Numident Verification Systems
042405

August 2026 **Office of Audit Report Summary**

Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) could increase verified matches for data from external parties and improve the administration of its programs by enhancing criteria in its Numident verification systems.

Background

To administer its programs, SSA uses data-exchange agreements to obtain information from such external parties as prisons, the Internal Revenue Service, and state agencies.
For example, SSA uses external data to (1) reduce field office traffic, (2) prevent improper payments, and (3) maintain accurate records.

SSA verifies external data if the fields are an exact match to the Numident or discrepancies are within certain tolerances. The verification process helps ensure the Agency associates program information with the correct individuals' records and does not disadvantage individuals by placing incorrect information on their records.

We reviewed data from five Numident verification systems that processed external data that SSA used to administer its programs. We focused our review on approximately 1.3 billion external reports the systems did not verify between Fiscal Years 2021 and 2025. We analyzed 30 sampled reports to determine whether SSA could have matched the reports using tolerances allowed under its manual verification policy, criteria from other SSA systems, or advanced analytics.

Results

SSA could increase verified matches for data from external parties and improve the administration of its programs by enhancing criteria in its Numident verification systems. Our review of 30 judgmentally selected reports found SSA did not always program its Numident verification systems to match reports with minor name discrepancies. We determined SSA could increase verified matches if it programmed its systems using tolerances allowed under its manual verification policy, criteria from other SSA verification systems, or advanced analytics programs similar to those employed by other Federal agencies. With enhanced criteria, the Numident verification systems could have verified matches for all 30 sampled reports. If SSA increased matches by even 1 percent of the transactions it reported its systems could not verify during our audit timeframe, it would see millions of additional matches each year. These additional matches could potentially prevent improper payments, inaccurate records, and additional manual work for SSA employees.

Variations in SSA's internal matching criteria contributed to unmatched reports. The variations occurred because SSA components developed and managed their Numident verification systems independently and did not collaborate on the matching criteria their systems applied. In addition, SSA did not periodically assess risks and make necessary enhancements to respond to risks of not identifying a valid data match or incorrectly identifying a match as valid.

Conclusion

SSA has plans to coordinate and combine some of its Numident verification systems into a centralized application. However, systems owners have not enhanced, and have no plans to enhance, matching criteria in SSA's Numident verification systems. It is important that SSA take additional steps to enhance matching criteria based on risk assessments to optimize the organizational and program impact of data exchanges with other agencies.

Recommendations

We recommended SSA establish processes for components to collaborate on matching criteria and enhance criteria to increase verified matches where appropriate. SSA agreed to implement our recommendations.