



Semiannual Report to Congress

OCTOBER 1, 2023 – MARCH 31, 2024

Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General





The Social Security Administration (SSA) administers programs that play a vital role in protecting the well-being of more than 72 million people. The SSA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is committed to serving taxpayers through independent oversight of SSA's programs and operations. It is my privilege to present this Semiannual Report to Congress (SAR), which summarizes key activities and significant accomplishments from October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024.

As we continue to investigate reports of wrongdoing, we also remain focused on preventing fraud by analyzing data to detect emerging fraud trends and threats, collaborating with SSA on initiatives to improve program integrity, and conducting education and outreach efforts. We are working across government to develop comprehensive strategies to combat evolving scam tactics, leading to enhanced public awareness campaigns and ensuring a coordinated response to better protect taxpayers. We are also continuing to innovate and lead government-wide in the understanding and implementation of artificial intelligence to improve how government serves the public.

This reporting period, in response to feedback from employees, our Office of Audit (OA) and Office of Investigations (OI) each developed and issued strategic plans, establishing goals and objectives specific to their unique workloads and workforces. These component-level strategic plans provide clear roadmaps for decision-making and performance evaluation, drive employee engagement, and facilitate adaptability to respond to changing circumstances, emerging threats and vulnerabilities, and shifts in priority.

In January 2024, OA issued its strategic plan. It developed the goals in the plan through a strategic analysis of OA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The strategic plan also includes strategies that focus on its audit products and the workforce charged with developing these products. OA is continuing its efforts to identify tactics to implement the strategic goals, objectives, and strategies in its plan, focusing on delivering quality, impactful, and timely audit products, and employing a highly skilled, high-performing, and engaged workforce.

OIG also issued its strategic plan in January 2024. Its plan provides a clear and concise picture of OIG's mission, vision, goals, and objectives. In creating it, OIG recognized the critical importance that employees, especially those new to the organization, understand the purpose of their work, driving progress towards achieving shared goals. OIG's goals focus on conducting high quality mission-critical investigative work and improving organizational culture and its reputation among the law enforcement community.

These component-specific strategic plans are just one example of the continued efforts by our hardworking and innovative workforce to advance our mission and propel our organization forward. I deeply respect and appreciate our employees' dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence.



Gail S. Ennis
Inspector General

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Message from the Inspector General | 1 |
| Table of Contents | 3 |
| Glossary of Acronyms | 4 |
| Statistical Achievements | 5 |
| Investigations Overview..... | 8 |
| Audit Overview..... | 18 |
| Legal Overview..... | 22 |
| Social Security-Related Imposter Scams | 25 |
| National Anti-Fraud Committee..... | 29 |
| Appendix A-N Table of Contents | 31 |
| Appendix A: Reporting Requirements | 32 |
| Appendix B: Reports with Questioned Costs | 35 |
| Appendix C: Reports with Funds Put to Better Use | 36 |
| Appendix D: Office of Audit Reports Issued | 37 |
| Appendix E: Significant Monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed | 39 |
| Appendix F: Significant Non-monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed | 43 |
| Appendix G: Open Recommendations and Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations | 46 |
| Appendix H: Audit Reports Issued Prior to the Reporting Period for Which No Management Decision Had Been Made by the End of This Reporting Period | 52 |
| Appendix I: Management Decisions Made Regarding Reports Issued in a Previous Reporting Period | 53 |
| Appendix J: Closed Audits and Investigations Not Available to the Public..... | 54 |
| Appendix K: Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 Compliance ... | 55 |
| Appendix L: Instances of Social Security Administration Interference or Refusal to Provide Information..... | 56 |
| Appendix M: Peer Reviews..... | 57 |
| Appendix N: Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated | 58 |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| BOAN | Beneficiary's Own Account Number |
| BPD | Business Process Document |
| CARES | <i>Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security</i> |
| CDI | Cooperative Disability Investigations |
| CDR | continuing disability review |
| CMP | Civil Monetary Penalty |
| CSO | Chief Strategy Officer |
| DC | Deputy Commissioner |
| DDS | Disability Determination Services |
| DI | Disability Insurance |
| DOD | U.S. Department of Defense |
| DoJ | U.S. Department of Justice |
| FFMIA | <i>Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996</i> |
| FRA | full retirement age |
| FY | fiscal year |
| IG | Inspector General |
| IG Act | <i>Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended</i> |
| IRS | Internal Revenue Service |
| IRS-CI | Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation |
| MBR | Master Beneficiary Record |
| MDHHS | Maine Department of Health and Human Services |
| NAFC | National Anti-Fraud Committee |
| NYSERS | New York State Employees Retirement System |
| OA | Office of Audit |
| OASDI | Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance |
| OI | Office of Investigations |
| OIG | Office of the Inspector General or Office of Inspector General |
| PIN | Personal Identification Number |
| PPP | Paycheck Protection Program |
| RSI | Retirement and Survivors Insurance |
| SAR | Semiannual Report to Congress |
| SIDA | Security Identification Display Area |
| SSA | Social Security Administration |

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| SSI | Supplemental Security Income |
| SSN | Social Security number |
| U.S. | United States |
| USPIS | U.S. Postal Inspection Service |
| VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs |
| VoIP | voice-over internet protocol |
| WPC | Whistleblower Protection Coordinator |





\$143,310,261

Monetary Accomplishments

This number includes court-ordered restitution, recoveries, settlements, judgments, fines, and estimated savings resulting from our investigations.



\$184,940,654

Questioned Costs

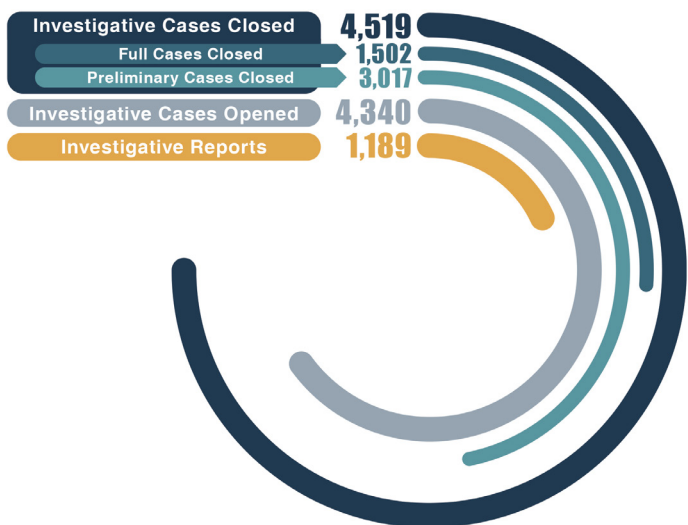
Questioned costs include costs that we determined, based on our audits: (1) violated a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds; (2) were not supported by adequate documentation; or (3) were unnecessary or unreasonable.



\$82,927,445

Funds Put to Better Use

Funds put to better use are funds that SSA could use more efficiently if it took action to implement our recommendations.



The number of investigative reports includes summary reports of investigative findings issued externally by OI, including prosecution referrals, reports of employee investigations, reports of special investigations, and reports of findings by a Cooperative Disability Investigations unit.



This includes Audit Reports, Management Advisory Reports, and Congressional Status Updates on Social Security-related Scams.

1. OIG conducts preliminary investigations to further develop allegations of activity that may threaten the integrity of SSA’s programs and operations or involve the misuse of a Social Security number. A preliminary investigation may result in a full investigation being opened, when there is an articulable factual basis that reasonably indicates the alleged activity has occurred; however, some preliminary investigations never result in a full investigation. This statistic reports the level of investigation at the time of case closure.



Persons Referred to the U.S. Department of Justice for Criminal Prosecution

648

This number includes individual subjects or entities referred to the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) where the investigative findings were not subject to pre-established prosecution declination guidelines.



Imposter-Scam Allegations Received

48,884

This figure represents the number of imposter-scam allegations OIG received. The allegations may include scammers impersonating government employees or alleging Social Security-related problems to steal money or personal information. OIG receives imposter-scam allegations via multiple sources, including a dedicated, online, scam-reporting **form** that requests detailed characteristics about the reported scams.



Persons Referred to State and Local Prosecutors for Criminal Prosecution

145

This number reflects the total number of individual subjects or entities referred to state and local prosecuting authorities where the investigative findings were not subject to pre-established prosecution declination guidelines. These persons may also have been referred to DoJ.



Prosecutions and Convictions

278

This number reflects **257** sentencing and **21** pretrial diversions.

244

Indictments/ Criminal Informations



This number includes indictment or criminal information filings per subject. It does not include subsequent or superseding indictments, and/or criminal informations for the same subject.



Task Forces/Working Groups

210

During the reporting period, we were members of **210** task forces/working groups. This includes **20** related to COVID-19 fraud.



Total Allegations Received

150,412

1,159

Total Subpoenas Issued

This number is the total number of OIG subpoenas issued during this reporting period.

513

Safety and Threats

OIG received **513** allegations related to employee safety issues, of which **140** involved alleged assault or harassment, **310** were associated with threats against SSA employees or buildings, and **63** involved other safety threats.



\$6,920,436,554
Potential Cost Savings from Unimplemented Recommendations

This figure reflects the dollar value of aggregate potential cost savings for all reports issued prior to the commencement of this reporting period (which was October 1, 2023) with unimplemented monetary recommendations.



1,045
Administrative Actions

Administrative actions include benefits terminated, claims denied, administrative recoveries, reduction in benefits, removal of representative payee, benefits suspended, and personnel actions.



943
Subjects with Administrative Actions

211

Unimplemented Recommendations

To provide SSA adequate time to implement our recommendations, we only report unimplemented recommendations 6 months after the end of the semi-annual period in which we provided them to the Agency.



These penalties reflect the number of Civil Monetary Penalties cases resolved and total collections from penalties imposed.

Investigations Overview

- Allegations Received by Category
- Cooperative Disability Investigations
- Disability Insurance Fraud
- Supplemental Security Income Fraud
- Retirement and Survivors Insurance Fraud
- Social Security Number Misuse
- COVID-19 Relief Fraud
- Employee Fraud and Employee Safety
- Whistleblower Retaliation

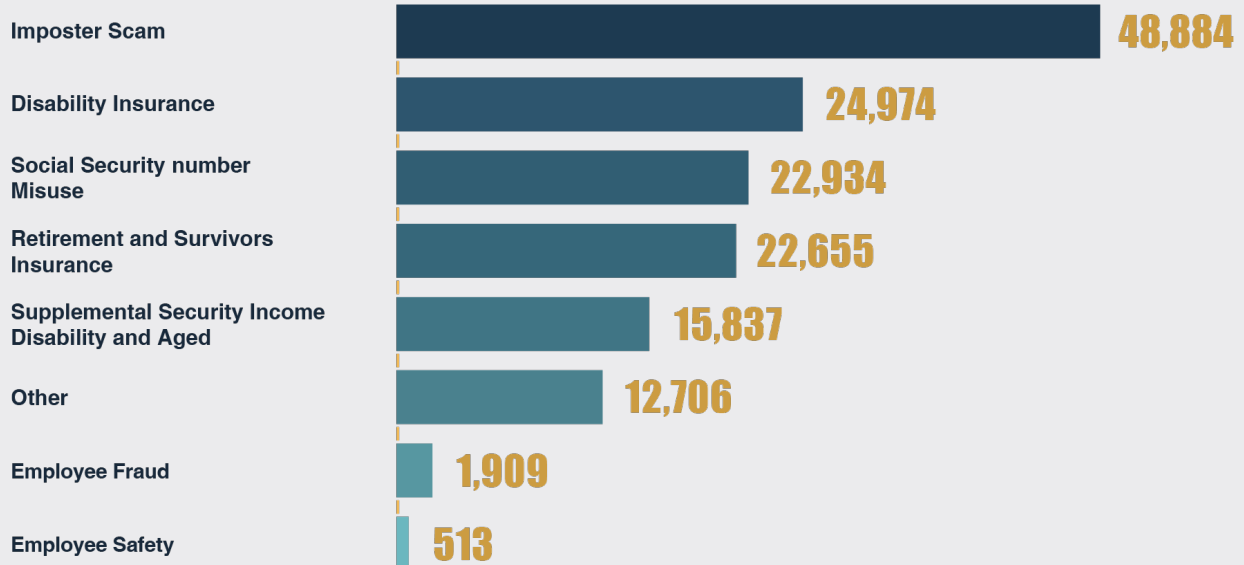


OI receives and evaluates allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in SSA’s programs and operations, and takes appropriate action in coordination with federal, state, and local prosecutors. OI also investigates allegations of retaliation against whistleblowers who have made protected disclosures. Our investigations may result in criminal or civil prosecutions, Civil Monetary Penalties (CMPs), or Agency administrative actions. We received 150,412 allegations during this reporting period, shown by category in the chart below.

