

INFORMATION ON PASS

General Information

A Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) can help you return to work by letting you set aside money and/or things you own to help you reach your work goal. Under regular Supplemental Security Income (SSI) rules, we reduce your SSI payment by other income you have. But the income you set aside for a PASS doesn't reduce your SSI payment. Also, under SSI rules, you cannot own things worth more than \$2000 for an individual or \$3000 for a couple, except for your house and vehicle. But, with PASS, we don't count the things you need for your PASS, such as property or equipment.

How PASS Works

PASS lets you choose the kind of work you want to do. Of course, you must be able to do this job, with enough training and the right items and services. You must find out what training, items or services you will need to reach your work goal. These can include supplies to start a business, school expenses, equipment and tools, transportation and uniforms. Next, you find out how much these items and services will cost. A PASS can help you save to pay these costs. Also, PASS now lets you set aside money for **installment payments** as well as a down payment for things like a vehicle, wheelchair or computer if they are needed to reach your work goal.

Setting Up A PASS

You may get help in setting up your plan from a vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor, an organization that helps people with disabilities, your Social Security office or anyone else willing to help you. *If a VR counselor helps you with your plan, we will probably agree that it is a good plan, unless we have reason to question it.*

Once you decide what your work goal is and know what you will need to reach this goal, contact your local Social Security office. We will give you a PASS form, "Plan for Achieving Self-Support," (SSA-545-BK) to complete. This form collects most of the information that SSA needs to review your plan. * Pay special attention to page 5 of the application, which we call the milestone page. This is where you list the detailed steps you have taken, or plan on taking, to achieve your vocational goal. The first step should be when you began to pursue your goal and the last step should be when you plan on achieving your work goal. When you have completed the form, bring or mail it to your Social Security office.

What Happens To Your PASS

We will send the PASS to SSA employees who are trained to work with PASS. The PASS expert handling your case will work directly with you. He or she will look over the plan to see if there is a good chance that you can meet your work goal. The PASS expert will also make sure that the things you want to pay for are needed to achieve your work

goal and are reasonably priced. If changes are needed, the PASS expert will discuss them with you. If we do not approve your PASS, you can appeal the decision.