Trainer's Notes

W-2 Case Management and the SSI/SSDI Process

Purpose:

The purpose of the course is to provide Case Managers and FEPs with information about the SSI/SSDI application process and strategies for appropriate case management for W-2 T participants involved in the SSI/SSDI process.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe to W-2 participants what SSI and SSDI are
- Use assessment to determine whether or not a W-2 applicant or participant is appropriate for SSI and/or SSDI
- Assist the W-2 T participant with the SSI/SSDI application and/or appeals process
- Assign activities to support the W-2 T participant's SSI/SSDI application
- Access resources and collaborate with other service providers working with the participant to achieve his/her desired outcomes

Materials

Trainer's Notes
Participant Guide
CPS Unit and CPS File for "Let's Review!" activity
LCD Projector
PPT Presentation
Flip Chart/Markers or White Board/Dry Erase Markers
Name Tents
Optional: Pre-made chart of PG pg. 7

Note to Trainers:
The PPT presentation is a supplemental tool you can use to highlight various resources and websites. If the training room has internet access, it would be more beneficial to use the internet to highlight this information. You will want to review the websites prior to training. It is suggested that you create a favorites folder with the following websites bookmarked to ensure quick access to the site during the class.

What Is SSI?
http://socialsecurity.gov/ssi/

SSI in Wisconsin
http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ssi/benefits.htm

What Is SSDI?
www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/

Redbook
www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook

BEST
www.benefits.gov/ssa

Adult Disability Starter Kit
www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_adult_eng.htm

SSDI Online Application
https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib

Representing a Claimant
www.socialsecurity.gov/representation

Appeals Process
www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/appeal.htm

Participant Should Bring

Copy of Participant Guide

Suggested Timeline

9:00-9:15	Introductions/housekeeping
9:15-9:45	What Is SSI? and What Is SSDI?
9:45-10:15	Assessment
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-10:55	Activity Part 1
10:55-11:15	The SSI and SSDI Application Process
11:15-11:30	The SSI/SSDI Determination Process
11:30-11:45	Case Management Level of Involvement
11:45-12:45	Lunch
12:45-1:25	Activities to Support SSI/SSDI Advocacy
1:25-1:55	Using Employment Search as an Advocacy Tool
1:55-2:20	Activity Part 2
2:20-2:35	Break
2:35-3:05	The SSI/SSDI Appeals Process
3:05-3:25	Activity Part 3
3:25-3:45	Let's Review CPS Activity
3:45-3:55	Today's Takeaways
3:55-4:00	Evaluations

The order of this class is purposeful. The class starts by introducing the topic – SSI and SSDI. It then discusses assessment in the context of identifying individuals who are appropriate for SSI/SSDI advocacy. After the attendees know who are appropriate to refer, the class then discusses the application process and determination process. After those processes are explained, the class describes how to case manage someone through that process. The course then discusses the appeals process, and finally what a FEP/Case Manager should do after the final decision from SSA is made.

PPT Slide 1

Provide introductions and housekeeping information.
Review the course objectives.

Introduction

This introduction is taken directly from the W-2 Manual. **State** that SSI/SSDI advocacy is required, and that today we will discuss how that looks. In order to understand who to refer for advocacy services and what advocacy services may look like, first we want to define and understand SSI and SSDI.

What Is SSI?

Recap the following information regarding SSI:

- Funded by general tax revenues of the U.S. Treasury (**not** Social Security taxes)
- SSI makes monthly payments to people who have low income and few resources
- Must be age 65 or older, blind or disabled
- The monthly payment is $740
- Wisconsin has a supplemental payment of $83.78/month
- Recipients can qualify for the Caretaker Supplement (CTS) benefits

SSI Non-Financial Requirements

State that just like with W-2, SSI has non-financial eligibility requirements. **Review** the requirements:

- Be a resident of the United States
- Not be absent from the country for more than 30 consecutive days
- Be either a U.S. citizen or national, or in one of certain categories of eligible non-citizens
- Be age 65 or older, blind or disabled
- File an application
- Apply for any other cash benefits or payments for which s/he may be eligible (e.g., pensions, Social Security benefits, etc.)
- Give SSA permission to contact any financial institution and request any financial records that the financial institution may have about the individual

SSI Financial Requirements

State that SSI also has financial eligibility requirements. Income and resources are counted. **Review** the key points in the PG related to income and resources:

Income:

- Includes things like wages, Social Security benefits and pensions
- Current threshold is $1070/month
- Certain income is disregarded (e.g., FoodShare, energy assistance, etc.)
- If married, a spouse's income also is counted

Resources:

- Includes things that are owned, like real estate, bank accounts and stocks
- Resource limit of $2,000/individual and $3,000/couple
- Some resources are disregarded (e.g., home, vehicles, burial plots, etc.)

PPT Slide 2
http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/
Explain that for more information, multiple links to forms, videos and resources, this website is the portal for SSA's information on SSI. This website will link you to:

- Eligibility requirements
- Information on the application process
- Income reporting
- General information
- And more…

PPT Slide 3
http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ssi/benefits.htm

What Is SSDI?

Recap the following information regarding SSDI:

- Benefit paid to people who cannot work due to a medical condition expected to last at least one year or result in death
- Funded by taxes withheld under FICA or SECA
- Individual must have worked in jobs covered by Social Security
- Benefits are based on individual's prior work history or family member's work history
- Under title XVI, an individual can receive SSDI as an adult over 18 years of age or as a child less than 18 years of age

Explain that there are two different earnings tests:

1. A "recent work" test based on the individual's age at the time s/he became disabled (*Based on the age of the individual, s/he must have been working at a specific period of time at the onset of the disability.)*; and
2. A "duration of work" test to show that s/he worked long enough under Social Security (*Based on the age of the individual, s/he must have worked a certain number of years. These years do not need to occur in a specific time period, unlike the "recent work" test.*)

SSDI Non-Financial Requirements

Explain that SSI and SSDI are similar in that both programs have non-financial requirements. **Review** the non-financial requirements for SSDI:

- Be a resident of the United States
- Not be absent from the country for more than 30 consecutive days
- Be either a U.S. citizen or national, or in one of certain categories of eligible non-citizens
- File an application
- Be blind or disabled
- Be insured (meaning s/he has earned enough work credits) under the age of 65

Explain that SSI and SSDI are different. One main difference is that SSDI does not have any financial requirements. Another difference is that SSI is not based on a person's work history or his/her family's work history. SSDI benefits are based upon an individual's Social Security earnings record.

PPT Slide 4

http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/

Explain that this website will take you to the SSA's information on benefits for people with disabilities. The information available on this website is:

- How the disability determination works
- Information that the applicant needs to supply during the application process
- FAQs
- Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool
- And more…

SSI vs. SSDI

PPT Slide 5

To recap the introduction of SSI and SSDI, you can use this chart taken from Social Security's Red Book and found at http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/.

Review the chart in the PG. It may be helpful as you are reviewing this chart to create a similar chart on flip chart paper that can be displayed in the classroom for the remainder of the day. You also could recreate this chart prior to the start of class and display it at the start of class.

Assessment

Note to Trainers:
This is supposed to be a brief overview of assessment. Assessment has been trained many times. This section on assessment should focus on the relationship between assessment and determining who is a viable SSI/SSDI candidate.

Transition by stating that now that we have an overview of SSI and SSDI, we’ll look at assessment as a tool to identify those individuals who should be referred for SSI/SSDI advocacy services.

Review the bulleted items that outline the information assessment provides.

- The participant’s ability to become employed and remain employed,
- The appropriate placement of a participant,
- The existence of potential disabilities or other specific limitations through screening with a validated screening tool, and
- The need for a formal assessment of any disabilities or other employment barriers by a qualified agency or individual.

