

# **What WI DVR Staff Need to Know About BOND**

## **What is BOND?**

The Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND) is a demonstration program created to help Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries return to work. Through the use of a benefit offset, they are testing a different way to treat SSDI beneficiaries' work and earnings. This offset can help beneficiaries earn more and keep more of their benefits than is currently possible.

## **How does BOND work?**

BOND will gradually reduce enrolled participant's Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits—\$1 for each additional \$2 earned above a specific dollar amount. This reduction will replace what some refer to as the “cash cliff” or the total loss of benefits if earnings exceed the specified amount.

Consumers must call the BOND Call Center (1-877-726-6309) to become “set up” before they are able to access any offset or benefit counseling services.

## **How did DVR consumers get selected for BOND?**

Beneficiaries were randomly selected to be enrolled or offered the opportunity to participate in BOND. BOND enrollment was automatic for stage 1 enrollees and voluntary for stage 2 enrollees.

## **Why is this information important for DVR staff to know?**

We already have WI DVR consumers that are enrolled in BOND and are eligible to receive an offset of their SSDI. These individuals can receive SSA funded work incentive benefit counseling and, for certain BOND participants, enhanced benefit counseling.

**Beneficiaries are randomly assigned to a treatment group. It is important for DVR counselors to know what group consumers are in to help advise them on where to go for assistance. These groups are:**

T1 & T21 – Offset benefit and free work incentive counseling \*

CI & C2 – Control group only (no benefit available)

T22 – Offset benefit and enhanced work incentive counseling services \*\*

\*Work incentives counseling includes in-depth benefit analysis and report.

\*\*Enhanced work incentives counseling services include in-depth benefit analysis and report services including additional assessments (CareerScope and OASYS assessment tools) and case management services to assist consumers in developing and achieving long-term employment goals.

## **How do counselors find out if consumers are enrolled?**

It is important to ask a consumer when they are working with DVR if they are enrolled in BOND and what treatment group they are assigned to. The consumer likely knows this answer. If they do not know and DVR funded benefit counseling is being provided, the benefit counselor can help find this information out by referring to the BPQY report (which will specify only if they are enrolled in BOND or not). The BOND Call Center (1-877-726-6309 or TTY 1-877-726-6390) can answer questions regarding BOND and group enrollment (T1, T21, C1, C2 or T22).

## **Important Reminder Regarding T22 Enrollees:**

A DVR consumer in the T22 group (receiving enhanced work incentive counseling) has opportunities for support and financial incentives to work substantially, if they choose, more than any other beneficiaries in Wisconsin. DVR assisted employment planning with effective guidance and counseling, the ability to earn at SGA level without losing payments and additional employment supports through BOND (assessment administration, vocational case management & more) will enhance the likelihood that individuals will achieve their goal. DVR counselors are encouraged to work closely with the consumer and the enhanced benefit counselors to ensure collaboration and partnership as these consumers venture into substantial employment. Please note however that ERI is sub-contracting with Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute and Creative Employment Opportunities (CEO) and T22 enrollees will be served by ERI, SVRI or CEO. ERI will be able to refer T22 consumers and DVR counselors on to the correct provider.

## **Who else to contact:**

Resources are available to enrollees through the Beneficiary Access and Support Services Call Centers, BOND Site Office, BOND Call Center and SSA BOND Work CDR Unit:  
<http://www.bondssa.org/contactus.php>

For benefit counseling related questions, T-1 & T-21 enrollees should contact BOND Call Center (1-877-726-6309) & T-22 enrollees should contact Employment Resources Inc (608-246-3444).

## **Additional Resources Include:**

Social Security Official Site: <http://www.bondssa.org/>  
Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.bondssa.org/faq1.php>  
Enhanced Benefit Counseling Agency: <http://eri-wi.org/programs/bond/>