OI works closely with federal, state, and local law enforcement partners and participates on task forces and working groups, including those related to COVID-19 pandemic fraud. Subject matter experts provide support in areas such as digital forensics, policy, training, and analytics. OI also oversees the Cooperative Disability Investigations (CDI) program and manages OIG’s fraud hotline.

Allegations Received by Category

October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024



Cooperative Disability Investigations

Although OIG broadly investigates fraud across all SSA programs, we have a dedicated **CDI** program that focuses on disability fraud. CDI units routinely investigate allegations of fraud before benefits are paid and support continuing disability reviews by providing evidence for determinations. Since 1997, CDI units have improved program integrity by resolving questions of fraud in Social Security disability claims.

A CDI unit consists of an OIG special agent who leads the unit and personnel from SSA, state agencies called Disability Determination Services (DDS), and state or local law enforcement partners. Stopping a fraudulent payment before it occurs, or as soon as it is suspected, is in the interests of SSA, OIG, and the taxpayers. By combining federal and state resources and expertise, CDI units benefit not only Social Security programs, but also other federal and state programs, such as food and nutrition assistance, housing assistance, Medicare, and Medicaid.

CDI units have contributed to a projected savings to taxpayers of more than \$8.1 billion since inception of the CDI program. During this reporting period, the work of CDI units led to 560 disability claims being denied or ceased, \$39,676,954 in projected savings for SSA programs, and \$5,789,653 in SSA monetary accomplishments in the form of recoveries, fines, judgments, restitution, and settlements. The CDI unit efforts also led to \$47,510,778 in projected savings for non-SSA programs. The SSA and OIG worked with state and local partners to successfully expand CDI coverage by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, in accordance with the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015*. Fifty CDI units now cover all fifty States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories of Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

Below, we highlight two CDI cases.

Investigation of Business Owner Who Concealed Work Activity and Income Led to SSA Overpayments of \$252,000 and Projected SSA and Medicare Savings of \$181,000

In a CDI investigation that originated with an anonymous complainant, our Milwaukee CDI unit investigated a Disability Insurance (DI) beneficiary who concealed work activity and income from SSA. The beneficiary began receiving benefits in 2010, alleging she was unable to work due to dementia, anxiety, sleep apnea, heart conditions, and memory problems. She also alleged she could not drive.

In reality, the woman was a chef-owner of a restaurant in Wisconsin and owned a food company that sold products at farmers markets. Our investigators discovered news

articles and social media posts about the woman and her businesses. The articles highlighted her success at local farmers markets with her seasonings and homemade sweet potato noodles. In a local TV show interview, the woman stated she grew in her garden most of what she used in her seasonings and noodles and also described how she made noodles. Our investigators also observed the woman working at her restaurant and a local farmers market without any physical limitations. She interacted with customers, accepted cash payments, and provided change for the transactions. The investigators also observed the woman driving without assistance.

As a result of our investigation, the woman's disability claim was reopened and denied, resulting in an overpayment of \$248,204 in DI

benefits and \$3,920 in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. Terminating her benefits resulted in a projected DI savings of \$96,404 and savings of \$84,885 to the Medicare program.

- **Investigation of Missouri Man Who Exaggerated His Health Issues to Receive DI Benefits Led to Projected SSA and Medicare Savings of \$205,000**

In a second CDI investigation that originated with an allegation from a Missouri DDS, our St. Louis CDI unit investigated a disability beneficiary alleged to have exaggerated his own health issues and whose medical reviews were inconsistent. The man began receiving benefits in 2009 due to osteoarthritis and back disorders. He claimed his physical pain prevented him from standing, walking, lifting objects, using his arms, and sitting. However, our investigators observed the man, on multiple occasions, riding, repairing, and even walking a moped long distances and up hills. This investigation resulted in the cessation of his benefits and auxiliary benefits paid on his record. The cessations resulted in a projected savings of \$120,304 to the disability program and \$84,885 to the Medicare program.

Disability Insurance Fraud

DI fraud comprises a significant part of our investigative workload. DI fraud includes, among other activities, concealing work activity or medical improvement while receiving disability benefits, representative payee misuse, and deceased payee fraud.

Below we highlight two DI cases.

- **Mississippi Man Sentenced to 4 Years of Probation, Ordered to Pay \$105,000 for Social Security Fraud**

In a DI investigation, based on a referral from a private citizen, a man who was receiving DI benefits was alleged to have been self-employed and operating a company as an electrician. Our investigators determined the man applied for DI benefits in 2002 that resulted in him receiving back payments from January 2001. As part of his application, the man agreed to notify SSA if he were to return to work or if his medical condition were to improve. However, investigators found the man returned to work in 2019 and concealed his work activity from SSA to continue to receive DI benefits to which he knew he was not entitled. SSA determined that it paid the man \$104,699 in DI benefits to which he was not entitled between March 2019 and June 2023. In October 2023, the man pleaded guilty to Social Security Fraud. In January 2024, a judge sentenced him to 4 years of probation and ordered him to pay restitution of \$104,699 to SSA.

- **Michigan Woman Sentenced to 3 Years of Probation, Ordered to Pay \$151,000 for Theft of Government Funds**

In another DI investigation, a Michigan woman pleaded guilty to theft of government funds. According to court records, from about June 2008 through March 2018, the woman received disability benefits based on her allegations she was unable to work. At the same time, she intentionally concealed work under a false Social Security number (SSN), while receiving those disability benefits under her actual SSN. Our investigation led to the woman pleading guilty in August 2023. Following her plea, in January 2024, a judge sentenced her to 3 years of probation and ordered her to pay restitution of \$150,839 to SSA.

Supplemental Security Income Fraud

SSI is a means-tested program, and we work to ensure only those who are eligible for these critical benefits receive them. Eligibility for SSI primarily relies on self-reporting many factors including earnings, assets, resources, marital status, residency, and living arrangements, among others. We investigate allegations of many types of SSI fraud, including when someone falsifies a disability to become SSI-eligible or conceals a marriage, real estate, other assets, or their true country of residence from SSA, while receiving SSI payments.

Below, we highlight two SSI cases.

- **Maine Woman Sentenced to 3 Years of Probation, Ordered to Pay \$104,000 for Social Security and Health Care Fraud, and Theft of Government Funds**

An SSI investigation involved a woman who pleaded guilty to SSA fraud, health care fraud, and theft of government funds. We initiated this case based on a referral from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), which alleged the woman, an SSI beneficiary who also received benefits under MDHHS programs, concealed residing with her spouse.

The woman concealed her living arrangement by not reporting to SSA that her husband lived in her household from 2005 to 2020 and that she received material financial support from him, including spousal support under a divorce order. This unreported income made her ineligible for the \$78,858 in SSI that she had received for herself and her son. The woman also submitted falsified information to the MDHHS from 2005 to 2017, making her ineligible for \$4,551 in MaineCare program benefits and \$20,188 in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits she received.

In May 2023, she pleaded guilty to SSI fraud – concealment, health care fraud, and theft of government money. In January 2024, a judge sentenced her to three years of probation and ordered her to pay \$78,858 in restitution to SSA and \$24,739 to the MDHHS. We investigated this case with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) and the MDHHS Fraud and Recovery Unit.

- New Hampshire Man Pleaded Guilty to Making False Statements to Obtain Social Security Benefits**

In a second SSI investigation, a man was sentenced to 5 years of probation for providing false statements to retain control of a recipient's benefits. Court records show that in 2018 the man applied for SSI payments on behalf of a disabled minor who was in his care and custody at that time. SSA approved the payments and assigned the man to be the minor's representative payee, which allowed him to use the funds for the minor's personal care and needs. However, in 2019, the minor left his household and custody, but the man did not inform SSA of this change, as was required. Instead, he falsely claimed that the minor continued to live with him and reported to SSA that he was using the SSI payments for the minor until 2022. By providing false statements to SSA, the representative payee received \$23,148 to which he was not entitled and did not use these funds for the minor's maintenance. In July 2023, he pleaded guilty to false statements. In February 2024, a judge sentenced him to 5 years of probation and to pay \$23,148 in restitution to SSA.

Retirement and Survivors Insurance Fraud

These investigations involve Retirement and Survivors Insurance (RSI) benefits, including deceased payee fraud, representative payee misuse, false statements about marital or parental status in applying for survivors' benefits, and other related types of fraud.

Below, we highlight two RSI fraud cases.

- California Man Sentenced to 2 Years in Prison, Ordered to Pay \$859,000 for Social Security Fraud and Money Laundering in Which He Concealed Mother's Death for 32 Years**

We initiated an RSI investigation after SSA notified us they could not locate a RSI beneficiary. In June 2022, our investigators interviewed the beneficiary's son who told us his mother was alive and residing in Japan. However, this was not true. His mother died in Japan in 1990. For approximately 32 years, her son concealed the death so he could receive her widow's benefits from SSA and annuity payments from the Department of Defense's (DOD) Survivor Benefit Plan, and other funds, totaling approximately \$859,000.

In June 2023, the man pleaded guilty to Social Security fraud and money laundering. According to the plea, the man intentionally omitted his mother's SSN on reporting documents to conceal her death from SSA and DOD. He used her name while she was alive to fraudulently obtain a \$126,000 refinance loan secured by his home and thereafter recorded a fraudulent quitclaim deed to conceal and disguise his true ownership and control of the property. After her death, he filed fraudulent tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in his mother's name to receive approximately \$13,000 in IRS tax

refunds and Treasury stimulus payments. He also interacted with SSA on his mother's behalf and signed her name on DOD forms to perpetuate the fraud. The man further used her identity to open credit accounts with multiple banks and laundered the stolen money.

In October 2023, a judge sentenced him to 24 months in prison and 3 years' supervised release. The judge additionally ordered restitution of \$858,876 to the government agencies and financial institutions he defrauded, including \$253,714 to SSA. We investigated this case with the DOD OIG.