Informal Assessment

Ask what type of information do you collect through informal assessment?
Record answers on flip chart.
Possible Responses:
- Work history
- Education level
- Family situation
- Physical ability (lifting, hot/cold environment, etc.)

Ask how does this information assist you in determining potential barriers?
Possible Responses:
- FEP/Case Manager may identify "red flags" such as low TABE scores, little to no work history, sporadic/short-term jobs, participant's inability to answer questions, etc.

Ask how can this information lead you to make a referral for SSI/SSDI?
Possible Responses:
- Participant may self-disclose barriers or medical history that limit his/her ability to obtain and maintain employment.
- Be sure that the class discusses how assessment is used to identify who is an appropriate candidate for SSI/SSDI. Just because a W-2 participant has a barrier does not mean that s/he is disabled. Assessment will help FEPs/Case Managers look at the situation as a whole and gather all the information necessary to make a decision.

Explain that policy requires that certain topics be covered during the informal assessment process. Topics that must be covered by informal assessment and are directly related to SSI and SSDI advocacy include:
- Concerns related to personal and family health, including mental health
- Other needs or barriers identified by the participant that impede his or her ability to participate in W-2 activities or find and retain a job

It may be helpful to reference the Informal Assessment Inventory in W-2 Manual 5.2.2. FEPs/Case Managers can use that inventory as a guide to ensure all important topics are being address with the W-2 participant.

Formal Assessment

Review how the results of formal assessment can be used:
- The appropriate level of W-2 participation
- The person's ability to engage in specific work and training activities
- The need for supportive services and/or accommodations

Obtaining a Complete Assessment

Discuss the forms that can be used to obtain a completed assessment:
- Learning/cognitive disability – no form. FEP may need to create a document.
- Mental health/AODA – use form 126.
- Other medical conditions – use form 2012. Note that this form was redesigned specifically with SSI/SSDI attainment in mind.
- Formal Assessment Agreement (form 2565) is required to be reviewed and signed with the participant before any formal assessment takes place.

Best Practices
We've heard from agencies many times that it can be difficult to obtain a completed formal assessment. Review the best practices in the PG and **ask** the class for additional best practices. **Record/take notes**, as the information shared by the class may be useful to pass on.
Possible Responses:
- Introduce yourself, the W-2 program and the purpose of the formal assessment to the medical provider before s/he receives the assessment documents.
- Follow up with the medical provider during and after the process to ensure timely receipt of the assessment.
- Ensure that you have a signed release of information on file giving you permission to speak with the medical provider.

Functional Assessment

Functional assessments provide information on a participant's ability to complete daily tasks and work functions. The information obtained from a functional assessment can be valuable during the SSI/SSDI application process. The results of a functional assessment can be submitted as part of the SSI/SSDI application.

Ask the class if they know where they can go to obtain a functional assessment for the participant.

Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool (BEST)

PPT Slide 6
http://www.benefits.gov/ssa

Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool (BEST) helps individuals find out if they could get benefits that Social Security administers, such as SSI and/or SSDI. Based on answers to questions, this tool will list benefits the individual might be eligible for and provide information about how to qualify and apply. This is a good assessment tool to use to help identify appropriate candidates for SSI/SSDI advocacy.

State that BEST is NOT an application for benefits and:

- does not know, or ask for, an applicant's name or Social Security number
- does not access personal Social Security records
- will not give an estimate of benefit amounts

PPT Slide 7
This is the start of the BEST questionnaire.
Note to Trainers:
If you have internet access, you can complete the questionnaire online. It takes just a couple of minutes. You can complete the questionnaire with made-up responses, or you can use one of the scenarios from the TN Appendix to help guide your responses.

PPT Slide 8
Additional example of BEST questions

PPT Slide 9
This is a sample of the results page. Please note 2 messages: on the right side that this is not an application, and toward the bottom that responses can be edited.

PPT Slide 10
Note that on the results page, included is a list of links for additional resources.

SSI Assessment Process Tool

This tool is for:

- Determining who is a viable SSI/SSDI candidate
- Identifying information to gather
- Organizing information
- Helping to make decisions

A copy of this form is in the PG Appendix page 42. It is important to note that this tool is not an official DCF form, but rather a resource that Case Managers can use. Case Managers can change or adapt this tool as needed. This tool can also be found via Module 5A of ***Assessment Basics for SSI Advocacy*** that can be accessed in Learning Center.

Ask the question in the PG.
Possible Responses:

- Informal and formal assessments
- Functional capacity assessments
- Medical information (whether obtained in writing or through conversation with providers)

Remind the class that assessment information is used to:

- See which W-2 applicants/participants are viable candidates for SSI/SSDI
- Develop a customized EP

Important: For SSI/SSDI candidates, their primary goal is to obtain SSI/SSDI benefits, but they still should have a secondary goal of employment.

Explain that the participant still will have employment-focused activities on his/her EP. It is not an either/or, but a ratio of activities. We will go into more detail about the ratio of activities later in the training.

Assessment Activity Part 1

The assessment activity is located in the Appendix of the TN and in the Activity Appendix of the PG. The purpose of this activity is to put into practice the assessment information just explained. There are three scenarios: Maria, Gregory and Lucy. Divide the class into equal groups of four individuals (the number of groups will depend on the size of the class). Assign each group one of the scenarios, dividing the scenarios equally among the groups. Ask the groups to complete only **Part 1** of the scenario. Provide 15 minutes for the group to read the scenario and answer the corresponding questions. During the group work, trainer should be listening in on the conversations and starting the debrief process focusing on questions 1 and 3. Then call the groups back together and debrief for 10 minutes. During the large group debrief, trainer may want to focus the group discussion on the responses from question 2. Debrief responses are in the TN.

The SSI and SSDI Application Process

Explain that as the FEP and/or Case Manager, they are playing an important role during the W-2 participant's SSI/SSDI application process.

Adult Disability Starter Kit

PPT Slide 11

http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_adult_eng.htm

Note to Trainers:

If you have access to the internet, it would be helpful to pull up the website and go through the Starter Kit so that the class can see the information it contains.

Emphasize that this is just a tool – it is NOT part of the application. It assists the applicant in gathering documents and information s/he will need for the actual application.

Point out the three bullet points on what the kit contains.

Discuss the possibility of assigning this kit as part of the W-2 participant's activities.

The Disability Report also can be accessed online. Again, **discuss** the possibility of assigning the completion of that form as part of the W-2 participant's activities.

Steps in Applying for Benefits

Explain that the processes for applying for SSI and SSDI are similar. The biggest difference is that the SSI application must be completed in person at an SSA office, whereas the application for SSDI can be completed in person ***or*** online.

SSDI applicants do not need to apply online for benefits, but the SSA does point out many advantages for applying online.

- Can start the claim immediately – no need to wait for an appointment
- Can apply from anywhere – *again, a talking point for FEPs/Case Managers who can assist W-2 participants to apply while in the FEP's office*
- Don't need to worry about transportation/time/money, etc., to get to the SSA office

The SSI Application Process

Review the bulleted list in the PG. **Emphasize** that this is an in-person application process and that a Claims Representative will be completing the application documents for the applicant.

The SSDI Application Process

Review the bulleted list in the PG.

Explain that the Adult Disability Report and the online application can be started and stopped at any time. This means that the FEP/Case Manager can either assign the completion of these on the W-2 participant's EP, or can assist the W-2 participant in completing these over a series of appointments.

PPT Slide 12
https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib
This is the start of the online SSDI application. **Note** on the right that there is an introduction video that will provide more information.

PPT Slide 13
Note that when starting the application, there is an option for assisting someone with the application. This can be part of the advocacy services that you and your agency provide.

