

# Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE) Fact Sheet

Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE) is a work incentive that allows **SSI** recipients to deduct the cost of certain items and services they need to work from their gross earnings, even if those items are also needed for non-work activities.

## **How It Helps You:**

When you work and have Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the Social Security Administration reduces your SSI check based on how much you earn (after disregarding at least the first \$65 earned, your SSI check is reduced by \$1 for every \$2 earned). However, you may also have work expenses related to your impairment which can be deducted from your gross monthly earnings. The cost of these expenses will be used in calculating your SSI payment amount.

## **How It Works:**

For an IRWE deduction to be allowable, the following criteria must be met:

- The expense must be related to an impairment treated by your health care provider, and
- The expense must help you work, and
- The expense must be paid by you and not reimbursed by another source, and
- The expense must be paid within a month in which you work, and
- The expense must be reasonable

Some IRWE examples may include Supported Employment Services, Attendant Care, Transportation Costs, Medical Devices, Prosthesis, Work-Related Equipment and Assistants, medications, therapies, etc.

If you think you have an IRWE, request and keep receipts to document the expense. To establish an IRWE, you must submit the cost of the expenses in writing to the local Social Security Office with an explanation of how the expense meets the above criteria.

Social Security deducts from your gross earnings the cost of IRWEs. This decreases your "countable earned income" which means that your SSI check will be higher.

The following organizations can be helpful to you for making decisions about work:

1. Show Me Employment Project: Bobbi Moseley at 800-346-8951 Ext 238
2. Area Work Incentives Coordinator (AWIC): Jeff Warder at 866-739-4773 Ext 24613
3. Social Security Work Incentive Liaison (WIL): Field Representative at 800-772-1213
4. Springfield Regional Office/Employment Coordinator: Debbie Peabody at 417-895-7485