

TX VRC Resource Tools

Plans to Achieve Self Support: Identifying Good Candidates

Plans to Achieve Self-Support or “PASS” are a Social Security Work Incentive that allows beneficiaries to set aside funds to purchase items and services needed to achieve an employment goal. PASS can be used to supplement VR funding by providing additional resources, providing items and services that VR cannot provide (e.g., vehicles), and potentially extending support beyond VR case closure. While PASS can be used for wage or self-employment, it can be particularly useful for VR customers starting small businesses by providing items and services such as:

- Training/education
- Licensing/certification
- Transportation (including vehicles)
- Equipment (business equipment, computers, etc.)
- Supplies
- Or anything reasonably related to the employment goal!

PASS Works by allowing people to set aside income they have, **other than SSI**, into a special account to be used for approved purchases. Often funds set aside are SSDI benefits or wages. Setting aside funds in a PASS can increase someone’s SSI or make them eligible if they weren’t before. And while PASS is an SSI work incentive, often people who receive SSDI (or both SSI and SSDI) can benefit as they have income other than SSI to contribute. They can set aside their SSDI and receive additional SSI to live on!



PASS is a very under-utilized resource as it is not well understood. VRCs can help spread the word about PASS, especially if they can recognize a good candidate! Some things to look for include:

- The VR customer is eligible for Social Security cash benefits — Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).
- The VR customer has a work goal that will produce enough income to reduce their dependency on Social Security benefits (lower SSI benefits or eliminate SSDI benefits).
- The vocational goal will require resources to pay for items and services beyond, or in addition to, what VR can cover.
- The VR customer has less than \$2,000 in resources (needed for SSI eligibility).

If you think someone is eligible, refer them to a Certified Work Incentive Counselor (CWIC) near you!
CWICs can help assess if the customer is a good candidate for PASS and help you get started!
