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Building Financial Security for
People and Families with Disabilities



Consumer
Affairs



Student Earned Income Exclusion and Plan for Achieving Self-support (PASS): Improving the Financial Futures of Youth with Disabilities



Building Financial Security for
People and Families with Disabilities



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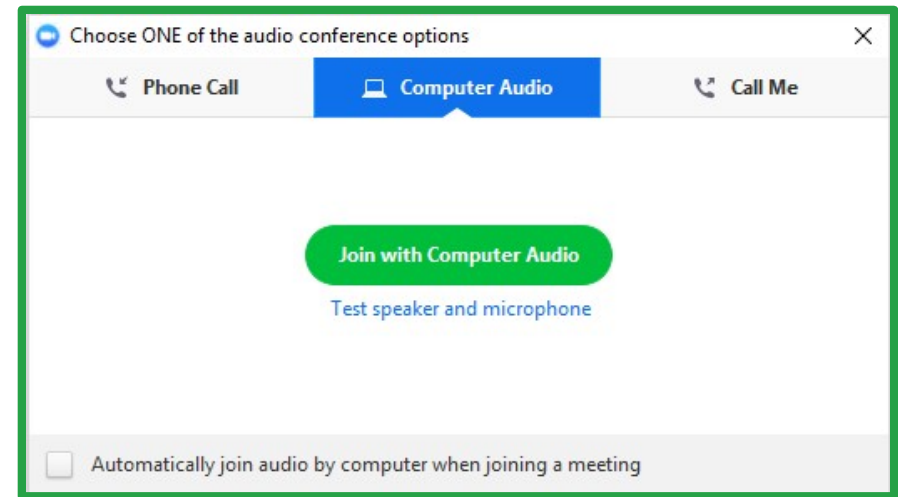
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Please note: This webinar is being recorded and the materials will be placed on the National Disability Institute website at:

<https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/resources/webinars/empowered-cities-webinars/>.



Building Financial Security for
People and Families with Disabilities



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Introduction



Maria Jaramillo

National Disability Institute

Project Director, Empowered Cities

mjaramillo@ndi-inc.org

Empowered NYC

EmpoweredNYC is an initiative that has created new strategies and tools to enable New Yorkers with disabilities to improve their financial stability.

This initiative is advancing financial capability by ...

- Offering tailored, one-on-one financial counseling for people with disabilities enhanced with new expertise, outreach and tools; and
- Providing this monthly webinar training series for service providers like you.

Strategic Partners

City of New York, led by:

- NYC Department of Consumer Affairs Office of Financial Empowerment
- NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

- National Disability Institute
- Citi Community Development
- Poses Family Foundation
- Advisory Board of municipal offices, disability service providers and financial empowerment service providers

Empowered NYC Referrals

Refer your clients to one of our financial counselors:

- They specialize in one-on-one financial counseling.
- Counseling services are free and confidential.
- Counselors can help the person access their credit report and consider banking and savings accounts.
- Counselors have been trained on disability benefits and can address the financial aspects of these benefits, including Work Incentives and income limits.
- Sessions will be available in all five boroughs of NYC.

To make an appointment with a financial counselor, go to nyc.gov/EmpoweredNYC.

Objectives of Today's Webinar

- Learn how qualifying students can use the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE) to earn up to \$7,500 per year without it affecting their Supplemental Security Income (SSI) check.
- Understand how someone receiving SSI can use a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) to save for a vocational goal, including supplies to start a business, school expenses, equipment and tools, transportation and other items necessary to help them reach their goal.

Today's Speaker



Nancy Boutot

National Disability Institute
Manager, Financial Empowerment

nboutot@ndi-inc.org

Disability and Poverty



In NYC, **34%** of working-age people with disabilities live in poverty, compared with **14%** of those without disabilities.

Disability and Poverty (cont'd)

- People with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed and to live in poverty than any other single demographic group in the United States today.
- Public benefit programs for people with disabilities, especially Supplemental Security Income (SSI), are not aimed at increasing assets and independence for people with disabilities.
- The presence of a disability and the need to maintain a public benefit **should not** require one to forfeit their economic stability and live in poverty.

Economic Self-Sufficiency - It's the Law!