Key Points

Review the key points in the PG. **Point out** especially the final bullet point. Explain that this is part of the SSI/SSDI advocacy process.

Information the Applicant Needs When Applying for Benefits

Information about the Applicant

Review the bulleted list.

Information about the Applicant's Medical Condition
Review the bulleted list.

Documents the Applicant Needs to Provide
Review the bulleted list.

Case Management in Practice
Ask the question in the PG.
Possible Responses:
- Get work history from WPEL
- Gather any information from assessment forms
- Provide educational needs assessment scores (e.g., TABE scores)
- Make copies of everything for the individual's W-2 case; keep the copies in a confidential file
- Ensure that the participant also has copies of all relevant material

The SSI/SSDI Determination Process

The first steps are for the SSA to:

- determine if the applicant meets the basic requirements for benefits
- review the applicant's work history

If the basic requirements have been met, the SSA then will send the application to Disability Determination Services, which in the state of Wisconsin is the Disability Determination Bureau (DDB). The DDB is responsible for determining if, in fact, the applicant has a disability.

How the Decision Is Made

Five questions will be asked.

1. **Is the applicant working?** If the applicant has worked in the past year and made more than $1070/month, s/he will not be deemed disabled.

2. **Is the applicant's medical condition "severe"?** Just because the applicant has a medical condition doesn't mean s/he is automatically disabled. The medical condition must *significantly* limit the applicant's ability to complete basic work activities for at least one year.

3. **Is the applicant's medical condition on the "Listing of Impairments"?** *If you have access to the internet in the training room, it may be helpful to access the link so that the class can see the listing of impairments.* If the medical condition is on the list – the applicant is disabled. If the condition is not on the list, further investigation is necessary.

4. **Can the applicant do the work s/he did before?** If the participant still can do the work s/he was doing in the past, s/he will not be deemed disabled. If that is not the case, the DDB will need to go on to question 5.

5. **Can the participant do any other type of work?** This is where the FEP/Case Manager can play a role. Documentation the FEP has gathered concerning education/training, previous work and the types of activities the W-2 participant currently is doing (or is unable to do) may be beneficial information.

To Summarize

Recap the decision-making process with the table in the PG.

W-2 Participation and the Case Management Process

Policy states that the FEP and/or W-2 agency are responsible for ensuring that advocacy happens for the W-2 participant. That doesn't necessarily mean the FEP needs to provide the advocacy him/herself. An outside representative may take on that role. W-2 agencies **must** provide SSI/SSDI advocacy services, regardless of who actually performs the advocacy duties. Regardless of who provides the advocacy duties, it is important to understand what is required of an advocate.

Case Management Level of Involvement

This information is taken directly from the W-2 manual.

Some key points from this policy:

- Advocacy can come from the agency, through subcontract or by outside referral
- Advocates provide services to facilitate approval of the SSI/SSDI application
- Advocates provide assistance during the appeals process
- Advocacy can happen at any time (application, reconsideration or appeal)

The advocate needs specific knowledge to be a qualified advocate:

- Experience working in an SSI/SSDI advocacy role;
- General knowledge of W-2 policy and procedures;
- Knowledge of the SSI/SSDI application processes; and
- Legal or medical background or experience in the field of disabilities.

Duties of Advocates

The FEP/Case Manager may act as the SSI/SSDI applicant's advocate. This list of duties is taken directly from the W-2 Manual.
Review the list of duties with the class.

Ask for a show of hands from the class to see who has acted as an advocate for an SSI/SSDI applicant. **Ask** for a volunteer (or more, depending on time) to describe the duties s/he performed as an advocate:

- Successes/Pitfalls
- How long did the application process take?
- Was the application approved?
- What do you wish you knew then that you know now?
- Best practices or "pearls of wisdom" they can share about the process

Collaboration

State that collaboration can help bring about positive outcomes for the W-2 participant. Collaboration can be especially important when trying to provide advocacy services during the SSI/SSDI process.

Ask the class who they can collaborate with.
Possible Responses:

- AODA Advocate
- Social Service agencies
- Disability Determination Bureau staff
- Mental Health providers
- Income Maintenance staff
- Contracted SSI/SSDI advocacy groups
- DVR
- Adult Literacy services
- Disability Navigator

Case Management in Practice
Have the class partner up with one other person to answer the questions. Debrief as a large group by reviewing some of the responses. *You may want to list these on a flipchart for class members to record for their own resources.*

Consider a W-2 T participant with an SSI/SSDI focus you are working with. Who, in addition to you, works with him/her?
Possible Responses:

- Medical and/or mental health providers
- An outside advocate
- Family member help/assistance/influence
- Additional social service/government agencies
- School counselor from child's school
- Social worker

What benefits do you and the participant receive by collaborating with these partners?
Possible Responses:

- Get the "whole" picture from all aspects of the participant's life
- Gather documentation for the application and/or appeals process
- Can have a "staffing" to ensure proper W-2 activities are assigned
- Everyone is on the same page with the W-2 participant
- W-2 participant receives all possible services and access to all possible resources

Give an example of a success story resulting from collaboration.
Possible Responses:

- Will vary based on training

Stress that the FEP/Case Manager is not alone in this process. There are many outside experts and services s/he can tap into for the W-2 participant.

Authorized Representative

Review the numbered list on the ways the authorized representative is able to work on behalf of the applicant.

Important notes:

- The representative will receive copies of the SSA's decisions.
- The representative must fill out the *Appointment of Representative* form. Point out the link in the PG.
- Authorized representatives may charge for their services, but must inform the SSA.

Point out the policy reference in the box. W-2 agencies, W-2 staff members and W-2 subcontractors may **not** charge for being an authorized representative.

Important Information about Authorized Representatives
Review the bulleted list.

PPT Slide 14
http://www.socialsecurity.gov/representation/
Point out that from this page, representatives can get more information about FAQs, forms that will be necessary during the process and access to additional resources.

Release of Information
This is important to point out. The FEP/Case Manager may not be acting as the Authorized Representative, but still can sign a Release of Information to obtain critical information from the SSA about the W-2 participant's application.

Note that this should be done early in the process so that the FEP/Case Manager can be speaking with the advocate, Authorized Rep, the SSA and the DDB from the very beginning of the W-2 participant's SSI/SSDI application process.

Recap this section by explaining the following:
Each agency may be handling SSI/SSDI advocacy differently, depending on that agency's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Although some agencies may be handling SSI/SSDI advocacy internally, others may be subcontracting those duties to outside vendors. Collaboration is always important, but those skills may be on heightened display for those FEPs/Case Managers who need to collaborate on SSI/SSDI cases with outside vendors.

Activities to Support SSI/SSDI Advocacy

Key Points:

- W-2 T participants can be assigned ***up to*** 40 hours/week of activities.
- W-2 T participants with an SSI/SSDI focus may have multiple or severe barriers that prevent immediate attachment to the work force.
- Assign activities that support enhancement of living during the SSI/SSDI process.
- Participants most likely are already involved with other types of appointments. These should be incorporated into their EP.

Remind the class if they are providing SSI/SSDI advocacy services, they also must include the advocacy activity code SD on WPCS/WPCH. This is important for accurate case documentation and needed for any SSI/SSDI Performance Outcome Payments.

Personal Logs (PD)

Personal logs should be used to support the W-2 participant's SSI/SSDI application.

- Used as an evaluation tool
- Based on participant's barrier(s)
- Create the log yourself, and include specific questions for the participant to answer
- Questions should be structured in a way to gather information useful to the participant's SSI/SSDI application

Review the list of questions in the PG that a Personal Log may answer. **Ask** the class how the answers to these questions may benefit the participant and his/her SSI/SSDI application.

