

Benefits Summary & Analysis

Beneficiary Name: Katy Dyd

Date: 9/26/10

Summary of your Current Benefits Situation

What I have verified about your current benefits with Social Security and other agencies (as needed):

The Benefits Planning Query (BPQY) verifies that you receive the following:

- A Childhood Disability Benefit (CDB) in the amount of \$712. This is paid from your father's account and you have received this amount since your date of entitlement – 3/96.
- You are enrolled in Medicare Parts A, B and D. Your Medicare Part B premium is being paid by a Medicare savings Program (QMB) and you have 100% low-income subsidy for Part D.
- The BPQY does not show any work incentives used; however, it does show that you had earnings of \$14,348.28 over the past five years.

What you told me about your current employment situation and/or your future employment plans or goals:

You are working with a supported employment specialist at Just Jobs to find a part time position in a retail environment. You were referred to this agency by your VR counselor.

You expect to work 20 hours a week, and your placement specialist has indicated that you can expect to earn about \$8.50/hour. Based on this estimate, your average monthly gross wages would be approximately \$731.

Analysis of How Employment May Affect Your Benefits

How your employment situation and/or plans may affect your Social Security cash benefits:

When you go to work and you are on CDB benefits you get a series of work incentive phases that offer you varying degrees of protection from losing your benefits. The first phase is called the Trial Work Period or TWP for short. The TWP allows you to test your ability to work for at least 9 months without worrying about losing your CDB benefits. During your TWP, you can earn an unlimited amount and still receive your full Social Security disability benefit as long as you still have a disabling impairment.

In 2011, SSA will only count a TWP month if your gross earnings are more than \$720 a month, or if you work more than 80 self-employed hours in a month. Your TWP won't end until you

accumulate 9 TWP months within a 60-month period. You need to understand that you only get one 9-month TWP per period of entitlement.

Although the BPQY, Benefits Planning Query, does not show any Trial Work Period months used, it appears that you have likely used several Trial Work Period months. I see that there are several years of earnings listed on the BPQY. We will need to have SSA develop your past work history to know exactly where you stand. If you have in fact used 5 TWP months as SSA previously told you, you will have 4 remaining months.

- Your earnings as a part time retail clerk are expected to be \$731.00 per month (\$8.50/hour x 20 hrs/week x 4.3 weeks/month).
- At this level of earnings, you will begin to use any remaining Trial Work Period months since your gross earnings will be above the 2010 benchmark of \$720/month for a TWP month.
- Remember that during the TWP, you can have unlimited earnings without penalty to your CDB check.

Once your TWP is over, SSA will look at your countable earnings to see if they would be considered to be “substantial gainful activity” or SGA. SSA allows you to keep your full cash payment as long as the work you are doing is not considered to be “substantial gainful activity” or SGA. To help decide when earnings would be substantial gainful activity, SSA uses a specific dollar figure as a guideline. In 2011 the SGA guideline is \$1,000 of gross earned income per month.

You need to understand that SGA is far more than just a number or a dollar amount of monthly gross earnings. During an SGA determination, SSA considers many different things such as the value of your work, how long you were able to earn more than the SGA level, and whether or not special work incentives can be used to lower the amount of earned income they count each month. Basically, if your countable earned income averages above the SGA guideline, your work activity is probably going to be considered SGA. If your countable income averages below the SGA guideline, your work is unlikely to be considered SGA.

Based on what your employment goal is right now, we project your average monthly gross wages to be about \$731. That level of wages would NOT be considered SGA. You could continue to work at this level indefinitely and still keep your full CDB cash payment – that is great news!

Even if you worked at a level that would be considered SGA, there are still some important work incentives that can extend the length of time your check would be received and which would make it easier to get your CD check back again in case you had to stop work or reduce your hours. I will explain those special rules in more detail when you are closer to accepting a job and know exactly how much your wages will be.

How your employment situation and/or plans may affect your health insurance (Medicare and/or Medicaid):

Now, let's talk about your medical coverage. It is important to understand that as long as you are eligible to receive a cash CDB payment, you will keep your Medicare coverage – all parts! This can continue on forever – as long as your CDB payment continues.

Many people think that if they lose their cash benefits due to work, they will also lose their Medicare coverage. In fact, this is NOT the case! Most individuals with disabilities who work will continue to receive AT LEAST 93 consecutive months of Hospital (Part A) and Supplemental Medical Insurance (Part B) under Medicare, after the Trial Work Period ends. In some cases, this coverage can continue much longer than 93 months. Medicare Part A will continue to be free, but you need to know that you will have to pay your Medicare Part B premium out of your own pocket once the cash benefits stop. SSA will bill you for these premiums 4 times each year. We will talk more about that if you get to the point that your wages might cause your CDB check to stop – if that happens.