- Georgia Woman Sentenced to More Than One Year in Prison, Ordered to Pay \$459,000 for Theft of Government Funds from SSA and New York State Employees Retirement System**

In another RSI investigation, originating from a referral from our OA, a woman was sentenced for theft of government funds. The woman was the caretaker for her mother-in-law who was receiving monthly retirement benefits from SSA and the New York State Employees Retirement System (NYSERS), at the time of her death. The woman was found to have knowingly concealed her mother-in-law's death in 2006 from SSA and NYSERS, which continued to make benefit payments to the deceased. Our investigators found the woman fraudulently accessed the deceased's bank account and stole \$194,351 in SSA retirement benefits and \$264,699 in New York State benefits and transferred these funds into her own bank account. In July 2023, the woman pleaded guilty to theft of government funds. In November 2023, a judge sentenced her to 12 months and 1 day in prison, and 2 years of supervised release. He further ordered her to pay restitution of \$194,351 to SSA and \$264,699 to the NYSERS.

Social Security Number Misuse

We work to ensure the integrity of SSNs, as SSA depends on them to accurately post earnings to individuals' records and calculate earned benefits. SSNs are used by not only SSA but also other agencies and entities, so we often pursue joint investigations into SSN misuse. We may investigate any situation in which a person misuses an SSN, whether for unauthorized work, obtaining a loan, applying for a government benefit, or any other purpose.

Below, we highlight two cases involving SSN misuse.

- "John Doe" Sentenced to 7 Years in Prison for False Statements and Aggravated Identity Theft**

In an SSN misuse investigation, our investigators received a referral from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) OIG advising there were two individuals with the same biographical information, but they had two different photographs located in the VA's system. The investigation found that a man stole an SSN to assume the identity of a veteran and to apply for a U.S. Passport. "John Doe" pleaded guilty to charges of making false statements in an application for a U.S. Passport and aggravated identity theft. In October 2023, a judge sentenced the man to a total of 84 months in prison (60 months for false statements and 24 months for aggravated identity theft) and 3 years of supervised release. We investigated this case with the VA OIG, U.S. Department of State, and the Suffolk County (Florida) District Attorney's Detective Squad.

- **Pennsylvania Man Sentenced to More Than 2 Years in Prison for Multiple Crimes After Posing as Deceased Schoolmate for 27 Years**

In a second SSN misuse investigation referred by the U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service, a man used the identity of a deceased individual to obtain a passport and apply for SSI. According to court documents, the man began using the identity, including the assigned SSN, of a schoolmate who had died in 1986. Under the deceased's identity, the man applied for several replacement SSN cards and obtained and renewed official U.S. passports in 2005 and 2020, which he used to travel and apply for a firearms license. Further, the man was employed at the Philadelphia International Airport and used his fraudulently obtained documents to secure his Security Identification Display Area (SIDA) badge to access the restricted work areas. From 2010 to 2021, he submitted 10 applications to have his SIDA renewed. In 2020, still using the deceased's identity, he applied for SSI benefits. SSA denied the SSI due to insufficient medical evidence.

In August 2023, the man pleaded guilty to misuse of an SSN, entry by false pretenses to secure area of an airport, false statement in application and use of a passport, and aggravated identity theft. In January 2024, a judge sentenced him to 24 months and 1 day in prison and 1 year of supervised release. We investigated this case with the U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service.

COVID-19 Relief Fraud

OIG plays an important role in addressing COVID-19 pandemic-related fraud throughout the federal government. SSN misuse, including identity theft, is a common thread running through a substantial number of pandemic investigative cases. During this reporting period, we participated in 20 COVID-19 fraud-related task forces and working groups and collaborated with other federal law enforcement entities on joint investigations related to COVID-19 pandemic relief, including Unemployment Insurance fraud and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) fraud. We participated in the National COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Taskforce, led by the Deputy Attorney General of the U.S. We also worked with other federal, state, and local agencies to pursue SSN misuse and other crimes committed in relation to PPP fraud.

Below, we highlight two COVID-19 relief cases.

- **New Jersey Man Sentenced to 3 Years in Prison, Ordered to Pay \$2 Million for COVID-19 Fraud**

In a pandemic-related fraud case, a New Jersey man was sentenced for scheming to obtain millions of dollars in *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES Act)* funds. The man submitted at least 21 fraudulent applications to receive funding provided through the PPP. In the applications, he used fraudulent tax returns, government forms, and other people's names and documents, including SSNs of individuals who were deceased for over a decade.

In all, the man applied for over \$15 million in PPP funds and received just over \$2.1 million. He transferred the illegally obtained funds to accounts he controlled and used the money for himself and his family on financial investments, housing, home investments, and college tuition.

In December 2022, he pleaded guilty to bank fraud, money laundering, and misuse of an SSN. At his sentencing in November 2023, a judge ordered him to serve 36 months in prison, and 3 years of supervised release; the judge also ordered him to pay \$2,127,391 in restitution immediately to the U.S. Treasury for distribution to victims including financial institutions and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

We investigated this case with Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI), USPIS, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation OIG, U.S. Secret Service, and the Sparta Township (New Jersey) Police Department.

- Former Reality Show Cast Member Sentenced to 4 Years in Prison, Ordered to Pay \$564,000 for Multiple Crimes**

In a second case that included pandemic-related fraud, we investigated a woman alleged to have used SSNs not assigned to her to open and operate businesses and defraud financial institutions. The woman, who appeared on reality TV shows “Basketball Wives of LA” and “Marriage Bootcamp,” engaged in multiple fraud schemes over the course of approximately a decade. She used the Personally Identifiable Information, including the SSNs of others, to establish and operate businesses. She also fraudulently applied for loans, established lines of credit, and opened bank accounts using SSNs assigned to others. And, she under-reported her income to the IRS and provided false information regarding dependents on her tax forms.

The woman continued her fraud schemes even after investigators interviewed her and after she was indicted. While under indictment, she fraudulently applied for funding through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and the PPP in which her applications contained false personal and business information. She submitted fraudulent applications for a state’s rent relief program misrepresenting her state residency and purported financial losses

caused by the pandemic. She also conspired to defraud at least one insurance company by submitting fraudulent medical bills.

After pleading guilty in May 2023 to SSN misuse, bank fraud, false statements, and wire fraud, a judge sentenced her in October 2023 to 48 months in prison and 5 years’ supervised release. The judge also ordered her to pay \$564,069 to the defrauded financial institutions, insurance company, and government entities, including \$139,898 to the IRS and \$197,047 to the Small Business Administration. We investigated this case with the IRS-CI and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Employee Fraud and Employee Safety

Public integrity investigations are critical to ensuring we maintain the public trust in SSA’s programs and operations.

We must take swift action concerning allegations against employees who may have misused their position for personal gain or violated other laws or regulations in the performance of their official duties. We also must act when the safety of SSA employees is threatened.¹

Below, we highlight one employee fraud case.

- Former SSA Employee Sentenced to 3 Years of Probation, Ordered to Pay \$16,000 for Theft of Government Funds**

We initiated an employee fraud investigation in November 2022 after receiving information from the Decatur, Georgia SSA Field Office. The Field Office alleged that an employee’s Personal Identification Number (PIN) was used to cause several automated one-time payments to be deposited into accounts not associated with the benefit recipients.

1. We did not have any employee safety cases to report during this period.

Our investigators reviewed SSA's audit records which confirmed that between June 10 and September 15, 2022, the employee's PIN was used to change the direct deposit information for six SSI recipients and direct the payments into two bank accounts that were not previously associated with them. According to the records, the employee's PIN was also used to change the direct deposit information for the SSI recipients back to the original accounts. In April 2023, our investigators interviewed four of the six SSI recipients. All four recipients denied authorizing the opening of or familiarity with the accounts where their payments were deposited.

In June 2023, the employee admitted to investigators during an interview that she stole the funds. She explained she randomly chose the SSI recipients from a list of recently approved applicants who were owed retroactive payments. The employee resigned from her position in August 2023. She was charged with theft of government funds in September 2023 and pleaded guilty in October 2023. In January 2024, the former employee was sentenced to three years' probation and was ordered to pay \$15,698 to SSA.

Whistleblower Retaliation

Section 5(a)(20) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended (IG Act), requires OIG to provide a detailed description of any instance of whistleblower retaliation, including information about the official found to have engaged in retaliation and what, if any, consequences the establishment imposed to hold that official accountable. There are no known instances of retaliation to report for this reporting period.

Audit Overview

- Improper Payments
- Potential Cost Savings from Unimplemented Recommendations
- Significant Problems, Abuses, and Deficiencies



Our audit work helps SSA serve the American people by identifying opportunities for savings, better use of funds, and improvements in SSA's program management and results. We continue to deploy audit resources to address **SSA's top management and performance challenges**.

During this reporting period, these challenges included: (1) managing human capital; (2) improving service delivery; (3) protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of SSA's information systems and data; (4) modernizing information technology; (5) improving administration of the disability programs; and (6) improving the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper payments. We also conduct reviews at the request of Congress.

This reporting period, we issued six audit reports.¹ This includes three audit reports that identified almost \$268 million in potential cost savings and three reports with non-monetary recommendations or no recommendations. See **Appendix B** and **Appendix C** for statistical tables showing potential cost savings, including those for which no management decision had been made by the commencement of the reporting period, and **Appendix D** for the full list of reports issued during this reporting period.

Improper Payments

According to a **Social Security Fact Sheet**, SSA estimated in 2024 an average of almost 68 million Americans per month will receive a Social Security benefit, totaling about \$1.5 trillion in benefits paid during the year.

According to SSA's FY 2023 **Agency Financial Report**, given the magnitude of SSA payments, even the slightest error in the payment process can result in millions of dollars in over or underpayments. Per the most recent estimates available, SSA estimates it made approximately \$13.6 billion in improper payments in FY 2022. Of those, \$11.1 billion were overpayments and \$2.5 billion were underpayments.

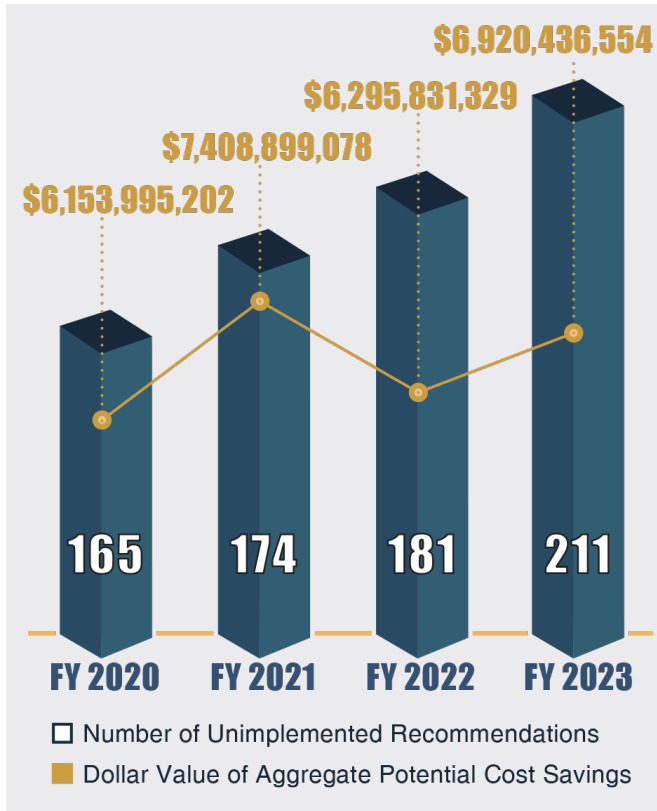
During this period, all three audit reports we issued that identified potential cost savings were related to the management challenge, "Improve the Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments." Our work related to this management challenge identified almost \$185 million in questioned costs and almost \$83 million in funds put to better use and included 11 recommendations.