Possible Responses:

- It will help uncover what s/he is able to accomplish in a day
- It will identify who in the household is completing necessary chores, etc.

The personal log must be structured and have a specific purpose and goal. The participant must be aware of the purpose and goal and what the expected outcomes are from this activity. FEPs/Case Managers should ask themselves how many hours a week are realistic for this activity (*it is realistic to consider assigning no more than 1 hour a day)*.

Ongoing Medical/Personal Care Activities (MP)

Be sure to remind the class that this activity has a specific purpose and certain policy around it. This activity is assigned:

- For ongoing medical appointments
- When the participant cannot be assigned to other work activities due to restrictions. *This does not mean the individual cannot be assigned to ANY other activity, only that they cannot be assigned other activities during medical appointments.*
- When restrictions are expected to last more than six months

It is beneficial for the SSI/SSDI application, as it allows the participant and FEP to get updated information from the medical provider.

Life Skills Activities (LF)

Review the bulleted list of possible activities.
This activity can be beneficial in providing the participant the skills needed to help advocate for him/herself. These activities also can provide supports the participant may need as s/he goes through the SSI/SSDI application process.

Personal Development Activities (PD)

Review the bulleted list of possible activities.
These activities can benefit the participant applying for SSI/SSDI by providing supports in place that can assist him/her through the SSI/SSDI application process. They also could provide valuable information to the DDB about what the participant is or is unable to complete with or without supports in place.

Counseling Activities (CA, CM)

These activities need to be prescribed by an AODA or mental health professional.
These activities can benefit the participant applying for SSI/SSDI by having the AODA counselor or mental health counselor's documentation of the participant's barrier, diagnosis, prognosis and/or treatment plan.

Strategy Break
Break the class into five even groups. Assign each group one question to discuss and then answer. Have the small groups then report out to the large group. **Record** the responses to the questions on a whiteboard or flipchart. Draw out best practices and strategies to use when assigning these activities to SSI/SSDI applicants. Based on this discussion with the class, feel free to ask additional questions. The purpose of this discussion is to get the group thinking about case management strategies in preparation for their next activity.

How do you identify the types of activities that may be appropriate for the participant?
Possible Responses:
- Assessment
- What s/he already is involved in
- Personal goals/needs
- Where s/he is at in the SSI/SSDI process

How do you choose how many hours of each activity to assign?
Possible Responses:
- Look at his/her daily/weekly/monthly appointments and how long they last
- Establish a "game plan" and goals for each activity
- Be realistic in the amount of time an activity can take
- Participant's current level of ability

How do you determine when an activity is no longer serving its purpose?
Possible Responses:
- When the participant is no longer making progress
- When the participant has gone as far as s/he can go in the program (if it is an outside program)
- Revisit the original purpose/goal of the activity and determine if it still is appropriate

Who is available to the participant and you to collaborate with on these activities?
Possible Responses:
- DVR
- Other social service providers (churches, non-profits, etc.)
- Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Advocates
- Educators and/or instructors

What community resources are available to assist you and the participant in the SSI and SSDI process?
Possible Responses:
- Responses will vary based on location. Be sure the class does provide a list. Depending on where training participants work, trainer may want to prep by checking online what community resources are available in their area/s.

Using Employment Search as an Advocacy Tool

Employment search activities need to be discussed from the start. **Remember** that it is important that we look at activity assignment as a ratio. What ratio of activities makes sense based on where the participant is in the SSI/SSDI process (in the initial application process, in the appeal process or been denied)? Keep in mind that although the participant does have barriers and limitations, s/he also has skills and resources. The whole picture of the participant needs to be incorporated into appropriate activity assignments.

Points to keep in mind:

- What barriers and limitations does the participant need to address?
- What skills and resources does the participant bring to the table?
- What accommodations can be provided to assist the W-2 participant in being able to complete his/her activities?
- **Remember** the ratio of activities. No matter the situation, some employment-related service activities will be appropriate.

Career Planning and Counseling (CE)

Review the information on Career Assessment.
Ask the class what resources or websites they find most helpful to use with these activities.
Possible Responses:

- CAPS/COPS
- WisCareers
- WorkNet

Employment Search (ES)

Review highlights of information in PG.

- ES is more than just independent job search and job logs
- Wide variety of ES activities
- Other staff to help you with this process, including job matching
- Informational interviews, especially for those not quite ready to accept employment immediately, because there is no risk involved
- At-home ES activities
- Job search workshops

Job Readiness/Motivation (MO)

These activities can be useful for those individuals who are not ready to do a full-fledged employment search.

These activities provide the participant with an opportunity to improve:

- Soft skills
- Self-awareness
- Employment readiness

Through these activities, participants will learn:

- General workplace expectations
- Work behavior
- Job retention skills

Review the types of activities this encompasses.

Occupational Testing (OC)

A participant may not be able to return to his/her former line of work. Occupational testing can assist that individual in exploring how his/her current skills, aptitudes and abilities could fit into a new line of work.

Work Experience (WE)

Review key points about Work Experience. This isn't new, so keep in mind these points as you think about your current SSI/SSDI focused W-2 T caseload.

- Supportive environment
- Strategic to the participant's goals
- Specific outcome(s) based on participant's goals
- Accommodations if needed
- Adjustments based on progress
- Regular follow up and support to address any issues or concerns to ensure that the worksite still is appropriate for the participant, and to ensure that the site wants to continue to be a worksite for the W-2 agency

A participant's involvement in a worksite and his/her ability or inability to perform the necessary duties can be useful information for the participant's advocate, the DDB, the SSA and other entities.

Point out the text box at the bottom of the page. It is important to note that the PG does not cover every activity that could be assigned to a W-2 T receiving SSI/SSDI advocacy. S/he may be assigned other activities as covered in the W-2 Manual 7.4.2.2, e.g., Education and Training.

Strategy Break (begins on page 30 of the PG) – Break the class into five groups. Assign groups 1-3 one question from questions 1-3, assign group 4 questions 4 and 5, and assign group 5 questions 6 and 7. Give small groups time to discuss and answer their question(s). Have small groups report out to the large group. Don't be afraid to ask additional questions based on the direction of the conversation and the climate of the class. As with the previous Strategy Break, the purpose of this activity is to prepare the participants for their next activity.

Question 1

Possible Responses:

- It can uncover possible employment opportunities the applicant has not thought of.
- It can identify transferable skills that can be used in other occupations.
- Although someone applying for SSI/SSDI may not be looking at other occupations or thinking about returning to work, this is good information for both the SSI/SSDI application and to meet the goals of the W-2 program.

Question 2
Possible Responses:
- ES is more than independent employment search, so a participant can be assigned to group activities or to meet with a job developer to see what type of options may be open to him/her.
- Informational interviews may shed light on various other occupations for the participant, and s/he may find out more information on what s/he could or could not do on the job.
- All of the information gathered in these types of activities could be used to strengthen an SSI/SSDI application.
- It is important to keep in mind what a participant can do/accomplish with accomodations.

Question 3
Possible Responses:
- Responses will vary based on training audience. Encourage the class to think about what activities could be done or offered in a Job Club that still can benefit an SSI/SSDI applicant and assist him/her in moving forward.

Question 4
Possible Responses:
- For someone who just started the SSI/SSDI application process, the ratio of employment-related services may be less. The participant may not be assigned independent employment search, but other types of activities such as career exploration or job club.
- For someone who is in the appeals process, the ratio of employment-related services will be greater, because s/he may need to be returning to the world of work soon. More direct employment search or interview preparation may be assigned.

Question 5
Possible Responses:
- Can strengthen an SSI/SSDI application by providing some functional assessment information related to the job functions a participant can or cannot do.
- Looking at LMI may uncover that the participant is not able to return to any type of meaningful employment.

