Social Security Administration

§ 411.535 Under what circumstances will milestones be paid?

(a)(1)(i) Under the outcome-milestone payment system, an EN (or State VR agency acting as an EN) can earn up to four Phase 1 milestone payments for serving beneficiaries whose gross earnings were less than the trial work level in each of the 18 months before the ticket was first assigned to an EN. All work and earnings counted toward reaching the four Phase 1 milestones must occur after the ticket is assigned and before the beginning of the beneficiary’s outcome payment period (see §411.500(f)) except as provided in §411.536 (reconciliation payments).

(ii) Significant work activity prior to ticket assignment will limit the availability of Phase 1 milestone payments. The PM will make this assessment of work activity prior to the first ticket assignment on each ticket, irrespective of the EN’s chosen payment system, in determining if a later Phase 1 milestone is met, provided the earlier earnings fall within the relevant time period for meeting the later milestone.

(ii) We can also pay the EN (or State VR agency acting as an EN) up to eleven Phase 2 milestones achieved by a title II disability beneficiary (including a concurrent title II/title XVI disability beneficiary) or up to eighteen Phase 2 milestones achieved by a title XVI disability beneficiary (who is not concurrently a title II disability beneficiary) who has assigned his or her ticket to the EN (or State VR agency acting as an EN). A Phase 2 milestone is met for each calendar month in which the beneficiary has worked and has gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment as defined in §404.1080 of this chapter) in that month that are more than the SGA threshold amount as defined in §404.1574 of this chapter.

(iii) We pay available milestone payments in sequence except when the beneficiary’s outcome period begins before the beneficiary has achieved all Phase 1 and Phase 2 milestones. Example: The individual, in the first month of employment after assigning the ticket, earns above the SGA level. Despite having exceeded trial work period level earnings and earned above the SGA level as required for Phase 2 payments in paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section, based on the individual’s earning we would pay the EN the sequentially available milestone, which in this case would be Phase 1, milestone 1.

(iv) In addition to the milestone payments, monthly outcome payments can be paid to the EN (or State VR agency acting as an EN) during the outcome payment period.

(b) The outcome-milestone payment system is designed so that the total payments to the EN (or the State VR agency acting as an EN) for a beneficiary are less than the total amount that would have been paid if the EN were paid under the outcome payment system. Under the outcome-milestone payment system, the total payment to the EN (or the State VR agency acting as an EN) is about 90% of the total that would have been potentially payable under the outcome payment system for the same beneficiary.

(c) Except as provided in §411.536 (reconciliation payments) the milestones for which payments may be made must occur prior to the beginning of the beneficiary’s outcome payment period.

(d) We will pay an EN (or State VR agency acting as an EN) to which the beneficiary has assigned a ticket for milestones or outcomes achieved only in months prior to the month in which the ticket terminates (see §411.155). We will not pay a milestone or outcome payment to an EN (or State VR agency acting as an EN) based on a beneficiary’s work or earnings activity in or after the month in which the ticket terminates.

(e) If a title XVI disability beneficiary becomes entitled to title II benefits after we authorize the first milestone or outcome payment, we will continue to calculate the EN payments using title XVI payment calculation base under the outcome payment system on the basis of paragraph (a)(1)(i) and under the outcome-milestone payment system on the basis of paragraph (a)(2). This applies even if the title XVI eligibility is subsequently terminated and the person becomes only a title II beneficiary.

§411.536 Under what circumstances can we make a reconciliation payment under the outcome-milestone payment system?

When the beneficiary’s outcome payment period begins before the beneficiary has attained all Phase 1 and Phase 2 milestones, we will pay the EN (or a State VR agency acting as an EN) a reconciliation payment. The reconciliation payment will equal the total amount of the milestone payments that were available with respect to that ticket, when the ticket was first assigned, but that have not yet been paid. The reconciliation payment will be based on the payment calculation base for the calendar year in which the first month of the beneficiary’s outcome period occurs, rounded to the nearest whole dollar. The payment will be made after an EN has qualified for 12 outcome payments. Where multiple ENs had the ticket assigned at some time, the PM will apply the rule under §411.560 to determine the allocation of the reconciliation payment.

§411.540 How are the payment amounts calculated for each of the milestones?

(a) For both title II disability beneficiaries and title XVI disability beneficiaries, the payment amount for each of the Phase 1 milestone payments is equal to 120% of the payment calculation base for title II (as defined in §411.500(a)(1)) for the calendar year in which the month of attainment of the