We continuously engage SSA to ensure timely resolution of all recommendations. As shown in detail in **Appendix E**, SSA had not implemented 20 significant monetary recommendations from FYs 2017 through 2022, offering potential cost savings of about \$3.2 billion. As shown on the following chart, potential cost savings from all unimplemented recommendations increased from \$6.3 billion to about \$6.9 billion from FY 2022 to FY 2023. The number of unimplemented recommendations increased from 181 to 211 over the same period.²

1. This includes four Audit Reports and two Management Advisory Reports.

2. To provide SSA adequate time to implement our recommendations, we only report unimplemented recommendations six months after the close of the semi-annual period in which we provided them to the Agency. The FY 2023 figure includes audits issued through September 30, 2023. Numbers are comparative to prior years' Spring SARs. We will report figures for the first half of FY 2024 (October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024) in the Fall 2024 SAR.

Potential Cost Savings from Unimplemented Recommendations



Significant Problems, Abuses, and Deficiencies

– Auxiliary Beneficiaries Who Do Not Have Their Own, or Have an Incorrect, Social Security Numbers

Auxiliary beneficiaries are children, widows, spouses, and parents who receive Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) benefits based on another wage earner’s Social Security record. When an auxiliary beneficiary is involved, SSA uses the primary wage earner, and not the auxiliary beneficiary’s SSN (known as the Beneficiary’s Own Account Number (BOAN)) to track the auxiliary beneficiary’s payments on the Master Beneficiary Record (MBR). To comply with a

Social Security Act requirement that individuals first entitled to benefits as of June 1, 1989 or later have, or have applied for, an SSN to receive OASDI benefits, the BOAN verification system monitors the MBR to ensure an auxiliary beneficiary entitled after this date, has an SSN.

We conducted this audit to determine whether SSA decreased the number of auxiliary beneficiaries with missing or incorrect SSNs on the MBR. We found that since 2002, SSA has decreased the number of auxiliary beneficiaries with missing or incorrect SSNs by 98 percent. Of the more than 10 million auxiliary beneficiaries in current pay status, 5,885 (less than one-tenth of 1 percent) did not have a valid SSN. Because the SSNs were missing or incorrect, SSA improperly paid 133 auxiliary beneficiaries \$2.6 million. Most of these improper payments were due to death.

As of July 2023, SSA had corrected 969 (16 percent) of the 5,885 records. Therefore, there were 3,643 auxiliary beneficiaries entitled before June 1, 1989, and 1,273 entitled on or after June 1, 1989 without a valid SSN. SSA agreed with the recommendation to add the correct SSNs to the 1,273 MBRs for auxiliary beneficiaries entitled on or after June 1, 1989 that are still missing or incorrect.

– Follow-up: The Social Security Administration’s Implementation of Mail Procedures

Mail processing at SSA offices is primarily a manual workload. In July 2021, we issued an interim report, **The Social Security Administration’s Processing of Mail and Enumeration Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic**, which highlighted the exponential increase in the Agency’s volume of mail and that SSA did not have detailed policies or performance metrics related to mail processing. In September 2021, SSA issued a Mail Handling Business Process Document (BPD) that focused on 10 key mail processing issues. We conducted this audit to determine whether SSA offices were complying with the BPD.

In this audit, we found SSA offices had improved mail processing since our July 2021 review. While most offices were meeting 6 of the 10 BPD requirements, some offices did not always meet BPD requirements in the following 4 areas: (1) Undeliverable returned mail, (2) Remittances and returned unendorsed Department of the Treasury checks, (3) Mail triaging and timeliness, and (4) Scanning mail.

SSA agreed with our three recommendations that it: (1) evaluate and adjust, where appropriate, the timeliness metrics for mail handling to correspond with, and support, the current mail workload, (2) evaluate and adjust, where appropriate, the monitoring process for mail handling to better identify non compliant offices that require remediation, and (3) take action, as needed, for offices we identified as non compliant with the BPD requirements.

• **The Social Security Administration’s Enforcement of the Earnings Test**

The earnings test is a provision of the *Social Security Act* that requires that SSA withhold payments from beneficiaries who are under full retirement age (FRA) if their earnings exceed a certain limit. To administer the earnings test, SSA employees and systems: (1) suspend benefits based on estimated earnings, (2) enforce the earnings test based on actual earnings, (3) calculate overpayments, and (4) increase monthly benefits effective at FRA if SSA withheld benefits because of the earnings test. We conducted this audit to determine: (1) whether SSA accurately and timely paid beneficiaries subject to the earnings test, and (2) the administrative costs to enforce the earnings test.

In this audit, we provide a conservative estimate that in FY 2021, SSA spent approximately \$70 million in administrative costs to enforce the earnings test. Despite these costs, we found SSA did not accurately or timely pay beneficiaries subject to the earnings test. As a result, we estimate SSA: inaccurately calculated approximately 47,000 of the 294,000 earnings-test overpayments

established in FY 2021, totaling more than \$148 million; inaccurately paid approximately 9,000 beneficiaries approximately \$29 million based on estimated earnings that were more or less than their actual earnings; and did not timely pay approximately 176,000 beneficiaries approximately \$81 million in monthly benefit increases. In general, SSA did not accurately calculate earnings-test overpayments because it used incorrect monthly earnings information when the monthly earnings test applied. Outdated systems with programming limitations and unclear policies regarding when employees could grant earnings-test-related monthly benefit increases contributed to the inaccurate and untimely payments.

We made 10 recommendations to SSA including improving the accuracy and timeliness of its payments to beneficiaries subject to the earnings test; reducing administrative costs to enforce the earnings test; and correcting the errors we identified in our review. SSA agreed with our recommendations.

Legal Overview

- Civil Monetary Penalty Program
- Review of Legislation and Regulations
- Whistleblower Protection Coordinator Education



Civil Monetary Penalty Program

Section 1140 authorizes CMPs to protect the public from advertisements, solicitations, and other communications (including websites and scam telephone calls) that may convey the false impression SSA approved, endorsed, or authorized the communication. It also prohibits the reproduction and sale of SSA publications and forms without authorization and places restrictions on the charging for services SSA provides to the public without charge. SSA's CMP program to enforce Section 1140 has been delegated to the Inspector General (IG) and has been an effective administrative enforcement alternative when criminal or civil prosecution is declined or not feasible.

SSA OIG continues its efforts to protect consumers from Social Security-related scam calls originating outside of the U.S. by seeking corrective action against U.S.-based telecommunications companies, who profit by accepting Social Security-related scam calls into the U.S. telecommunications system and passing them onto unsuspecting consumers. During the reporting period, SSA OIG resolved a matter with a telecommunications gateway carrier resulting in the imposition of a \$37,500 penalty. To date, SSA OIG has initiated 36 Section 1140 inquiries into companies involved with Social Security-related scam calls and has imposed penalties against 24 such companies. As a result, many of these companies have taken more proactive steps to prevent scam calls from entering the U.S. or have decided to discontinue this aspect of their operations or have ceased operations entirely.

In addition to SSA OIG's actions related to scam calls originating outside the U.S., SSA OIG launched a new initiative (Disability Insurance Application Lead Scam) focused specifically on misleading Social Security disability telephone solicitations originating domestically. These solicitations have been made for the purpose of developing business leads for disability claimant representatives. SSA OIG has initiated Section 1140 inquiries into several entities over concerns

that these solicitations may falsely convey the impression that the calls are from or are otherwise authorized by the SSA.

SSA OIG also launched various Section 1140-related educational outreach initiatives. We have recently piloted a new outreach initiative with public libraries to provide them print and digital SSA-related scam awareness resources to bolster awareness at the community level.

Further, SSA OIG commenced an initiative to increase awareness of Section 1140 among disability representatives. This knowledge-sharing effort should give disability representatives added tools to protect their vulnerable clients from SSA-related scams and identity theft. An additional goal of this outreach is to ensure that disability representatives are aware of the regulations, preventing them from inadvertently giving the impression that their legal services are endorsed by SSA.

Review of Legislation and Regulations

Section 4(a)(2), codified at 5 U.S.C. § 404(a)(2), of the *IG Act*, requires OIG to review existing and proposed legislation and regulations, and make recommendations concerning the impact of such legislation or regulations on the economy and efficiency of, or the prevention and detection of fraud in SSA programs and operations. In addition to communicating directly with congressional staff as needed to discuss legislative issues, below are examples of the way we accomplished this statutory requirement during this reporting period.

Reviewed proposed legislation and regulations, including the following:

- Proposed changes to the *Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986*.
- Proposals to amend or eliminate certain IG mandates.
- A proposal to establish a governance structure for federal agencies' use of artificial intelligence (AI).

Whistleblower Protection Coordinator Education

Section 3(d) of the *IG Act* requires the IG to designate a Whistleblower Protection Coordinator (WPC) to carry out certain key functions, including educating SSA employees and managers about prohibitions on retaliation for protected disclosures. Additionally, the WPC is responsible for educating employees who have made or are contemplating making a protected disclosure about the rights and remedies available to them.

On December 22, 2023, the IG designated the Chief Investigative Counsel as the WPC. Attorneys working with the WPC reviewed and revised the training provided to new employees on whistleblower rights and protections and conducted several sessions of new Employee Whistleblower Training as part of OIG's New Employee Orientation. The team also reviewed and revised the process for monitoring the WPC mailbox to ensure that whistleblower education letters are provided promptly. The WPC plans to collaborate with SSA's Office of Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity and SSA's Office of Personnel to enhance whistleblower rights education on SSA's internal electronic platforms.

Social Security-Related Imposter Scams

- Public Outreach and Education
- Scam-Related Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions
- Civil Enforcement
- Status Updates on Social Security-Related Imposter Scams



In a Social Security-related imposter scam, a scammer claims to be an SSA or other government employee. Scammers may threaten arrest or other legal action unless one immediately pays a fine or fee, promise a benefit increase or other assistance in exchange for payment, or demand personal information. Scammers often require payment by retail gift card, cash, wire transfer, digital currency, or prepaid debit card. These scams primarily use the telephone, but some scams also use email, text messages, social media, or U.S. Mail. Many of the scams originate overseas.

OIG has established a multidisciplinary team of professionals that develops and implements innovative approaches to combat these scams through public outreach and education, criminal investigations and prosecution, and civil enforcement.

Public Outreach and Education

OIG, in coordination with SSA, collaborates with all levels of government, leverages anti-fraud interests of private companies, and engages with special interest groups who focus on combatting fraud, protecting vulnerable populations, and reaching underserved communities. We regularly engage with the media to reach new audiences, including through television and podcast interviews, social media, and print media. We continue to expand our reach by fostering strategic relationships and identifying new alliances.