Question 6
Possible Responses:
- Job Developers
- Job Club facilitators
- SSI/SSDI advocates (if other than you)
- Medical professionals

Question 7
Possible Responses:
- Responses will vary based on class audience. Try and capture some best practices.

Activity Part 2

The purpose of this activity is to put into practice the information presented on the SSI/SSDI application process and the two strategy breaks on activities. Ask the group to return to their previous groups. Ask that they resume working on their respective scenario and to complete only **Part 2**. Allow the groups 10-15 minutes to read the scenario and answer the questions. Bring the groups back together as a large group and debrief. Allow 10 minutes for the debrief.

The SSI/SSDI Appeals Process

The applicant has the right to appeal the decision of the SSA and has 60 days from the receipt of the decision to file an appeal. When s/he receives the Notice of Decision, that notice will include information on the appeals process. If the application was denied based on medical information, then an appeal can be filed online. Point out the link in the PG to do that.

The Levels of Appeal

There are four levels of appeals.

1. **Reconsideration:** A complete review of the applicant's information.
2. **Hearing:** This takes place if the applicant disagrees with the decision made during the reconsideration process. The hearing will be conducted by an administrative law judge. The participant will need to be present for this process, but that can be either in person or via video conference. The judge will make the decision.
3. **Appeals Council:** If the applicant disagrees with the decision made in the hearing process, s/he can request a review by the Appeals Council. The council can choose whether or not to review the case. If it chooses to complete a review, the council can do the review or send it back to an administrative law judge for review.
4. **Federal Court:** This takes place if the applicant disagrees with the decision of the Appeals Council. This is a lawsuit filed with the federal court.

PPT Slide 15
http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/appeal.html
This page will provide information on the appeals process. There are links to multiple SSA publications, forms and resources, as well as the opportunity to start the appeals process online.

PPT Slide 16
Before an online appeal is started, you may want to watch the video on preparing an appeal file. As with the previous page, this page will link you to publications, resources and the necessary information needed to take someone through the appeals process.

Strategy Break
Ask the questions in the PG.

What new information may you have that could benefit the W-2 participant during the appeals process?
Possible Responses:
- New medical information
- New formal assessment information
- Additional witnesses, such as a former worksite supervisor or employer who can speak to the participant's abilities

Remember that the FEP/Case Manager's opinion is valued. The FEP/Case Manager is the employment expert, and SSA will take into consideration the fact-based opinions and observations of the FEP/Case Manager.

How will the type of activities assigned on a participant's Employability Plan change during the appeals process?
Possible Responses:
- The assigned activities may change to focus on more employment search related activities
- The hours assigned to activities may change with hours increasing for employment search related activities

When SSI/SSDI Is Approved

This information is directly from the W-2 Manual.

The FEP/Case Manager can begin to develop the Transition Plan right away in the SSI/SSDI advocacy process.

Point out the link to get to the plan.

Key points regarding the Transition Plan:
- Developed with the participant during face-to-face meeting
- After the SSA makes decision, finalize the plan
- Plan should be given to participant no sooner than 90 days prior to W-2 eligibility ending
- Update and/or review the Plan until eligibility ends
- FEP/Case Manager must document in CARES case comments when the final plan was printed and given to participant

Remind the class of the information in the box at the bottom of the page.

What Is Included in the Transition Plan

Reinforce that each person and family has a unique own story; therefore, each Transition Plan should reflect the unique situation of the participant and his/her family.

Review bulleted items of topics that should be covered.

It is required for the plan to include:

1. A plan of action – both short- and long-term. Include specific steps for completing the plan of action.
2. Resources and referral information. Explain the purpose of each resource and how it relates to the participant's situation.

Other Important Information

- Services through DVR such as Ticket to Work
- The purpose and use of Independent Living Centers
- Application information for other government services
- ADRC locations/phone numbers
- IM programs such as FoodShare, BadgerCare, etc.
- Community resources

Ask what community resources do you typically include in a Transition Plan?
Possible Responses:
Answers will vary depending on the community/location.

Ticket to Work

Background information on Ticket to Work:
http://www.ssa.gov/work/overview.html#a0=0
The Ticket to Work Program provides most people receiving Social Security benefits (beneficiaries) more choices for receiving employment services. Under this program, the Social Security Administration (SSA) issues tickets to eligible beneficiaries who, in turn, may choose to assign those tickets to an Employment Network (EN) of their choice to obtain employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services necessary to achieve a vocational (work) goal. The EN, if it accepts the ticket, will coordinate and provide appropriate services to help the beneficiary find and maintain employment.

When SSI/SSDI Is Exhausted

Key Points:

- Review the participation. Are accommodations in place? Can those accommodations cross over into unsubsidized work?
- Re-assess the suitability of the W-2 T placement. Assessment is ongoing, so continue to use informal and formal assessment to determine the appropriate placement.
- Get another formal assessment. Do the results of that new assessment change how the FEP/Case Manager does things? If changes are made, be sure to document those appropriately.
- Create a new EP. This EP should be different than the EP used during the SSI/SSDI advocacy process. These participants are now on an Employment Focus track, and the activities being assigned should have the goal and purpose of moving the participant into employment.
- Consider the usefulness of on-the-job training and paid work experience. This may give the participant an opportunity to train and train for jobs s/he has not done in the past.

Ask the question in the PG.
What strategies can you use to create an EP that focuses the W-2 T participant on employment?
Possible Responses:

- Education may be needed if the participant realistically cannot return to the former job
- Work experience may provide new skills to the participant
- Collaborative employment search with a Job Developer can ease the participant into a more employment focused W-2 T position
- LMI information may assist the participant in discovering other occupations s/he has not thought of

Give a 30-second “commercial” for the W-2 T Employment Focused Engagement Strategies course.

Activity Part 3

The purpose of this activity is to wrap up the scenarios and put into practice the information just provided on Transition Plans and reengagement. Ask the group to return to their previous small groups. Ask that they complete **Part 3** of the activity. Allow the groups 10-15 minutes to read their scenario and to answer the questions. Bring the groups back together in a large group to debrief. Allow 10 minutes for the debrief.

Putting It All Together

This begins the wrap up of the day. **State** that we have covered many topics today: what SSI/SSDI are, the application and decision process and how we case manage that, and the appeals process and how we manage that. We will be reviewing all of this information using the CPS unit ("clickers").

Let's Review!

1. How many steps are there in the Disability Determination Bureau's (DDB) sequential disability determination process?

    A. One
    B. Three
    C. Five

1. Is the individual engaging in substantial gainful activity (SGA)?
2. Is there a "severe" impairment?
3. Does the impairment(s) meet or equal the Listings?
4. Does the claimant have the capacity to perform past relevant work?
5. Does the claimant have the capacity to perform other work?

    D. Seven

2. Will an individual's SSI/SSDI claim be denied if his/her impairment(s) fails to meet or equal a listing in Step 3 of the disability determination process?

    A. Yes
    B. No

An individual can be approved, but not denied at Step 3. If the case is not approved at Step 3, it moves to Step 4 and possibly Step 5 in the disability determination process.

3. When DDB looks at an individual's ability to perform other work (Step 5), they must look at three factors. Which factor is **not** considered?

    A. Age
    B. Education
    C. Reason for leaving past work

Although the reason for leaving may indicate a reduced physical or mental capacity, DDB already has determined the individual's Residual Functional Capacity (RFC) before they get to Step 4 (see Q1 for a list of the steps).

    D. Past work experience (transferable skills)

4. If a participant states that s/he has Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS), you first must obtain documentation from his/her treating provider before deciding whether to offer SSI advocacy.