Your Medicare Part B premium is currently being paid by the State under a program called QMB. Once you begin earning \$731/month, you will not likely qualify for the QMB program which pays for your part B premium and covers all of the other out-of-pocket expenses associated with your part B coverage. You might still be able to get help paying the Part B premium through another program called SLMB which you will need to apply for at the Medicaid office. Your income would be very close to the limit for this help, but perhaps we can apply some deductions to lower how much is counted. We will know more when an actual job has been located.

Your low income subsidy that pays for your Part D expenses will probably decrease some. Again, when we know more about the job you will be in, we can look at that and tell you how much of the Part B subsidy you will retain.

How your employment situation and/or plans may affect other benefits you receive (Food Stamps, HUD rental subsidies, etc.):

You told me that you did not receive any other benefits. If you apply for any benefits, please let me know so I can explain how paid employment might affect them.

Benefits Issues Not Related to Employment

You told me that your father passed away very recently. Since you collect a CDB payment off of your father's work record, it is very likely that this payment will be increased now you're your father is deceased. You need to contact SSA to notify them of your father's death and request a benefit re-calculation. The best way to get this done would be to go to the local Field Office at 126 Mulberry Lane. You do not need to make an appointment, but you should arrive early (they open at 8:00 am) so you can get ahead of the crowd. You indicated to me that your mother would be willing to go with you to SSA to get this issue resolved.

Let me know if you have ANY questions! Please call me when you get the notice of what your

new monthly payment will be.

Employment Services and Supports You May Need

Now, I mentioned there might be a work incentive that might apply in your case. A Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) is a work incentive that allows you to set aside some or all of your countable income (your CDB payment) to pay for items that you need in order to reach your employment goal. By doing this, you could become eligible for another benefit called SSI and with the SSI, you would get full Medicaid coverage. Right now, you did not seem to feel that you needed extra money to pay for things to achieve your occupational goal, but this may change.

I would like to talk to your supported employment professional and your VR counselor to see explain how the PASS program works. It may be that there is additional training you could use that a PASS could help with. You have signed releases of information allowing me to chat with these professionals about your benefits and whether or not pursuing a PASS make sense for you right now.

Important Things for You to Remember

Important dates or deadlines:

- We have set an appointment for you to work with me on developing your report of earnings so that SSA can properly determine previous TWP usage. You will need to bring any of the paystubs that you have from your previous years of work at the sheltered workshop.
- If you don't have these, ask the workshop if they can provide you with records about your previous earnings.
- You need to contact SSA so they can check to see if you can get an increase in your CDB payment since your father has now passed away – that needs to get done as soon as possible!

Things you need to report to SSA or other agencies:

Right now you really do not have anything to report to SSA. We will develop all of that past work and get that in to be developed and that is all that needs to be done for now. Once you start a paid job, I will need to teach you how to report that income to SSA, but that won't be for some weeks or months.

Recordkeeping reminders:

Keep all letters you get from SSA! Call me if you need help understanding these letters – I am

happy to help you with this!

Remember that it is your responsibility to promptly report all relevant changes to the Social Security Administration and any other federal, state, or local entity administering benefits you receive!

Using this Report

You should keep this report and refer back to it when you have questions about how your employment plans may affect your Social Security benefits, associated health insurance, and any other federal, state or local benefits. It is also important for you to share this report with other people who are helping you achieve your employment goals.

The information contained in this report is intended to help you make informed choices about important life issues that may affect your Social Security and/or other public assistance benefits. The accuracy of the information and advice contained in this report is dependent upon:

1. The accuracy and completeness of the information you provided about your current and past benefits status;
2. The accuracy and completeness of information you provided about relevant factors such as current and past earnings, unearned income, resources, disability status/medical condition, marital status, and living arrangements;
3. Current laws and regulations governing the effect of employment and other factors on Social Security disability benefits and other federal benefits; and
4. Current Social Security Administration (SSA) policies and procedures regarding the use of applicable work incentives.

Changes in the factors described above may seriously affect the accuracy of the information provided in this correspondence. Please contact your CWIC immediately to discuss any changes in your benefits situation or employment plans or to answer any additional questions you have about how employment may affect your benefits!

CWIC Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

NOTE: By signing this Benefits Summary & Analysis report, the CWIC is verifying that a copy of this report has been provided to and reviewed with the beneficiary.