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is the Foundation of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The purpose of the act is to “empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, **economic self-sufficiency**, independence, and inclusion and integration into society.”

Challenges to Financial Capability

- Negative credit report or a low credit score
- Stress from financial insecurity
- Lack of a bank account
- Wage garnishments for SSI/SSDI overpayments
- Lack of investment in:
 - Financial education
 - Education for a career

Create New Expectations

- Assume all people want to better their lives.
- Engage people with disabilities in the conversation.
- Provide *simplified* opportunities to improve financial stability.
- Acknowledge the limited financial literacy of all Americans, including those with disabilities.
- Just as you assume competence, assume the desire to live beyond poverty.

Four SSI Work Incentives (there are more)

1. Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)
2. 1619 (b) Continued Medicaid Eligibility
3. Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE)
4. Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS)

Acronyms

SSA – Social Security Administration

SSI – Supplemental Security Income

SSDI – Social Security Disability Insurance

FBR – Federal Benefit Rate (2019 = \$771.00)

SGA – Substantial Gainful Activity (2019 = \$1,220)

Student Earned Income Exclusion

Student Earned Income Exclusion (slide 2 of 3)

- Must be under the age of 22 and regularly attending school
- Can exclude earned income up to a certain amount (changes annually)
- Amount earned looked at monthly, with a yearly maximum
- This exclusion applies before any other exclusion
- Can carry the balance over to the next month

2019

\$1,870.00 per month, \$7,550.00 per year

Student Earned Income Exclusion (slide 3 of 3)

Report the following to the SSI claims representative:

- Proof of regularly attending school; and
- Pay stubs showing the amount of earned income while considered a student and under the age of 22.

Basic SSI Calculation without SEIE

- Let's say Herman receives SSI - \$771.00.
- He begins working and earning \$525.00 gross per month.
- What will his new SSI check be without SEIE?

\$525 gross wages

- \$65 exclusion

- \$20 exclusion

\$440

\$440 / 2 = \$220 Countable Income

\$771.00 - \$220 = \$551.00 SSI

\$551.00 + 525.00 = \$1,076.00

Student Earned Income Exclusion

Calculation with SEIE

- Herman receives \$771.00 in SSI.
- He begins working and earns \$525.00 gross per month.
- What will his new SSI check be?

$$\begin{array}{r} \$525 \text{ gross wages} \\ \underline{-\$525 \text{ Student Earned Income Exclusion}} \\ = 0.00 \text{ Countable Income} \end{array}$$

$$\$771.00 \text{ FBR}^* - \$0.00 = \$771.00 \text{ SSI}$$

$$\$771.00 + 525.00 = \$1,296.00!$$

Student Earned Income Exclusion (cont'd)

SEIE... three-month Summer Job!

- Herman receives \$771.00 in SSI.
- He gets a summer job and earns \$1,730.00 gross per month.
- What will his new SSI check be?

$$\begin{array}{r} \$1,730.00 \text{ gross wages} \\ \underline{-\$1,730.00 \text{ Student Earned Income Exclusion}} \\ = 0.00 \text{ Countable Income} \end{array}$$

$$\mathbf{\$771.00 \text{ FBR}^* - \$0.00 = \$771.00 \text{ SSI}}$$

$$\mathbf{\$771.00 + \$1,730.00 = \$2,501.00!}$$

That's \$7,503 in 3 months!

1619(b) Continued Medicaid Coverage

1619(b) Continued Medicaid Coverage (cont'd)

- One of the biggest concerns SSI beneficiaries have about going to work is the possibility of losing Medicaid coverage.
- Section 1619(b) of the Social Security Act provides some protection for these beneficiaries.

1619(b)

How much can beneficiaries living in New York and receiving SSI earn annually in Gross Wages before they are in jeopardy of losing Medicaid?

\$46,316.00*

New York, 2019

*** Medicaid Buy-In can increase this amount**

Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE)

Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) (Slide 2 of 3)

- SSA deducts the cost of certain, impairment-related items and services that you need to work from gross earnings when they decide if a person's work is substantial gainful activity (SGA).
- This is due to out-of-pocket expenses that support a disability to allow a person to earn income, even if those items or services are needed for non-work activities.

Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) (Slide 3 of 3)

IRWE's must meet the following criteria:

1. The expense must not be reimbursed.
2. The expense must be related to the disability.
3. The item or service is needed in order to work.

Examples

- Transportation
- Medications
- Medical Devices
- Personal Assistance
- Mental Health Counseling

Calculation with IRWE

- Herman receives \$771.00 in SSI.
- He begins working and earning \$525.00 gross per month.
- He pays \$200.00 out of pocket for medications monthly.
- What will his new SSI check be using an IRWE?

\$525 gross wages

-\$ 65 exclusion

-\$ 20 exclusion

\$440

-\$200 IRWE

= \$240

\$240 / 2 = \$120 Countable Income

\$771.00 - \$120 = \$651.00 SSI

\$651.00 + 525.00 = \$1,176.00

Plan for Achieving Self-Support

Plan To Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

How does a PASS help someone return to work?

- PASS lets a person on SSI set aside money and resources he or she owns to pay for items or services needed to achieve a specific work goal.
- The objective of the PASS is to help the person on SSI find employment that reduces or eliminates SSI or SSDI benefits.

How does PASS work?

- The applicant finds out what training, items or services they need to reach a work goal.
- A PASS can include: supplies to start a business, school expenses, equipment and tools, transportation and other items or services needed to reach an employment goal.
- The applicant finds out how much these items and services will cost.
- PASS can help the participant save to pay for these costs. PASS lets people set aside money for purchases, installment payments and down payments for things like a vehicle, wheelchair, or a computer if needed to reach their work goal.

PASS to Save Money for School

- Herman likes cooking so much, he wants to go to school to become a chef.
- School will cost \$4,000.00 for the first year.

\$885 gross wages

- \$65 exclusion

- \$20 exclusion

\$800

$\$800 / 2 = \400 Countable Income

Herman's Vocational Goal:

Save \$400.00 a month to go to school to become a chef.

PASS Calculation

\$885 gross wages

- \$65 exclusion

- \$20 exclusion

\$800

\$800 / 2 = \$400 Countable Income

\$400.00 Countable Income

- \$400.00 PASS Plan

0.00 Countable Income

Herman keeps his whole \$771.00 + \$885.00 per month.

\$1,656.00 - \$400 = **\$1,256.00**

What did we learn?

- We need to start talking about money!
- The presence of a disability and the need to maintain a public benefit should not require one to forfeit their economic stability and live in poverty.
- There are free tools available for learning how to save, budget, build credit, open a bank account, etc.
- ABLE Accounts are amazing!
- SSA Work Incentives are available to people on SSI and SSDI.
- A person on SSI can earn \$46,316 before Medicaid is in jeopardy.

Action Items



- ❑ Join the [EmpoweredNYC listserv](#).
- ❑ Watch our archived webinars [EmpoweredNYC webinar](#).
- ❑ Refer your clients to the free and confidential Financial Counseling Services.
 - To make a referral or schedule an appointment with a financial counselor, use the following link: nyc.gov/EmpoweredNYC.
- ❑ Crystal Rivera, Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE), crivera@dca.nyc.gov

Resources – Archived Webinars

- Why Financial Empowerment is Important to People with Disabilities
- Money and Benefits: Why Financial Empowerment Is Critical to Work
- Overview of SSDI Benefits and Work
- Overview of SSI Benefits and Work
- NY ABLE: Financial Empowerment and ABLE Accounts
- What You Need to Know about Medicaid for the Disabled, Aged and Blind
- The Power of Tracking Expenses

Resources – Archived Webinars (cont'd)

- How to Prepare for Tax Time: Free Tax Preparation and Important Updates for New Yorkers with Disabilities
- Build and Improve Your Credit History: The Importance of Good Credit for People with Disabilities Seeking Employment
- Integrating Financial Capability Strategies into Your Disability Programs
- Housing as A Key Stepping Stone to Financial Stability for People with Disabilities
- Work Incentives in Action!
- Tales From the Field: Stories from One-On-One Counseling Sessions!

Accessing Archived Webinars

<https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/resources/webinars/empowerednyc-webinars/>

New Micro-Training Series

Three-minute videos

Educate New Yorkers with Disabilities about topics such as:

- Myths about SSI and SSDI
- Tips to know before starting a new job
- Reporting your wages 101
- Reasonable accommodations
- Tips for college students with disabilities

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Questions?

