

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

October 2011



Objective

To identify and prevent individuals from inappropriately receiving Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments under multiple Social Security numbers (SSN) at the same address.

Background

In general, the Social Security Administration (SSA) assigns an individual only one SSN. However, in some cases, because of fraud or staff mistakes, the Agency has assigned individuals more than one SSN.

To view the full report, visit <http://oig.ssa.gov/audits-and-investigations/audit-reports/A-01-10-11008>

Follow-up: Individuals Receiving Benefits Inappropriately Under Multiple Social Security Numbers at the Same Address (A-01-10-11008)

Our Findings

Based on our review, SSA assessed \$2.5 million in overpayments to 77 beneficiaries who inappropriately received benefits under multiple SSNs at the same address. Of these 77 cases, 52 involved possible fraud and 25 had administrative errors. Additionally, the Agency avoided paying an estimated \$528,655 by discontinuing these incorrect payments. Our Office of Investigations is reviewing the aforementioned cases of possible fraud as well as 47 other cases. Therefore, we expect the Agency to assess additional overpayments.

For example, a New York resident began receiving SSI payments in October 1997 under one SSN, while working and earning over \$30,000 a year, on average, under a second SSN. In January 2007, she stopped working and began receiving disability benefits under the second SSN. Since her earnings and disability benefits made her ineligible for SSI, she was overpaid \$103,774 from October 1997 through May 2011. Our Office of Investigations is investigating this case.

Our Recommendation

We recommend SSA staff work with our Office of Investigations and assess overpayments where appropriate.

SSA agreed with this recommendation.