March 7, 2024, marked our fifth annual National Slam the Scam Day, which is part of the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Protection Week. The initiative's goal is to educate the public about

the tactics scammers use in Social Security-related and other government imposter scams that continue to plague the nation. It further encourages the public to hang up on scammers or otherwise ignore or disengage with these scams. We continue to increase the reach and impact of our efforts with each successive Slam the Scam Day.

This year, in coordination with SSA, we spread our message through traditional and social media outlets, participated in English and Spanish chats on X (formerly known as Twitter), and developed and disseminated video clips. Highlights of this year's Slam the Scam Day included:

- The U.S. Senate passed a **resolution** by Unanimous Consent designating March 7, 2024, as National Slam the Scam Day;
- Elected federal, state, and local representatives shared messages on social media and through press releases;
- Federal, state, and local government agencies, private companies, and nonprofit organizations shared the Slam the Scam message through social media, blog posts, press releases, email messages, and print material;
- Media coverage garnered an approximate audience of over 400 million people, including television, radio, and online and print audiences;
- **Social Security IG looks to stop fraud revved up by AI** aired on Federal News Network on March 21, 2024, which included coverage of Slam the Scam Day; and
- Leading up to the event, OIG staff was interviewed live on KWTW News 9, Oklahoma City, OK, on March 1, 2024 to talk about Slam the Scam Day

National Slam the Scam Day March 7, 2024



X (formerly Twitter)
21.3 Million
#SlamtheScam chats



Facebook
4.3 Million
#SlamtheScam followers



Instagram
1.3 Million
reach from Slam the Scam posts

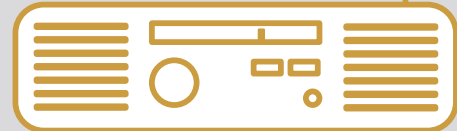
Senate Resolution

Senate passed by Unanimous Consent **S.Res.584** designating March 7, 2024 as National Slam the Scam Day



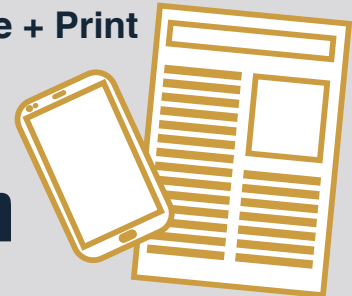
Radio Audience:

3.4 million



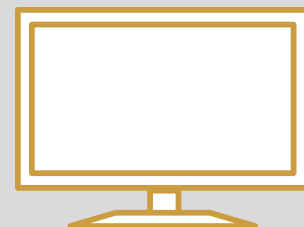
Total Online + Print Audience:

400 million



Television Audience:

4.2 million



Note: All figures in this graphic are estimates.

Produced at U.S. taxpayer expense.

Scam-Related Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions

OIG criminal investigators and investigative counsel work diligently to develop leads, prosecute criminals, and disrupt scams.

Below, we highlight one Social Security-related scam case.

Owner of Telecommunications Company Sentenced to 2 Months in Prison, Ordered to Pay \$393,000 for Money Laundering in Which the Crime Facilitated Impersonation Schemes

In an imposter scam case investigated by our Major Case Unit, an owner and Chief Executive Officer of a voice-over-internet protocol (VoIP) company was sentenced for his role in transmitting imposter scam calls into the U.S. The business owner admitted in a September 2022 guilty plea that since around 2016, his company provided telecommunication services for a client, an India-based VoIP provider. By November 2018, he said he was aware that the VoIP provider was using his services to route fraudulent robocall traffic, such as government imposter calls impersonating SSA or IRS agents into the U.S. telephone system and causing U.S. consumers to be defrauded. While the man said he was not aware of all the specifics of the fraud schemes that the client engaged in, by at least May 2019, he said he knew the funds paid to his company by the VoIP client for continued telecommunication services constituted proceeds of unlawful activities. He also admitted to knowingly conducting his own unlawful monetary transactions.

In December 2023, the man pleaded guilty to money laundering and was sentenced to 60 days in prison and 2 years of supervised release. The judge also ordered him to pay restitution of \$216,700 to victims of the impersonation schemes and entered a forfeiture judgment of \$176,000. We investigated this case with the USPIS.

Civil Enforcement

As discussed in the Legal Overview section, OIG enforces Section 1140, a consumer protection law that prohibits misleading consumers by giving a false impression of association with, or authorization or endorsement by, SSA through any type of communication.

OIG continues to notify gateway providers of their potential civil liability, encourage proactive techniques to block transmission of scam calls, and where appropriate, impose fines. Working together with federal and state law enforcement partners, the team shares knowledge, strategizes based on its analyses of industry trends, and coordinates parallel enforcement actions for maximum national consumer protection impact.

Status Updates on Social Security-Related Imposter Scams

Since October 2019, we have provided updates on our efforts to combat Social Security-related imposter scams to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security; U.S. Senate Committee on Finance; and U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. OIG began publicly releasing those updates in FY 2021. The **reports** share information about Social Security-related and government imposter scam allegation trends and address our ongoing efforts to raise public awareness of and disrupt them. The reports also provide a brief analysis of scam allegation data and highlight scam-related investigations and outreach.

This reporting period, we published two Quarterly Scam Updates covering the third quarter of FY 2023 (April 1, 2023, to June 30, 2023) and the fourth quarter of FY 2023 (July 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023).

National Anti-Fraud Committee



The National Anti-Fraud Committee (NAFC) is a partnership between SSA and SSA OIG that supports strategies for combatting fraud, waste, and abuse in SSA programs and operations. The NAFC co-chairs are SSA's Deputy Commissioner (DC) for the Office of Analytics, Review, and Oversight and SSA OIG's Chief Strategy Officer (CSO). Other SSA voting members include all of its DCs, Chief Actuary, and General Counsel. Non-voting members include SSA's Associate Commissioner for the Office of Program Integrity, Lead Regional Commissioner for Fraud, Chief Information Security Officer, and all of SSA OIG's Assistant IGs and the Chief Counsel to the IG.

The NAFC meets quarterly to share information and create concrete steps for addressing SSA fraud. The NAFC also holds an annual multi-day summit on pressing issues and emerging trends, and tracks action items and outcomes from the summit throughout the year. As reported in the Fall 2023 Semiannual Report to Congress, the 2023 Summit dedicated a day focusing on AI. As part of an action item generated from the Summit, SSA OIG's CSO participated in a series of conversations with the Office of Management and Budget's Chief Information Officer and Chief Financial Officer groups to discuss how AI changes the fraud landscape. The discussions focused on SSA and SSA OIG's goal to use AI to combat fraud and leverage existing resources to protect SSA programs and operations from fraudulent actors.

Appendix A-N

Appendix A: Reporting Requirements

Appendix B: Reports with Questioned Costs

Appendix C: Reports with Funds Put to Better Use

Appendix D: Office of Audit Reports Issued

Appendix E: Significant Monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed

Appendix F: Significant Non-monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed

Appendix G: Open Recommendations and Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations

Appendix H: Audit Reports Issued Prior to the Reporting Period for Which No Management Decision Had Been Made by the End of This Reporting Period

Appendix I: Management Decisions Made Regarding Reports Issued in a Previous Reporting Period

Appendix J: Closed Audits and Investigations Not Available to the Public

Appendix K: *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 Compliance*

Appendix L: Instances of Agency Interference or Refusal to Provide Information

Appendix M: Peer Reviews

Appendix N: Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated



Reporting Requirements

This report meets the requirements of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, and includes information as mandated by Congress.¹

| Section | Requirement | Page(s) |
|---------|---|-----------------|
| 5(a)(1) | A description of significant problems, abuses, and deficiencies relating to the administration of programs and operations of the establishment and associated reports and recommendations for corrective action made by the Office | 20-21 |
| 5(a)(2) | An identification of each recommendation made before the reporting period, for which corrective action has not been completed, including the potential cost savings associated with the recommendation | 39-45 |
| 5(a)(3) | A summary of significant investigations closed during the reporting period | 5; 10-17; 28 |
| 5(a)(4) | An identification of the total number of convictions during the reporting period resulting from investigations | 6 |
| 5(a)(5) | Information regarding each audit, inspection, or evaluation report issued during the reporting period, including— A. a listing of each audit, inspection, or evaluation; B. if applicable, the total dollar value of questioned costs (including a separate category for the dollar value of questioned or unsupported costs) and the dollar value of recommendations that funds be put to better use, including whether a management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period | 37-38 |
| 5(a)(6) | Information regarding any management decision made during the reporting period with respect to any audit, inspection, or evaluation issued during a previous reporting period | 53 |
| 5(a)(7) | The information described under section 804(b) of the <i>Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996</i> (Public Law 104–208, §101(f) [title VIII], 31 U.S.C. 3512 note) | 55 |
| 5(a)(8) | A. An appendix containing the results of any peer review conducted by another Office of Inspector General during the reporting period; or B. If no peer review has been conducted within that reporting period, a statement identifying the date of the last peer review conducted by another Office of Inspector General | 57 |
| 5(a)(9) | A list of any outstanding recommendations from any peer review conducted by another Office of Inspector General that have not been fully implemented, including a statement describing the status of the implementation and why implementation is not complete | 57 |

1. Effective December 27, 2022, the *Inspector General Act of 1978* was reorganized and codified as 5 U.S.C. §§ 401–424; the requirements for the Semiannual Report to Congress appear in 5 U.S.C. § 405. Section 5273 of the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023*, however, amended the semiannual reporting requirements as they had appeared in section 5 of the *Inspector General Act* prior to the codification. These revisions are not yet codified in 5 U.S.C. § 405 and instead appear in the statutory notes as amendments not shown in the text.

| Section | Requirement | Page(s) |
|----------|---|---------|
| 5(a)(10) | A list of any peer reviews conducted by the Inspector General of another Office of the Inspector General during the reporting period, including a list of any outstanding recommendations made from any previous peer review (including any peer review conducted before the reporting period) that remain outstanding or have not been fully implemented | 57 |
| 5(a)(11) | Statistical tables showing— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. the total number of investigative reports issued during the reporting period; B. the total number of persons referred to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution during the reporting period; C. the total number of persons referred to State and local prosecuting authorities during the reporting period; and D. the total number of indictments and criminal informations during the reporting period that resulted from any prior referral to prosecuting authorities | 5-6 |
| 5(a)(12) | A description of the metrics used for developing the data for the statistical tables under paragraph 5(a)(11) | 5-6 |
| 5(a)(13) | A report on each investigation conducted by the Office where allegations of misconduct were substantiated involving a senior Government employee or senior official (as defined by the Office) if the establishment does not have senior government employees, which shall include— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. the name of the senior government employee, if already made public by the Office; and B. a detailed description of— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the facts and circumstances of the investigation; and ii. the status and disposition of the matter, including— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. if the matter was referred to the Department of Justice, the date of the referral; and II. if the Department of Justice declined the referral, the date of the declination | 58 |
| 5(a)(14) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. A detailed description of any instance of whistleblower retaliation, including information about the official found to have engaged in retaliation; and B. What, if any, consequences the establishment actually imposed to hold the official described in subparagraph (A) accountable | 17 |
| 5(a)(15) | Information related to interference by the establishment, including— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. a detailed description of any attempt by the establishment to interfere with the independence of the Office, including— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. with budget constraints designed to limit the capabilities of the Office; and ii. incidents where the establishment has resisted or objected to oversight activities of the Office or restricted or significantly delayed access to information, including the justification of the establishment for such action; and B. a summary of each report made to the head of the establishment under section 6(c)(2) during the reporting period | 56 |

| Section | Requirement | Page(s) |
|----------|--|---------|
| 5(a)(16) | Detailed descriptions of the particular circumstances of each— A. inspection, evaluation, and audit conducted by the Office that is closed and was not disclosed to the public; and B. investigation conducted by the Office involving a senior Government employee that is closed and was not disclosed to the public | 54 |