NYC Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE)

- **DCA** protects and enhances the daily economic lives of New Yorkers to create thriving communities.
- Within DCA, **OFE** is the first local government initiative in the country with the mission to educate, empower and protect New Yorkers and their neighborhoods so they can improve their financial health and build assets.

Learn more:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/partners/financial-empowerment.page>



NYC Free Tax Prep Campaign

OFE Coordinates a tax coalition that operates 200+ free tax preparation sites across NYC, helping New Yorkers with low-incomes file their taxes for free and access valuable income boosting tax credits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).



**NOTHING
SCARES A
NEW YORKER.
EXCEPT TAX
SEASON.**

**NYC
FREE
TAX PREP**

Trusted, professional filing
Don't fear your taxes! If you earn \$64,000 or less, you may qualify for free online filing or in-person filing with an IRS certified VITA/TCE volunteer preparer.
Call 311 or visit nyc.gov/taxprep
#FreeTaxPrep

NYC Office of the Mayor
**Comptroller
of the City**
citi



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HOME
THOSE
TAX
PREP
SAVINGS!**

**NYC
FREE
TAX PREP**

Trusted, professional filing
You can do a lot with the money you save on tax prep. If you earn \$64,000 or less, you may qualify for free online filing or in-person filing with an IRS certified VITA/TCE volunteer preparer.
Call 311 or visit nyc.gov/taxprep
#FreeTaxPrep

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nyc.gov/taxprep

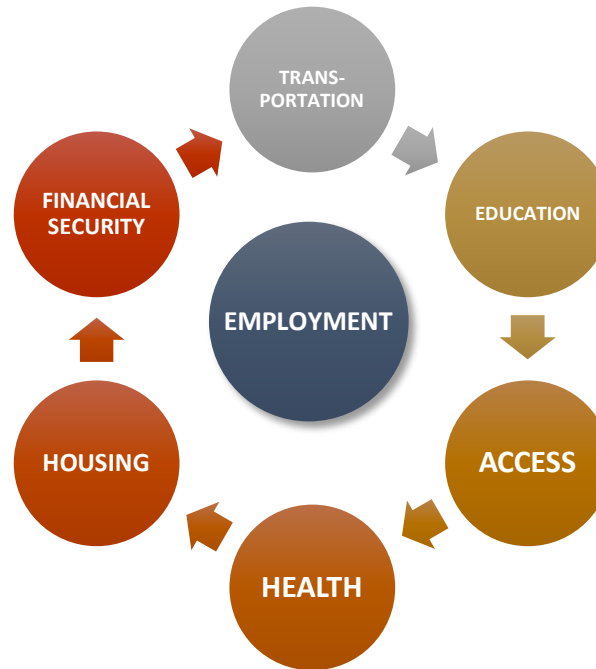
NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD)



- **MOPD** works to ensure that New Yorkers with disabilities can lead happy, healthy and productive lives.
- **NYC: ATWORK** connects people with disabilities to meaningful, living wage jobs across the five boroughs.
- **MOPD** improves services and programs for the over 920,000 New Yorkers who self-identify as people who are living with a disability.



NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities



AccessibleNYC Pillars



THE FIRST PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR NEW YORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

- Innovative, cross-systems approach to building a sustainable pipeline of qualified talent to meet the needs of businesses in high-growth industry jobs across NYC
- Business-led, business-driven initiative
- **NYC: ATWORK** is a collaboration among providers, businesses in high-growth sectors, vocational rehabilitation, schools and colleges and NYC government.

AccessibleNYC Pillars

Citi Community Development

- Citi Community Development leads Citi's commitment to financial inclusion and economic empowerment for underserved individuals, families and communities across the U.S.
- Through innovative collaborations with municipalities, community groups and leading nonprofit organizations, Citi's expertise, products and services are harnessed to help expand opportunity for all.



CitiCommunityDevelopment.com

National Disability Institute (NDI)

- **NDI** Is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to building a better economic future for people with disabilities.
- The first national organization committed exclusively to championing economic empowerment, financial education, asset development and financial stability for all persons with disabilities. NDI Affects change through public education, policy development, training, technical assistance and innovative initiatives.

