

# Working In America

## Get Help Getting Into The Workforce

(NAPS)—For many Americans—maybe you or someone you care about—2020 could be a milestone year.

That's because it could be the year of your ticket to financial independence. Here's why: For 20 years, Social Security's Ticket to Work (Ticket) program has helped people find their path to empowerment through work. Through the Ticket program, people ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits (SSDI/SSI) can work with authorized service providers called Employment Networks or their State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies to prepare for the workforce, find a job, or progress in their career.

Individualized services are designed to help people along the path to financial independence through work—a path that Social Security knows is different for everyone. But every step along that path is reason to celebrate.

For people like Chris, who experiences paralysis in 80 percent of his body as a result of a car accident, that path includes understanding how work affects disability benefits and knowing about the supports available.

After the accident, Chris began getting Social Security disability benefits while he took time to focus on adapting to life with quadriplegia. "My hands no longer worked. My legs, abs, back, and chest were no longer machines to make my future free and fun and full of opportunity," he recalls.

Learning to navigate in this new reality was hard work but the experience helped Chris approach obstacles as puzzles to solve. These skills served him well as he pursued his college education and work experiences where he culti-



**People with disability benefits can get help getting work and keeping those benefits.**

vated the attributes employers look for in their best employees.

Still, Chris had questions about how work and earning income would affect his benefits. When information about the Ticket program arrived in the mail, he called the Ticket to Work Help Line and connected with a trained representative who told him about Social Security Work Incentives. Work Incentives are rules that make it easier for adults with disabilities to work while maintaining access to their benefits.

This information helped Chris find the confidence he needed to continue pursuing work. Chris now works on a contract with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) where he trains customer service representatives. He's looking forward to increasing his hours and responsibilities.

If you're eligible for the Ticket program and want to learn more about the free services and supports available to you, call the Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET. Or visit <https://choosework.ssa.gov>.