

# Subsidy or Special Conditions

Subsidy or Special Conditions can be used if you are receiving SSDI benefits; have used your Trial Work Period; and are earning a bit more than the Substantial Gainful Activity level of \$1,000 (or \$1,640 if blind).

Subsidy or Special Conditions can sometimes allow your Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits to continue even though your benefits should stop.

You could have a possible subsidy if you:

- Have a job coach
- Do different tasks than others with the same job title
- Get extra help from your co-worker(s)
- Receive extra supervision
- Work more slowly than others in the same job position
- Get some other form of extra support to do your job

## Why Use Subsidy?

Here is an example of how using Subsidy can keep someone eligible for an SSDI payment even when they earn more than the Substantial Gainful Activity Level.

Sue is receiving SSDI benefits; has used her Trial Work Period; and is earning \$1,200 per month. Since Sue's gross earnings are more than the \$1,000 Substantial Gainful Activity level, she should not receive her monthly SSDI payment.

However, Sue's employer documents that she gets some extra support to do her job. She needs some extra break time and works a little more slowly than her co-workers. Sue's employer estimates that the extra break time and extra time to complete her job duties is about 20% longer than her coworkers.

**Sue's subsidy of 20% equals \$240 a month. (\$1,200 gross earnings X Sue's 20% subsidy).** Sue's gross earnings of \$1,200 minus her \$240 subsidy = \$960 in countable earnings.

Because Sue's countable earnings are now below the Substantial Gainful Activity level, her SSDI payments can continue.

When we spoke, we thought you might have subsidy in the following areas:

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**The Connection suggests you get help in setting up subsidy. We can help you figure out if you have a subsidy. We will also help your employer document that subsidy and submit it to your local Social Security office. Call us for this assistance.**

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**Subsidy and Special Conditions continued**

**To Use Subsidy:**

1. The Connection needs the following information in order to help you with subsidy:

- **What kind of extra support are you receiving on your job?**

For example, do you have a job coach, do you receive extra help with your job duties, or do you receive extra supervision? We can talk with you about the extra support you receive and help you get the necessary information to Social Security.

- **Your employer needs to be contacted to get your subsidy approved by Social Security.**

Your employer must sign a letter about your subsidy, so your employer needs to know about your disability. If your employer does not know that you are disabled, it may not be possible to use subsidy. If your employer knows you have a disability, but doesn't know specifics, we will not tell them specifics. We will not tell your employer you are disabled if you haven't already done so.

- **How can subsidy help you?**

If you are earning over the substantial gainful activity level, subsidy may allow you to continue to receive your SSDI cash payment. Subsidy could also allow you to work more hours. This information helps us explain to your employer why subsidy is important for you.

2. **We need your permission to talk with your employer and to then send subsidy information to Social Security.**

We need you to sign the enclosed release forms. Once the Connection receives the signed forms, we will contact your employer. We will explain

subsidy, how it can help you and talk about your situation. We will only discuss your disability if you agree we can do so. **NOTE:** In some cases a job coach may be able to help with subsidy. Please call me if you have a job coach and we didn't talk about it when we spoke.

4. Once the Connection talks with your employer about the amount of subsidy you have, we will prepare a letter explaining your subsidy and will ask your employer to sign it. After your employer signs the letter, we will send it to your local Social Security office for their review.

5. The Connection will let you know Social Security's decision. Do not assume you get to use subsidy until we have told you that it has been approved.

**How Long Does Your Subsidy Last?**

Subsidy will only apply to the job that you are doing now. If you switch positions, get a promotion, or take a job at a new company you may have a different amount of subsidy or may no longer have a subsidy. You cannot assume that the same subsidy will apply in a new job. Call the Connection if you get a new job or change your job duties. We will assist you in defining subsidy in your new situation.

You should have your subsidy updated once a year even if you do not have a change in your job. Contact the Connection for assistance.

**If you have questions about subsidy, what we say to employers about subsidy, or if you have questions about your situation, please contact a Work Incentives Coordinator at 651-632-5113 or 1-800-976-6728.**

**This information was prepared for you by the MN Work Incentives Connection.** The Connection cannot guarantee that you can use the work incentive, Subsidy or Special Conditions. You must get this work incentive approved by your local Social Security office by following the steps outlined above.