    A. True
    B. False

This person falls under the list of 'strong cases for SSI advocacy' without documentation from his/her treating provider. An individual who states s/he has ALS can receive up to 6 months of Presumptive Disability (PD) payments while DDB makes the final decision.

5. The eligibility requirements for both SSI and SSDI are the same.
    A. True
    B. False

Both SSI/SSDI have non-financial eligibility requirements (which differ from each other). SSI also has financial eligibility requirements, which SSDI does not.

6. The application for SSDI must be completed:
    A. In person
    B. Online
    C. Either A or B

The SSA recommends completing the SSDI application online, but that is not a requirement. The application can be completed in person.

7. It would be advantageous to have the participant complete the online ***Medical and Job Worksheet - Adult*** prior to completing the online SSDI application.
    A. True

Yes, this is true. The Case Manager can assign this as an activity on the EP or assist the participant in completing it during an office appointment.

    B. False

8. If an individual's wage documentation indicates that s/he is earning a gross monthly income of $1070, an application for SSI/SSDI will be denied automatically.
    A. True
    B. False

Although $1070/month is the SGA amount indicated in Step 1 of the Disability Determination Process, the SSI/SSDI application is not denied automatically. Subsidies and work-related expenses are deducted from gross earnings (by the local SSA office) when making SGA determination.

9. If an initial application for SSI/SSDI is denied, the applicant must submit a new application.
    A. True
    B. False

There is an appeals process that the applicant can follow. It is important for the applicant to follow that process and not submit a new application. If the applicant submits a new application, s/he then has a new application date. By following the appeals process, the applicant keeps his/her application date.

10. How many levels of appeal are there?
    A. One
    B. Two
    C. Three
    D. Four

The four levels of appeal (in order) are reconsideration, hearing, appeals council and federal court.

11. It is necessary to consider where in the SSI/SSDI application process a W-2 participant is when assigning Employability Plan activities.

  A. True

There are activities that support the SSI/SSDI application process and activities that take into account the most appropriate employment services for the individual.

  B. False

12. W-2 participants receiving SSI/SSDI advocacy never should be assigned any employment search/job readiness activities.

  A. True

  B. False

Not all SSI/SSDI advocacy participants will be assigned these types of activities. However, there is a wide range of employment search/job readiness activities that Case Managers can tap into. In some situations, assigning these activities may be appropriate and can assist the Case Manager and participant in determining the participant's level of job readiness.

13. It is important to start discussing the SSI/SSDI Transition Plan with SSI/SSDI advocacy participants early in the SSI/SSDI application process.

  A. True

W-2 policy states that the Case Manager may begin to develop a written Transition Plan with the participant early in the SSI advocacy process using the automated SSI/SSDI Transition Plan. W-2 Manual 7.4.4.1

  B. False

Today's Takeaways

Give the class time to answer the takeaway/transfer of learning items in their PG. **Ask** if there are volunteers who would like to share some of their takeaways.

Hand out and remind the class to complete their class evaluations.

Appendix

This appendix contains "real life" scenarios. The scenarios showcase how a FEP/Case Manager and/or advocate can play a vital role in assisting an individual in the SSI/SSDI application process. Trainers should read through the scenarios and then use them as needed during the day to highlight and further enhance the course material.

Example 1

We were working with an individual who had sustained an injury at work. He worked at a sawmill and dropped a log on his foot, crushing it. He was placed in a W-2 T placement while his injury healed (which took months, as he re-injured it at home a few months into the healing process). After the injury healed completely, he was unable to return to his previous job due to ongoing medical restrictions.

We pursued an employment path and placed him on a worksite with the local parks department. The site supervisor reported to us that the individual was acting odd on the worksite, and the supervisor believed he smelled alcohol on the participant's breath. The participant admitted that he had been drinking before going to the worksite and agreed to go for an alcohol assessment.

The assessment was eye-opening. He had been drinking heavily for years. He would drink a case of beer a night. He was functional, and could maintain his employment, until the day the log fell on his foot, which he confessed was alcohol-related. His subsequent re-injury at home was due to falling off his front porch while intoxicated.

Part of the assessment was an IQ test. The results came back and identified him with an IQ level of 63. The professionals who conducted the assessment said that the long term alcohol abuse actually had caused damage to his brain functionality.

With all the information documented, an application for SSDI was made and it was approved on the first try. It wasn't because he was an alcoholic, but because of the documented damage that had been done to his brain function.

Example 2

Our Job Coach was working with a participant who had been in W-2 for years. She had bounced between W-2 T and CSJ placements as her medical and mental health issues varied. Several applications for SSI had been denied.

After some frustrating struggles with the participant's worksite placements, she was placed into a sheltered workshop environment. The job coach collaborated with the participant's psychiatrist in creating a plan. When this did not work out, it was determined that perhaps an SSI application was really the best route for this individual. The job coach shifted gears to become her SSI advocate, assisted with completion of the application, continued working with the psychiatrist to document the participant's issues and assisted in her communication with the local Social Security office and DDB. The job coach also contributed her observations and experiences from the W-2 program to the application.

The application was approved on the first try.

Example 3

A W-2 participant had suffered for years with a back injury, which prevented her from working. She had older children in the home to assist with the household chores. Her work history had always been in the service industry/customer service. She was no longer able to do this line of work.

She applied for W-2 when she had exhausted all of her other resources and depleted her savings. She had been getting child support on a regular basis, but due to job loss, this had ended. At her initial appointment, she and her Case Manager discussed applying for SSI/SSDI. She had not previously applied, and stated by doing this, it would validate her not being able to work and provide for her family. Through the informal and formal assessment, an EP was developed and the participant tracked her day-to-day activities including: when she had difficulty, what she was able to accomplish and how the pain medication affected her ability to function. She also tried, without success, to work very part time at a local deli over the lunch hour.

Her initial application was denied. She appealed the decision. In her application, she provided the daily logs and a written statement from the Case Manager describing her ability to participant in the program. The participant was granted SSI at the appeal.

Example 4

Mrs. Chang, a native Southeast Asia refugee, came to America in 1980. She started working a few years later and continued working. Throughout the next twenty years, she experienced minor medical conditions. In February 2008, at age 54, she became unemployed. Right away she looked for a new job and filed for unemployed benefits. Those unemployment benefits lasted for a year and a half.

In August 2009 she started her application for disability and social security benefits. The application was first denied in March 2010. The first appeal process took place right away. In September 2010 she received her second denial. She began her second appeal the following month. By October 2011, she received another response only to find out that she was denied for the third time. Within two months, Mrs. Chang sought a lawyer to assist her with her third appeal.

The third appeal was filed through her lawyer two months later. The documents included her previous lifestyle before coming to America and her current situation at the time, along with her history of medical conditions. Mrs. Chang received her notification for a court hearing February, 15 2013. In March 2013, after nearly four years, Mrs. Chang was awarded disability benefits.

The moral of the story is, after multiple denials and appeals, benefits can still be awarded. Mrs. Chang was trying to fill this out with the help of family members. It was not until she obtained a SSI/SSDI advocate (in the form of a lawyer), that she was able to make progress. It is beneficial to have an advocate familiar with the application and appeals processes assist you.

Activity Appendix

Scenario A: Maria

Part 1

Maria, age 28, is a single woman, never married, with 2 children, Marquis, 5 years, and Clydie, 3 years.

Maria never completed high school, but does have her GED. She has no other formal education. She worked at Target for 8 years in a variety of jobs, from overnight stocking to team lead of 1st shift cashiers. She quit working at Target a year ago due to frequent absences that she felt were unfair to her coworkers. If she had remained at work, she would have constantly been in the restroom due to nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Before she quit working, she had moved in with her mother; she and her partner, the co-parent of Marquis and Clydie, had separated. Her partner also was sick much of the time, and she had tired of her partner's drug use. She didn't want her children seeing that sort of thing.

