

Maryland State Department of Education  
**Division of Rehabilitation Services**  
**Benefits Planning for SSI/SSDI Beneficiaries**

**Have questions about how employment will affect your Social Security benefits?**

Disability benefits are a very important part of your career and household decision-making process. Your DORS counselor will talk with you about making benefits planning a part of your VR Employment program or Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Social Security offers a number of work incentives to help you get a job and protect your eligibility for benefits. If you are planning to become employed, now is a good time to learn more about these safety nets.

Your DORS counselor will refer you to a Certified Benefits Planner who will become a part of your support team and work with you throughout your DORS program, all at no cost to you.

**Benefits Planners:**

- Teach you about the safety nets available to protect your eligibility for benefits as you explore becoming employed.
- Help you realize your earnings potential and establish an earnings goal.
- Stay in touch with you as you progress towards employment.
- Help you understand how to report your earnings to Social Security.
- Help you identify supports and other resources after your work with DORS is complete.

**Ready to get started?**

Your DORS counselor will refer you to a Benefits Planner, who will then reach out to you to schedule meetings. These meetings may be in person or virtually. The Benefits Planner will ask you to sign a release of information so they can contact Social Security, as well as other organizations, on your behalf. This is so the Benefits Planner can provide you with accurate information about your benefits.

All Benefits Planners are certified by VCU or Cornell and work ethically and confidentially to help you understand your state and federal benefits.

**Need more info?**

- The DORS website has information and videos about benefits planning and work incentives for SSI/SSDI recipients. [dors.maryland.gov/consumers/benefits](https://dors.maryland.gov/consumers/benefits)
- The Social Security Administration website also has information about work incentives at [www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/workincentives](https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/workincentives).