Reports with Questioned Costs

Questioned costs include costs that we determined, based on our audits: (1) violated a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds; (2) were not supported by adequate documentation; or (3) were unnecessary or unreasonable. Disallowed costs are those questioned costs identified through our audits that the Social Security Administration management has sustained or agreed should not be charged to the government. Section 5(a)(5)(B) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, requires that we report the total dollar value of questioned costs (including a separate category for the dollar value of unsupported costs), including whether a management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period.

| Reports with Questioned Costs for October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024 | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Number of Reports | Dollar Value Supported | Dollar Value Unsupported |
| A. For which no management decision had been made by the commencement of the reporting period. | 25 | \$2,658,736,014 | \$98,939,045 |
| B. Which were issued during the reporting period. ¹ | 3 | \$184,940,654 | \$0 |
| Subtotal (A + B) | 28 | \$2,843,676,668 | \$98,939,045 |
| Less: | | | |
| C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period. | | | |
| i. Dollar value of disallowed costs. ² | 11 | \$306,522,327 | \$98,541,401 |
| ii. Dollar value of costs not disallowed. ³ | 1 | \$359,839,314 | \$0 |
| Subtotal (i + ii) | 12 | \$666,361,641 | \$98,541,401 |
| D. For which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period. ⁴ | 19 | \$2,177,315,027 | \$397,644 |

1. See Appendix D for a detailed listing of all reports issued, including reports with questioned costs.
2. Some reports have multiple monetary recommendations with different decisions on the dollar values and are accounted for as follows: two reports have one recommendation recorded in C.i. and one recommendation recorded in D.
3. This report has one recommendation recorded in C.ii. and one recommendation recorded in D.
4. Some reports have multiple monetary recommendations with different decisions on the dollar values and are accounted for as follows: (1) two reports have one recommendation recorded in C.i. and one recommendation recorded in D.; and (2) one report has one recommendation recorded in C.ii. and one recommendation recorded in D.

Reports with Funds Put to Better Use

Funds put to better use are funds that the Social Security Administration could use more efficiently if it took action to implement our recommendations. Section 5(a)(5)(B) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, also requires that we report the dollar value of recommendations that funds be put to better use, including whether a management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period.

| Reports with Funds Put to Better Use for October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024 | | |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| | Number of Reports | Dollar Value |
| A. For which no management decision had been made by the commencement of the reporting period. | 16 | \$1,998,213,891 |
| B. Which were issued during the reporting period. ¹ | 2 | \$82,927,445 |
| Subtotal (A + B) | 18 | \$2,081,141,336 |
| Less: | | |
| C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period. | | |
| i. Dollar value of costs agreed to by management. ² | 8 | \$408,030,396 |
| ii. Dollar value of costs not agreed to by management. | 0 | \$0 |
| Subtotal (i + ii) | 8 | \$408,030,396 |
| D. For which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period. ² | 11 | \$1,673,110,940 |

1. See Appendix D for a detailed listing of all reports issued, including reports with funds put to better use.

2. Some reports have multiple monetary recommendations with different decisions on the dollar values and are accounted for as follows: one report has one recommendation recorded in C.i. and one recommendation recorded in D.

Office of Audit Reports Issued

We issued six reports during this reporting period. *The Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, requires that we identify reports with non-monetary findings, questioned costs, and funds put to better use. We issued three reports with questioned costs and two reports with funds put to better use during this period. Audit reports are available on our website at [this link](#). Unless otherwise noted, the Social Security Administration made management decisions on the text of the recommendations by the end of the reporting period for each issued report. Audit reports may be listed more than once in the charts that follow.

October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024

Reports with Non-Monetary Findings

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Management Challenge(s) ¹ |
|---|---------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| The Social Security Administration's Major Management and Performance Challenges During Fiscal Year 2023 ² | 022330 | 11/3/2023 | N/A ³ |
| The Social Security Administration's Financial Reporting for Fiscal Year 2023 | 152308 | 11/14/2023 | N/A ⁴ |
| Follow-up: The Social Security Administration's Implementation of Mail Procedures | 042312 | 1/25/2024 | Service Delivery |

October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024

Reports with Questioned Costs

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Management Challenge(s) | Dollar Value |
|--|---------------|------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Auxiliary Beneficiaries Who Do Not Have Their Own, or Have an Incorrect, Social Security Numbers | 012312 | 10/13/2023 | Improper Payments | \$2,619,544 |
| Match of Puerto Rico Death Information Against Social Security Administration Records | 022332 | 1/18/2024 | Improper Payments | \$4,855,241 |
| The Social Security Administration's Enforcement of the Earnings Test | A-08-21-51049 | 2/2/2024 | Improper Payments | \$177,465,869 |
| Total | | | | \$184,940,654 |

1. This column identifies the management challenge(s) for each issued audit report. For a list of the six management challenges, see the Audit Overview section of this report. These challenges apply to the audit reports in all tables in this appendix.
2. This report is located on our website under "Other Publications" at [this link](#).
3. This was a mandatory report.
4. This was a mandatory report.

October 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024

Reports with Funds Put to Better Use

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Management Challenge(s) | Dollar Value |
|---|---------------|------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Match of Puerto Rico Death Information Against Social Security Administration Records | 022332 | 1/18/2024 | Improper Payments | \$1,858,021 |
| The Social Security Administration's Enforcement of the Earnings Test | A-08-21-51049 | 2/2/2024 | Improper Payments | \$81,069,424 |
| Total | | | | \$82,927,445 |

Significant Monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed



Unimplemented Significant Monetary Recommendations Fiscal Years 2017 – 2023 (through March 31)

TOTALING \$3,164,378,207

Report Title, Report Number, Issue Date
Unimplemented Recommendation(s), Dollar Value(s)

■ Fiscal Year 2023

No reports with unimplemented significant monetary recommendations for which corrective actions have not been completed.

■ Fiscal Year 2022

Numident Death Alerts

(A-06-21-51086 – issued 9/30/22)

\$13,108,743 Questioned Costs
\$5,628,182 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 1: Resolve all pending Numident death alerts generated from June 2013 through August 2022, terminate benefits, and recover improper payments, as appropriate.

Work Review Determinations for Disabled Beneficiaries

(A-07-21-51012 – issued 9/29/22)

\$456,252,223 Questioned Costs

Recommendation 2: In the system that will replace eWork, incorporate controls to increase the accurate processing of work continuing disability reviews (CDR) and functionality to expand automation of work CDR processing and effectuation, including those involving multiple entitlements, reducing the need for manual actions.

Spouses and Widow(er)s Who Have Unverified Pensions

(A-13-17-50161 – issued 8/24/22)

\$9,956 Questioned Costs
\$118,378 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 3: Implement an internal control that prevents a future pension entitlement date on the Master Beneficiary Record (MBR) of more than 1 year in the future.

\$19,383,880 Questioned Costs
\$9,779,480 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 4¹: Identify and correct the future pension entitlement dates on the MBR for the estimated 5,434 beneficiaries who have entitlement dates that do not comply with policy or are not recorded on the MBR.

Incorrect Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Benefit Payment Computations that Resulted in Overpayments

(A-07-18-50674 – issued 5/26/22)

\$368,326,080 Questioned Costs

Recommendation 1: Improve Agency systems to automate benefit computations and reduce the need for manual processing.

Deceased Beneficiaries in Suspended Payment Status

(A-08-19-50800 – issued 11/22/21)

\$48,423,411 Questioned Costs
\$7,983,516 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 3: Verify and post death information, where appropriate, for the remaining beneficiaries in the State Death population.

\$14,130,460 Questioned Costs
\$7,993,948 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 4: Instruct technicians to take appropriate actions on the remaining beneficiaries in the Death Suspense population.

\$149,718,615 Questioned Costs
\$16,709,589 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 5: Establish systems criteria to identify Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance beneficiaries in Address Suspense who are likely deceased, such as identifying beneficiaries suspended for prolonged periods who do not have activity on any Social Security Administration (SSA) records since their suspension. Once established, SSA should update policy to instruct technicians to search for death information.

Fiscal Year 2021

Overpayments with Recovery Agreements that Will Extend Beyond 2049

(A-07-19-50775 – issued 9/28/21)

\$1,240,312,343 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation: Establish consistent criteria to ensure it identifies existing overpayments for which the Recovery of Overpayments, Accounting and Reporting system deleted a portion of the overpayment balance as part of a plan to address the untracked debt amount when it implements a solution to the Recovery of Overpayments, Accounting and Reporting system limitation.

The Social Security Administration's Application of the Retirement Insurance Benefits Limitation and Reduced Widow(er)'s Benefit Policy

(A-01-13-23095 – issued 6/4/21)

\$28,651,232 Questioned Costs
\$2,673,456 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation: Review the cases in our population and take the appropriate corrective action to assess and recover the overpayments.

1. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, it has not provided sufficient information to enable our audit team to verify that it has fully implemented it.

Follow-up on Underpayments Payable to Terminated Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries

(A-09-19-50848 – issued 12/11/20)

\$142,298,569 Questioned Costs
\$6,706,311 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 3: Identify and take action on the population of terminated beneficiaries with underpayments payable to eligible beneficiaries and individuals.

Fiscal Year 2020

The Social Security Administration's Rejection of State Electronic Death Registration Reports

(A-08-18-50499 – issued 9/21/20)²

\$84,615 Questioned Costs
\$62,943 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 3: Include a Numident match in the Death Information Processing System, or similar process, to assess Online Verification System discrepancies before rejecting an Electronic Death Registration report.

Fiscal Year 2019

Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries with Overpayments on Suspended and Terminated Records

(A-07-18-50317 – issued 9/25/19)

\$17,976,178 Questioned Costs

Recommendation 2: Establish a process to identify overpayments that exist on suspended or terminated Social Security numbers that the Re-entitled Beneficiaries process does not detect, so the Agency can transfer and recover them via benefit withholding.

Dedicated Account Underpayments Payable to Children Receiving Supplemental Security Income³

(A-04-18-50607 – issued 9/17/19)

\$65,223,112 Questioned Costs

Recommendation 2: Identify and take corrective action on the remaining population of Supplemental Security Income recipients with unpaid dedicated account underpayments.

Recovery of Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Overpayments When a Contingently Liable Beneficiary Stops Receiving Benefits

(A-04-18-50651 – issued 5/15/19)⁴

\$15,101,940 Questioned Costs

Recommendation 2: Review and take action to remove the overpayment balance from the 4,690 terminated contingently liable beneficiaries and transfer the debt balance to the original debtor

2. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

3. SSA considers this recommendation implemented.

4. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

for an immediate payment of the overpayment or seek recovery through additional debt collection tools.

■ Fiscal Year 2018

The Social Security Administration's Use of Administrative Tolerance Waivers

(A-04-16-50145 – issued 8/1/18)

\$12,568,202 Questioned Costs

Recommendation: Establish controls in the new Debt Management Product, as part of its Debt Management modernization initiative, that ensure technicians can only use the administrative tolerance waiver for overpayments allowable under the provision.

Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Debtors Who Were Not Current on an Installment Agreement

(A-04-18-50265 – issued 5/25/18)⁵

\$88,295,888 Questioned Costs

Recommendation: Review the 12,269 delinquent debtor records and take action, where appropriate, to begin benefit adjustment or recovery using its external collection tools.

Higher Benefits for Dually Entitled Widow(er)s Had They Delayed Applying for Retirement Benefits

(A-09-18-50559 – issued 2/14/18)

\$485,911 Questioned Costs
\$36,300 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 1⁶: Take action, as appropriate, for the 41 beneficiaries identified by our audit.

\$131,332,025 Questioned Costs
\$9,811,164 Funds Put to Better Use

Recommendation 2⁷: Evaluate the results for the 41 beneficiaries in our sample and determine whether SSA should review the remaining population of 13,514 beneficiaries.

■ Fiscal Year 2017

Widow(er)s Eligible for an Earlier Initial Month of Entitlement

(A-09-17-50187 – issued 8/7/17)⁸

\$285,191,557 Questioned Costs

Recommendation 2: Determine the feasibility of reviewing the remaining population of widow(er)s who may be eligible for additional months of benefits before their application filing date and could have chosen an earlier initial month of entitlement.

5. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, it has not provided sufficient information to enable our audit team to verify that it has fully implemented it.
6. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.
7. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.
8. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

Significant Non-monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed

16

Unimplemented Significant
Non-monetary Recommendations
Fiscal Years 2017 – 2023 (through March 31)

Report Title, Report Number, Issue Date
Unimplemented Recommendation(s)

■ Fiscal Year 2023

No reports with significant non-monetary recommendations for which corrective actions have not been completed.

■ Fiscal Year 2022

Numident Death Alerts

(A-06-21-50186 – issued 9/30/22)

Recommendation 2¹: Establish a timeliness goal for resolution of Numident death alerts.

Recommendation 4²: Establish management controls to periodically ensure Numident death alerts are resolved in a timely manner.

inputs to an applicant-submitted Form SS-5 and evidentiary documents, and provide feedback to the technicians who made input errors (such as race and ethnicity) or did not use the appropriate evidentiary documents.

Recommendation 3⁴: Revise enumeration policy to include clear instructions for when Form SSA-5002 is required and how to properly document the form.

Recommendation 9: Update the National Mail Handling Business Process to include standard Agency-wide mitigation steps for misdirected mail including original documents.

The Social Security Administration's Enumeration Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

(A-15-21-51015 – issued 9/30/22)

Recommendation 2³: Update quality control reviews to include comparison of the Social Security Number Application Process

1. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.
2. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.
3. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.
4. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

The Social Security Administration's Oversight of Disability Determination Services' Financial Management

(A-15-21-51117 – issued 9/20/22)

Recommendation 1: Revise the Code of Federal Regulations and/or the Program Operations Manual System to provide (a) detailed guidance related to financial oversight of the Disability Determination Services (DDS) and (b) specific instruction to the DDSs to uniformly carry out their financial management responsibilities. In addition, SSA should specify what actions it will take (in compliance with the *Social Security Act*) to remedy DDSs' recurring financial management findings and lack of fiscal control procedures.

Agile Software Development at the Social Security Administration

(A-14-20-50947 – issued 8/24/22)⁵

Recommendation 4: Strengthen its controls to more effectively enforce implementation of the updated Agile guidance among projects and teams.

Follow-up on Deceased Beneficiaries and Recipients with No Death Information on the Numident

(A-09-20-50936 – issued 5/4/22)

Recommendation 2⁶: Take action, as appropriate, to record death information in the Numident for the 15,714 beneficiaries identified by our current audit.

Recommendation 3⁷: Take appropriate action to record death information to the Numident for the 595,514 beneficiaries identified by our prior audits.

Students Whose Benefits Were Erroneously Terminated When They Reached Age 18

(A-09-19-50823 – issued 4/22/22)

Recommendation 5: Update the Title II Redesign System to ensure it generates an alert when SSA has terminated benefits to a child upon attaining age 18; however, the benefit record indicates the individual is a full-time student after they attain age 18.

Fiscal Year 2021

The Social Security Administration's Administrative Finality Policy

(A-01-19-50859 – issued 5/28/21)

Recommendation: Finalize its decision on updating its administrative finality policy and execute an action plan with specific milestones to ensure any updates are implemented timely.

Fiscal Year 2020

Miscellaneous Benefit Suspensions for Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries

(A-07-19-50799 – issued 9/21/20)

Recommendation 3: Implement controls, such as systems alerts and management reports, to identify beneficiaries in miscellaneous suspense status and ensure employees take corrective actions timely.

5. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

6. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

7. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

Beneficiaries with Representative Payees and Earnings

(A-02-17-50143 – issued 3/5/20)

Recommendation 4: Revise notices sent to beneficiaries and their representative payees informing them of benefit increases due to additional earnings to include the employer(s) name, earnings amounts, a reminder to report errors to the SSA, and instructions on reporting errors.

Fiscal Year 2019

Recovery of Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Overpayments When a Contingently Liable Beneficiary Stops Receiving Benefits

(A-04-18-50651 – issued 5/15/19)

Recommendation 3: Establish controls to remove the outstanding debt from terminated contingently liable beneficiaries and transfer the balance to the original debtor for an immediate payment of the overpayment or seek recovery through additional debt collection tools when available.

Fiscal Year 2018

Higher Benefits for Dually Entitled Widow(er)s Had They Delayed Applying for Retirement Benefits

(A-09-18-50559 – issued 2/14/18)⁸

Recommendation 4: Determine whether it should develop additional controls to ensure it informs widow(er) beneficiaries of their option to delay their application for retirement benefits.

Fiscal Year 2017

The Social Security Administration's Telework Program and Its Effect on Customer Service (Congressional Response Report)

(A-04-17-50267 – issued 7/12/17)⁹

Recommendation 3: Determine the effect telework has on customer wait times when a field office experiences an unusually high number of visitors.

8. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

9. SSA considers this recommendation implemented; however, OIG disagrees.

Open Recommendations and Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations

The Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General has open recommendations dating from fiscal year (FY) 2012. All recommendations from FYs prior to FY 2012 are closed. The chart below identifies the number of reports with unimplemented recommendations by FY and the aggregate potential cost savings of those recommendations.

| Reports Issued through September 30, 2023 | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Reports with Open Recommendations | | | |
| Fiscal Year | Number of Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations | Number of Unimplemented Recommendations | Dollar Value of Aggregate Potential Cost Savings |
| 2023 | 26 | 95 | \$2,072,914,010 |
| 2022 | 15 | 50 | \$1,335,866,039 |
| 2021 | 9 | 13 | \$1,620,357,023 |
| 2020 | 3 | 3 | \$147,558 |
| 2019 | 10 | 18 | \$811,818,194 |
| 2018 | 8 | 11 | \$260,113,081 |
| 2017 | 3 | 4 | \$657,415,697 |
| 2016 | 3 | 7 | \$27,974,234 |
| 2015 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| 2014 | 5 | 5 | \$136,153 |
| 2013 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 2012 | 2 | 2 | \$133,694,565 |
| TOTAL | 87 | 211 | \$6,920,436,554 |

Below is additional detail for each report included in the Number of Reports column above. All audit reports are available on our website at [this link](#).

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Dollar Value |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Allegations of Representative Payees' Misuse of Benefits | A-09-19-50797 | 9/29/23 | \$186,414,947 |
| Government Pension Data for the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset Determinations | A-13-20-50970 | 9/28/23 | N/A |
| Mobile Phone Security | 142314 | 9/28/23 | N/A |
| Whistleblower Protection for Contractors | 152306 | 9/27/23 | N/A |
| Manually Processed Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Benefit Termination Actions | A-07-21-51043 | 9/27/23 | \$53,362,441 |
| Windfall Offset Determinations | A-09-18-50697 | 9/27/23 | N/A |
| Follow-up Review of Self-employment Earnings Removed from the Master Earnings File | A-06-21-51020 | 9/26/23 | \$67,137,261 |
| Digital Identity in my Social Security | 142307 | 9/26/23 | N/A |
| Security of the Web Identification, Authentication, and Access Control Systems | 142311 | 9/26/23 | N/A |
| Ransomware Prevention and Response | 142309 | 9/25/23 | N/A |
| Security of the Earnings Record Maintenance System-Cloud Performance Audit | 142310 | 9/25/23 | N/A |
| Statutory Benefit Continuation for Disability Beneficiaries | A-07-21-51105 | 9/25/23 | \$563,584,926 |
| The Social Security Administration's Determinations of Supplemental Security Income Recipients' Trusts | A-02-21-51026 | 9/22/23 | \$213,252 |
| Workers' Compensation Lump-sum Settlements | 012308 | 9/21/23 | \$360,199,387 |
| Dedicated Accounts for Supplemental Security Income Recipients | A-04-21-51031 | 9/20/23 | N/A |
| Processing Non-citizens' Original Social Security Numbers Electronically Through Enumeration Programs | A-08-22-51136 | 9/20/23 | N/A |
| State Workers' Compensation and Public Disability Benefits' Reverse Offset Plans' Impact on the Disability Insurance Trust Fund | A-02-19-50867 | 9/18/23 | \$408,147 |
| The Social Security Administration's Controls over Modernized Development Worksheets | A-02-22-51157 | 9/18/23 | \$841,409,257 |
| The Social Security Administration's Determinations of Supplemental Security Income Recipients' Real Properties | 022328 | 9/1/23 | \$184,392 |

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Dollar Value |
|---|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Controls over the Social Security Administration's National 800-number Service During the COVID-19 Pandemic | A-02-21-51079 | 8/29/23 | N/A |
| Funds Dedicated to Address Program Integrity and Hearings Backlog Workloads | A-15-19-50885 | 8/14/23 | N/A |
| Numberholders Age 100 or Older Who Did Not Have Death Information on the Numident | A-06-21-51022 | 7/31/23 | N/A |
| Manual Processes for Resource-intensive Workloads | A-07-19-50882 | 7/21/23 | N/A |
| The Social Security Administration's Oversight of Beneficiaries Who Receive Benefits Under the Direct Express® Debit Card Program | A-04-20-50977 | 6/22/23 | N/A |
| Edit Routines Used to Reinstate Wage Items from the Earnings Suspense File | A-03-21-51013 | 6/12/23 | N/A |
| Compliance with the <i>Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019</i> in Fiscal Year 2022 | A-15-22-51183 | 5/5/23 | N/A |
| Numident Death Alerts* | A-06-21-51086 | 9/30/22 | \$18,736,925 |
| The Social Security Administration's Enumeration Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic* | A-15-21-51015 | 9/30/22 | N/A |
| Work Review Determinations for Disabled Beneficiaries* | A-07-21-51012 | 9/29/22 | \$553,284,181 |
| Follow-up on Controls over Special Payment Amount Overpayments for Social Security Beneficiaries | A-09-19-50794 | 9/29/22 | \$87,251,186 |
| The Social Security Administration's Challenges and Successes in Obtaining Data to Determine Eligibility and Payment Amounts | A-01-21-51029 | 9/23/22 | N/A |
| Follow-up on Processing Internal Revenue Service Alerts for Supplemental Security Income Recipients | A-03-18-50277 | 9/20/22 | \$34,016,434 |
| The Social Security Administration's Oversight of Disability Determination Services' Financial Management* | A-15-21-51117 | 9/20/22 | N/A |
| Agile Software Development at the Social Security Administration* | A-14-20-50947 | 8/24/22 | N/A |
| Spouses and Widow(er)s Who Have Unverified Pensions* | A-13-17-50161 | 8/24/22 | \$29,291,694 |
| Incorrect Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Benefit Payment Computations that Resulted in Overpayments* | A-07-18-50674 | 5/26/22 | \$368,326,080 |