When her partner was diagnosed HIV-positive, Maria went to be tested. She received her HIV-positive diagnosis two months ago. Neither child has tested positive.

Maria is new to the W-2 program. During her interview, she asks the Case Manager about Social Security disability. She said her mother also told her to check into that. The Case Manager discusses with Maria what she knows about SSI/SSDI and recommends that Maria consider applying for that program as well as W-2. Maria continues through the W-2 application process.

What assessment information would you gather during this initial application process?
Possible Responses:
- *A formal assessment for both medical and mental health*
- *Complete the BEST to screen for SSI/SSDI eligibility*

How would you use the assessment information?
Possible Responses:
- *To see if applying for SSI/SSDI is the most appropriate option based on her barriers and limitations as well as her skills and abilities*
- *To develop an EP that supports her barriers and a possible SSI/SSDI application*
- *To ensure proper placement in W-2 T*

How would you start the SSI/SSDI advocacy process?
Possible Responses:
- *Potentially act as her advocate, or assist her in locating an advocate*
- *Be sure to get copies of all her medical records*
- *Sign forms to share information back and forth with SSA/DDB*
- *Keep track of her ability or inability to perform certain activities*

Part 2

Maria reports to the Case Manager that she has decided to apply for SSI/SSDI.

The Medical Examination and Capacity form that arrives on the Case Manager's desk soon after Maria's W-2 T placement confirms the HIV-positive diagnosis. Maria's doctor notes that because it is early in her treatment, he recommends the Case Manager proceed slowly with her in W-2. His reason for this is because the infection's symptoms frequently may interfere with simple work tasks. He also notes that it is too early to say if she is "making positive progress," adding that in any case it would be likely that she would have "bad" days. The doctor's additional note with the Medical Examination and Capacity form points out that medications used in the treatment of HIV infection also may have effects on Maria's mental functioning, including memory, concentration, and mood, and may result in depression, severe fatigue, joint and muscle pain, and insomnia. The symptoms of HIV infection and the side effects of medication may be indistinguishable from each other.

Describe how you would support Maria in the SSI/SSDI application process. In your response, be sure to include with whom it would be helpful to collaborate and how, or in what manner.

Possible Responses:

- *Provide advocacy services (be sure the group discusses and identifies what those services will look like)*
- *Sign Release of Information to share and provide information with the SSA/DDB (be sure the group discusses what type of information they would share and provide)*
- *Collaborate with doctors, support groups and SSA/DDB claim representatives to establish a mutually agreed upon game plan*

What forms or documents would you complete and compile in support of Maria's SSI/SSDI application and her assigned activities in the W-2 T placement? In your response, provide an explanation about each form's specific usefulness in Maria's case.

Possible Responses:

- *Medical Examination and Capacity form – can give you a clue about prognosis, ability and accommodations*
- *Mental Health Report form – depending on Maria's mental health*
- *Services and Accommodations to Help You Do Your Activities – will ensure all activities are accommodated, and those working with Maria will be made aware of the accommodations*
- *A record of her non-participation and reasons for non-participation – are those reasons related to her barrier?*

What would you want to know in order to create an Employability Plan (EP) with Maria that would support her SSI/SSDI application? In your response, be sure to include activities you would consider assigning Maria on her EP, the EP's timeframe (e.g., 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, etc.) and your rationale for the activities and for the timeframe.
Possible Responses:

- *medical and/or mental health appointments*
- *personal logs (keeping in mind what the Case Manager needs to consider before designing/assigning a personal log activity, what the log may answer, and how it will be used)*
- *personal care activities*
- *life skills*
- *legal appointments*
- *any activity that might not necessarily be a reportable TANF work activity*

Part 3

It has been eight months since Maria applied for SSI benefits. She has received her award letter from the Social Security Administration. Her SSI payments will begin next month.

You and Maria need to develop a Transition Plan. What information and community resources would you include in that plan?
Possible Responses:

- *HIV Support Groups*
- *Economic Support (BadgerCare, FoodShare, child care, etc.)*
- *Encourage the group also to identify groups/resources specific to the community*

What steps will you take to close down Maria's case?
Possible Responses:

- *Wait to close the case until receipt of first SSI/SSDI payment has been confirmed*
- *Follow the normal steps of closing the case (update CWW, confirm failure, end WPWW, disenroll from the work program)*
- *Complete POP screens to obtain Performance Outcome Payment*

Scenario B: Gregory

Part 1

Gregory, age 37, is a divorced parent of 3, and has twins Staci and Laci, 13 years, and Brooks, 10 years. Their other parent, last known to be living out of the state, had been paying child support regularly, but those payments have stopped. The children's other parent keeps in contact with them via e-mail and telephone. You are just receiving Gregory's case through an inter-agency transfer.

Gregory graduated from high school and has an Associate's degree in Culinary Arts from the state technical college. He had worked as the sous-chef at a local restaurant until two years ago when he left due to chronic back pain, the emotional upheaval of the divorce, and gaining custody of his children.

Gregory has been in a W-2 T placement based largely on a back-related disability, the result of a car accident that occurred when he was 22 years old. He has not made any significant strides in moving forward with employment due to his disability. You mention that perhaps applying for SSI/SSDI could be beneficial. Gregory agrees that it is an option to consider.

The assessment information in Gregory's file is more than 6 months old. What new assessment information would you gather?
Possible Responses:
- *A formal assessment for both medical and mental health*
- *A new informal assessment in the work program driver flow*
- *Complete the BEST*

How would you use the assessment information?
Possible Responses:
- *To see if applying for SSI/SSDI is the most appropriate option*
- *To develop an EP that supports his barriers and a possible SSI/SSDI application*
- *To uncover the extent of his barriers and limitations as well as to discover his skills and abilities*
- *To ensure proper placement in W-2 T*

How would you start the SSI/SSDI advocacy process?
Possible Responses:
- *Potentially act as his advocate, or assist him in locating an advocate*
- *Be sure to get copies of all his medical records*
- *Sign forms to share information back and forth with SSA/DDB*
- *Keep track of his ability or inability to perform certain activities*

Part 2

You receive a Medical Examination Capacity form completed by Gregory's doctor, who has been treating him since the accident. The doctor sets strict limitations to work involving sitting or standing for long periods of time and lifting anything weighing 20 pounds or more. His symptoms, according to the doctor, will in all likelihood continue and be debilitating throughout his life, supported or eased by physical therapy and pain medication. You and Gregory decide to start the SSI/SSDI application process.

Describe how you would support Gregory in the SSI/SSDI application process. In your response, be sure to include with whom it would be helpful to collaborate and how, or in what manner.
Possible Responses:

- *Provide advocacy services (be sure the group identifies what those services will look like)*
- *Sign Release of Information to share and provide information with the SSA/DDB (be sure the group identifies what type of information they would share with SSA/DDB)*
- *Collaborate with doctors, support groups and SSA/DDB claim representatives to establish a mutually agreed upon game plan*

What forms or documents would you complete and compile in support of Gregory's SSI/SSDI application and his assigned activities in the W-2 T placement? In your response, provide an explanation about each form's specific usefulness in Gregory's case.
Possible Responses:

- *Medical Examination and Capacity form – can give you a clue about prognosis, ability and accommodations*
- *Mental Health Report form – depending on Gregory's mental health*
- *Services and Accommodations to Help You Do Your Activities – will ensure all activities are accommodated, and those working with Gregory will be made aware of the accommodations*

What would you want to know in order to create an Employability Plan (EP) with Gregory that would support his SSI/SSDI application? In your response, be sure to include activities you would consider assigning Gregory on his EP, the EP's timeframe (e.g., 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, etc.) and your rationale for the activities and for the timeframe.
Possible Responses:

- *medical and/or mental health appointments*
- *personal logs (keeping in mind what the Case Manager needs to consider before designing/assigning a personal log activity, what the log may answer, and how it will be used)*
- *personal care activities*

- *life skills*
- *legal appointments*
- *any activity that might not necessarily be a reportable TANF work activity*

Part 3

Within the last week, Gregory received a denial of his application for SSI/SSDI benefits. The letter from the SSA stated that, based on the information submitted, his condition would not prevent him from adjusting to other work. His age, education, training, and work experience also were considered by the SSA in determining whether he could do another kind of work. With his doctor's diagnosis firm as to his inability to do any substantial work, Gregory is submitting a request for reconsideration.

