

Fiscal Year 2021 Inspector General's Statement on the Social Security Administration's Major Management and Performance Challenges

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Report Summary

Objective

To summarize and assess the most serious management and performance challenges facing the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Background

The *Reports Consolidation Act of 2000* requires that Federal Inspectors General summarize and assess the most serious management and performance challenges facing agencies and the agencies' progress in addressing those challenges. The attached report provides our assessment.

Challenges

In Fiscal Year 2021 (October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021), we focused on the following management and performance challenges:

- *SSA's Response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic* - SSA continues to provide its customers with limited service in its field offices as most employees telework, a major challenge for an agency that, before the pandemic, served over 40 million customers a year in its field offices. [Read more](#).
- *Improve Administration of the Disability Programs* - SSA continues to face challenges with pending disability hearings and related processing times, and the COVID-19 pandemic renewed challenges with pending disability claims and continuing disability reviews. Continued focus is necessary to simplify work incentive regulations and create new opportunities for returning disabled beneficiaries to work. [Read more](#).
- *Improve the Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments* - SSA must be a responsible steward of the funds entrusted to its care by minimizing the risk of making improper payments and recovering overpayments when they occur. [Read more](#).
- *Improve Service Delivery* - SSA faces growing workloads and the expected retirement of experienced employees as it pursues its mission to deliver quality service to the public. [Read more](#).
- *Protect the Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability of SSA's Information Systems and Data* - SSA must ensure its information systems are secure and sensitive data are protected. [Read more](#).
- *Modernize Information Technology* - SSA must continue modernizing its information technology to accomplish its mission despite budget and resource constraints. [Read more](#).