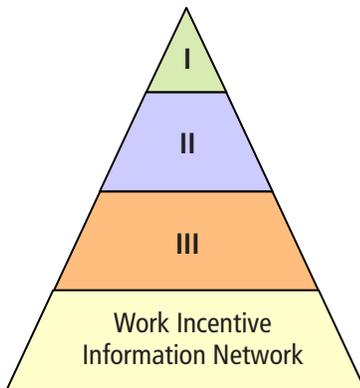


Work Incentives Information Network (WIIN)



Level I:

Comprehensive and Long-Term Benefits and Work Incentives Planning and Assistance

The Work Incentives Information Network (WIIN) is an approach to structuring the array of benefits and work incentives planning and assistance services that exist and are available throughout New York State. This tiering of expertise and skill accomplishes three primary purposes: 1) Assists practitioners in understanding the scope of service and support they provide to New Yorkers with disabilities and where they plug into the hierarchy of services; 2) Catalogues those services to provide a comprehensive directory for consumers of where services can be obtained; and, 3) Ensures that practitioners at each level are provided with access to ongoing technical assistance and training customized to meet their needs.

This level of service delivery is provided by credentialed benefits and work incentives practitioners who have completed a rigorous, nationally-recognized course of study inclusive of a minimum of 20 hours of practicum experience with an examination of proficiency/competency. Practitioners at this level provide the comprehensive array of benefits and work incentives services and job support to beneficiaries making choices about work. Typically they spend more than 35% of their effort delivering these services.

Level II:

Basic and Short-Term Benefits Planning Services and Supports

Practitioners at this level provide information and referral as well short-term, basic work incentives planning to beneficiaries considering work. Information concerning work incentives, impact of earnings on benefits, and advocacy and support with various state/federal agencies may be provided. Practitioners will have completed a minimum of two days of training on disability benefits and work incentives, use ongoing toll-free technical support to assist them in delivering short term services and update their skills through annual refresher training. Typically they will spend approximately 16-35% of their time delivering these services.

Level III:

General Benefits and Work Incentives Information and Referral

Level III practitioners provide general information and referral on work incentives issues as part of their job (typically less than 15% of their time). They are encouraged to attend distance learning events on work incentive issues and become acquainted with new information important to return to work efforts—like the Medicaid Buy-In, Plan for Achieving Self-Support and other issues. Practitioners will assist beneficiaries in navigating return to work and make active referrals to Level I and II practitioners when that level of support is needed.

The following training and technical assistance services and supports are available statewide through the New York Makes Work Pay Initiative.

Certificate Program in Benefits and Work Incentives Planning and Assistance

The core competency-based certificate program requires participation in a five-day onsite training event plus successful completion of a rigorous field assignment/evaluation. The program is targeted for Level I practitioners with time dedicated to comprehensive service delivery. The MIG will be developing 100 new practitioners at this level each year.

Work Incentive Information Network Seminars

Work Incentive Information Network Seminars will allow Level II practitioners to become fully acquainted with the Social Security Administration's disability programs and the related work incentives. These two day sessions will be offered regionally throughout NYS and provide a comprehensive introduction and review of all components needed to fulfill WIIN obligations.

Supplemental Distance Learning Training

Throughout the year, supplemental distance learning events will be offered to all WIIN practitioners, allowing the practitioner to remain current and become acquainted with new and various topics important to a return to work effort from the comfort of their office or home. The Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities and PASS are examples of topics to be offered.

Toll-Free Technical Assistance Hotline: 1-888-224-3272

A toll free technical assistance line is currently available to all WIIN practitioners who may have questions when working with beneficiaries who are interested in work. Technical assistance personnel will be available at all times during the work week.

Organizational Development Support and Online Organizational Assessment

Organizations providing the comprehensive array of benefits and work incentives planning and assistance services and supports will have access to an online organizational assessment tool to assess the quality and fidelity of services and supports offered—leading to development of a strategic work plan to enhance services.

WIIN Expectations, Eligibility, Policy & Procedures

As described above, practitioners at each level of the network have specific continuing education requirements to maintain their skills and expertise. These training programs are offered at no charge.

Partnering Organizations

- New York State Office of Mental Health
- Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University
- Employment and Disability Institute at Cornell University

Contact Us

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