Describe how you would support Gregory's participation in the W-2 program after the initial SSI/SSDI application has been denied.
Possible Responses:

- *Relook at the current information available*
- *Continue advocacy services through the appeals process*
- *Reexamine the activities assigned*
- *Identify other resources such as training, DVR, etc., that have not yet been made available to him*

What would you want to know in order to create an Employability Plan (EP) with Gregory, taking into consideration the SSI/SSDI denial and Gregory's request for reconsideration? In your response, be sure to include activities you would consider assigning Gregory on his EP, the EP's timeframe (e.g., 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, etc.) and your rationale for the timeframe.
Possible Responses:

- *Maybe get a new formal assessment or conduct a staffing with doctor to see what Gregory can do.*
- *Look at short term employment services activities. Reevaluate for their purpose, goal and progress. Have Gregory relook at his personal goals and potential employment goals. Match transferable skills with his abilities/limitations. Career Assessments?*

What forms or documents would you complete and compile in support of Gregory's request for a reconsideration of the SSI/SSDI denial? In your response, provide an explanation about each form's specific usefulness in Gregory's case.
Possible Responses:

- *New Medical Capacity form*
- *New observations about his ability to complete more employment-related tasks*

Scenario C: Lucy

Part 1

Lucy is a 39-year old parent of 2 children, Kent, age 18 and in his senior year of high school, and Kendall, age 16. Lucy divorced from her spouse, the co-parent of the children, seven months ago. The family has been surviving on what little savings Lucy received in the divorce settlement, on the child support for the children and on some financial assistance from family members.

Lucy feels her financial situation is in dire straits and comes to your agency to apply for W-2 services because she understands from a friend that she can get a check. During the intake, you discover that she has not worked in recent history. Lucy had been a stay at home parent and her former spouse had been the bread winner. She informs you that she no longer has any savings. She spent it all in the first two months. Her family has been getting by with help from other family members, but no longer can keep using them for financial support.

Lucy self-discloses that some days she cannot get out of bed, and admits that on those days she does not shower or make any of the family meals. Yet on other days, she can be very productive and clean the entire apartment floor to ceiling. As you explain the W-2 program, Lucy starts to cry and appears agitated. She tells you that she cannot work. Lucy continues through the application process. You have concerns over Lucy's mental state, and discuss your concerns with her.

What assessment information would you gather during this initial application process?
Possible Responses:
- *A formal assessment for both medical and mental health*
- *Complete the BEST to screen for SSI/SSDI eligibility*
- *Complete the BST*

Based on your concerns, how would you use the assessment information to determine if Lucy is a good candidate for SSI/SSDI?
Possible Responses:
- *Use the assessment information to uncover potential barriers and limitations*
- *See what "red flags" she presents during the informal assessment process*
- *Speak with her medical professionals to understand the extent of Lucy's barriers*

How would you start the SSI/SSDI advocacy process?
Possible Responses:
- *Potentially act as her advocate, or assist her in locating an advocate*
- *Be sure to get copies of all her medical records*
- *Sign forms to share information back and forth with SSA/DDB*
- *Keep track of her ability or inability to perform certain activities*

Part 2

The Mental Health Capacity form that arrives on the Case Manager's desk soon after Lucy's W-2 T placement indicates that she has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Lucy's doctor notes that because it is early in her treatment, he recommends the Case Manager proceed slowly with her in W-2. His reason for this is because it will take time to get her new medication adjusted to the right level, and they just started psychosocial treatment. He also notes that it is too early to say if she is "making positive progress," adding that in any case it would be likely that she would have "bad" days. The doctor's additional note points out that common symptoms of bipolar disorder include feelings of hopelessness, difficulty concentrating, poor judgment and extreme irritability and distractibility.

After having a conversation with Lucy and her doctor, you decide that applying for SSI may be a good option for Lucy.

Describe how you would support Lucy in the SSI/SSDI application process. In your response, be sure to include with whom it would be helpful to collaborate and how, or in what manner.
Possible Responses:

- *Provide advocacy services (be sure the group discusses and identifies what those services will look like)*
- *Sign Release of Information to share and provide information with the SSA/DDB (be sure the group discusses what type of information they would share and provide)*
- *Collaborate with doctors, support groups and SSA/DDB claim representatives to establish a mutually agreed upon game plan*

What forms or documents would you complete and compile in support of Lucy's SSI/SSDI application and her assigned activities in the W-2 T placement? In your response, provide an explanation about each form's specific usefulness in Lucy's case. What strategies would you employ to keep track of this information and documentation?
Possible Responses:

- *Medical Examination and Capacity form – depending on Lucy's medical health*
- *Mental Health Report form – can give you a clue about prognosis, ability and accommodations.*
- *Services and Accommodations to Help You Do Your Activities – will ensure all activities are accommodated, and those working with Lucy will be made aware of the accommodations*
- *A record of her non-participation and reasons for non-participation – are those reasons related to her barrier?*

What would you want to know in order to create an Employability Plan (EP) with Lucy that would support her SSI/SSDI application? In your response, be sure to include activities you would consider assigning Lucy on her EP, the EP's timeframe (e.g., 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, etc.) and your rationale for the activities and for the timeframe.
Possible Responses:

- *medical and/or mental health appointments*
- *personal logs (keeping in mind what the Case Manager needs to consider before designing/assigning a personal log activity, what the log may answer, and how it will be used)*
- *personal care activities*
- *life skills*
- *legal appointments*
- *any activity that might not necessarily be a reportable TANF work activity*

Part 3

Within the last week, Lucy received a denial of her application for SSI benefits. The letter from the SSA stated that, based on the information submitted, her condition would not prevent her from working. Her age, education and medical condition were considered by the SSA in determining whether she could work. With her doctor's diagnosis firm as to her inability to hold down a job for any sustained period of time, Lucy is submitting a request for reconsideration.

Describe how you would support Lucy's participation in the W-2 program after the initial SSI application has been denied.
Possible Responses:

- *Relook at the current information available*
- *Continue advocacy services through the appeals process*
- *Reexamine the activities assigned*
- *Identify other resources such as training, DVR, etc., that have not yet been made available to her*

What would you want to know in order to create an Employability Plan (EP) with Lucy taking into consideration the SSI denial and Lucy's request for reconsideration? In your response, be sure to include activities you would consider assigning Lucy on her EP, the EP's timeframe (e.g., 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, etc.) and your rationale for the timeframe.
Possible Responses:

- *Maybe get a new formal assessment or conduct a staffing with her doctor to see what Lucy can do.*
- *Look at short term employment services activities. Reevaluate for their purpose, goal and progress. Have Lucy relook at her personal goals and potential*

employment goals. Match transferable skills with her abilities/limitations. Career Assessments?

What forms or documents would you complete and compile in support of Lucy's request for a reconsideration of the SSI denial? In your response, provide an explanation about each form's specific usefulness in Lucy's case and how it would support her appeal.

Possible Responses:

- *New Mental Health Capacity form*
- *New observations about her ability to complete more employment-related tasks*