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Dollar Value |
|--|---------------|------------|-----------------|
| The Social Security Administration's Mailing Process During the COVID-19 Pandemic | A-08-21-51115 | 5/13/22 | N/A |
| The Social Security Administration's Compliance with the <i>Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019</i> in Fiscal Year 2021 | A-15-21-51121 | 5/11/22 | N/A |
| Follow-up on Deceased Beneficiaries and Recipients with No Death Information on the Numident* | A-09-20-50936 | 5/4/22 | N/A |
| Students Whose Benefits Were Erroneously Terminated When They Reached Age 18* | A-09-19-50823 | 4/22/22 | N/A |
| Deceased Beneficiaries in Suspended Payment Status* | A-08-19-50800 | 11/22/21 | \$244,959,539 |
| Overpayments with Recovery Agreements that Will Extend Beyond 2049* | A-07-19-50775 | 9/28/21 | \$1,240,312,343 |
| The Social Security Administration's Processing of Misuse Allegations of Individual Representative Payees | A-13-18-50712 | 6/14/21 | \$2,145,404 |
| System Alerts for Beneficiaries Identified by the Delinquent Debt Trigger File | A-07-18-50743 | 6/9/21 | \$36,806,243 |
| The Social Security Administration's Application of the Retirement Insurance Benefits Limitation and Reduced Widow(er)'s Benefit Policy* | A-01-13-23095 | 6/4/21 | \$31,324,688 |
| The Social Security Administration's Administrative Finality Policy* | A-01-19-50859 | 5/28/21 | N/A |
| Follow-up on Underpayments Payable to Terminated Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries* | A-09-19-50848 | 12/11/20 | \$149,004,880 |
| Follow-up on Disabled Supplemental Security Income Recipients Potentially Eligible for Childhood Disability Benefits | A-13-18-50714 | 12/10/20 | N/A |
| Supplemental Security Income Recipients Denied Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Benefits Based on Lack of Technical Evidence | A-05-18-50654 | 11/30/20 | \$134,830,079 |
| Social Security Administration Beneficiaries Eligible for Total and Permanent Disability Federal Student Loan Discharge | A-06-17-50281 | 11/9/20 | \$25,933,386 |
| The Social Security Administration's Rejection of State Electronic Death Registration Reports* | A-08-18-50499 | 9/21/20 | \$147,558 |
| Miscellaneous Benefit Suspensions for Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries* | A-07-19-50799 | 9/21/20 | N/A |

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Dollar Value |
|---|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Beneficiaries with Representative Payees and Earnings* | A-02-17-50143 | 3/5/20 | N/A |
| Old-Age Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries with Overpayments on Suspended and Terminated Records* | A-07-18-50317 | 9/25/19 | \$17,976,178 |
| The Social Security Administration's Accounting for, and Monitoring of, Court-ordered Restitution | A-04-18-50633 | 9/24/19 | N/A |
| Overpayments Pending Collection for Miscellaneous Reasons | A-04-18-50546 | 9/24/19 | N/A |
| Dedicated Account Underpayments Payable to Children Receiving Supplemental Security Income* | A-04-18-50607 | 9/17/19 | \$65,223,112 |
| The Social Security Administration's Controls for Identifying Potentially Fraudulent Internet Claims | A-09-18-50655 | 9/13/19 | N/A |
| Supplemental Security Income Underpayments Due Deceased Recipients | A-06-18-50608 | 9/10/19 | \$467,994,323 |
| Follow-up: Aged Beneficiaries Whose Benefits Have Been Suspended for Address, Whereabouts Unknown, or Foreign Enforcement | A-09-16-50077 | 8/6/19 | \$115,422,539 |
| Follow-up: Underpayments on Prior Supplemental Security Income Records | A-07-18-50676 | 6/6/19 | \$127,431,265 |
| Recovery of Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Overpayments When a Contingently Liable Beneficiary Stops Receiving Benefits* | A-04-18-50651 | 5/15/19 | \$17,770,777 |
| Supplemental Security Income Underpayments | A-15-18-50612 | 12/28/18 | N/A |
| Effectiveness of the Social Security Administration's Medicare Non-utilization Project | A-08-17-50261 | 9/19/18 | \$17,583,591 |
| Institutionalized Beneficiaries Who Have Earnings | A-02-17-50140 | 8/20/18 | N/A |
| The Social Security Administration's Use of Administrative Tolerance Waivers* | A-04-16-50145 | 8/1/18 | \$12,568,202 |
| Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Debtors Who Were Not Current on an Installment Agreement* | A-04-18-50265 | 5/25/18 | \$88,295,888 |
| Manual Adjustments to Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Overpayments | A-07-18-50294 | 4/9/18 | N/A |
| Undeliverable Social Security Number Cards | A-15-17-50279 | 4/2/18 | N/A |
| Higher Benefits for Dually Entitled Widow(er)s Had They Delayed Applying for Retirement Benefits* | A-09-18-50559 | 2/14/18 | \$141,665,400 |

| Report Title | Report Number | Issue Date | Dollar Value |
|---|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Customer Wait Times in the Social Security Administration's Field Offices | A-04-18-50260 | 2/6/18 | N/A |
| Widow(er)s Eligible for an Earlier Initial Month of Entitlement* | A-09-17-50187 | 8/7/17 | \$285,453,378 |
| The Social Security Administration's Telework Program and Its Effect on Customer Service* | A-04-17-50267 | 7/12/17 | N/A |
| Individual Representative Payees Who Do Not Have a Social Security Number in the Social Security Administration's Payment Records | A-09-16-50159 | 2/17/17 | \$371,962,319 |
| The Social Security Administration's Plan to Achieve Self-Support Program | A-08-16-50030 | 9/27/16 | N/A |
| Households with Multiple Children Receiving Supplemental Security Income Payments Because of Mental Impairments | A-08-14-14098 | 3/2/16 | N/A |
| Higher Retirement Benefits Payable to Families of Disabled Beneficiaries | A-09-14-34080 | 2/2/16 | \$27,974,234 |
| Supplemental Security Income Overpayments Pending a Collection Determination by the Social Security Administration | A-07-15-15030 | 9/22/15 | N/A |
| Fraud Risk Performance Audit of the Social Security Administration's Disability Programs | A-15-15-25002 | 4/29/15 | N/A |
| Auxiliary Beneficiaries Who Do Not Have Their Own Social Security Number | A-01-14-14036 | 9/29/14 | \$136,153 |
| Payments to Individuals with Deaths Reported in California from 1980 to 1987 | A-06-14-21416 | 8/14/14 | N/A |
| Supplemental Security Income Recipients Who Had Not Cashed Their Checks Within 1 Year | A-09-13-23023 | 4/7/14 | N/A |
| Improper Use of Children's Social Security Numbers | A-03-12-21269 | 3/31/14 | N/A |
| Supplemental Security Income Telephone Wage Reporting | A-15-12-11233 | 2/6/14 | N/A |
| Direct Deposit Changes Initiated Through Financial Institutions and the Social Security Administration's Internet and Automated 800-Number Applications | A-14-12-21271 | 12/20/12 | N/A |
| Beneficiaries Who Had Not Cashed their Social Security Checks Within 1 Year | A-09-10-20133 | 7/19/12 | \$133,694,565 |
| Title II Deceased Beneficiaries Who Do Not Have Death Information on the Numident | A-09-11-21171 | 7/9/12 | N/A |

*Denotes that report contains significant unimplemented recommendation as reported in [Appendix E](#) or [Appendix F](#).

Audit Reports Issued Prior to the Reporting Period for Which No Management Decision Had Been Made by the End of This Reporting Period

We do not have any audit reports with recommendations issued by September 30, 2023, for which no management decision had been made by the end of this reporting period.

Management Decisions Made Regarding Reports Issued in a Previous Reporting Period

There were no reports issued in previous reporting periods where the Social Security Administration had not made a decision on the included recommendations. Therefore, we have nothing to report.

Closed Audits and Investigations Not Available to the Public

■ *Office of Audit*

We did not issue any audits during this period that were not made available to the public.

■ *Office of Investigations*

We closed the following five cases of alleged misconduct by senior government employees that were not disclosed to the public.

1. A senior employee was alleged to have disregarded concerns of unsecured Personal Identifiable Information within a Social Security Administration (SSA) office.
2. An SSA component was alleged to have not paid a representative attorney timely in violation of regulations.
3. A senior employee was alleged to have abused their position in the awarding of program eligibility.
4. A former senior employee was alleged to have cancelled vendor contracts prior to retiring and then receiving a contract award for the same contracts as a private entity.
5. Two senior employees were alleged to have failed to retain oversight over cases pending in court.

There were no allegations of misconduct that were substantiated.

Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 Compliance

Section 804(b) of the *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 (FFMIA)* requires the Office of the Inspector General to report whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) has met the milestones in a remediation plan.

Because SSA is in compliance with the *FFMIA*, it does not have a remediation plan. Therefore, we have no information to report.

Instances of Social Security Administration Interference or Refusal to Provide Information

During this reporting period, we have no instances of Social Security Administration (SSA) interference with Office of the Inspector General (OIG) independence to report, and no instances to report in which SSA employees refused to provide information or assistance to the OIG.

Peer Reviews

■ *Office of Audit*

Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards require our Office of Audit (OA) undergo a peer review every 3 years to determine whether we suitably designed our system of quality control, and whether we are complying with that system, to provide us with reasonable assurance of conforming with applicable professional standards.

We did not complete a peer review of any other Office of the Inspector General (OIG), nor did any other OIG complete a peer review of OA, during this reporting period. There are no outstanding recommendations from prior peer reviews we completed of other OIGs, nor from prior peer reviews other OIGs completed of OA. Department of Defense OIG performed OA's last peer review and issued its peer review report in September 2021.

■ *Office of Investigations*

Federal OIG investigative offices must undergo a peer review every 3 years to ensure that the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency *Quality Standards for Investigations and Quality Standards for Digital Forensics* are followed, and that law enforcement powers conferred by Section 6(e) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, or other authorities, are properly exercised. Each OIG is required to implement and maintain a system of quality control for its investigative operations to ensure compliance with required standards.

We did not complete a peer review of any other OIG, nor did any other OIG complete a peer review of our Office of Investigations (OI), during this reporting period. There are no outstanding recommendations from prior peer reviews we completed of other OIGs, nor from prior peer reviews other OIGs completed of OI. Department of Homeland Security OIG performed OI's last peer review and issued its peer review report in February 2020.

Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated

We did not have any cases involving senior Government employees where allegations of misconduct were substantiated during the reporting period.



Semiannual Report to Congress

October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

Office of the Inspector General | OIG 85-007

Produced and published at U.S. taxpayer expense