



# Semiannual Report to Congress

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OCTOBER 1, 2021 – MARCH 31, 2022

Social Security Administration  
Office of the Inspector General





I am pleased to present this Semiannual Report to Congress summarizing the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) activities from October 1, 2021, through March 31, 2022.

During this reporting period, as the Nation began to emerge from some continued challenges of the ongoing global novel coronavirus SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19) pandemic, we remained focused on our core mission to serve the public through independent oversight of SSA's programs and operations. We continued to produce meaningful work through our audits and investigations of fraud, waste, mismanagement, and abuse in SSA's programs and operations.

Our Office of Audit continued analyzing and reporting on systemic weaknesses in SSA's programs and operations, and recommending program, operations, and management improvements. We issued 15 audit reports, one of which was completed in response to the management challenge, "Improve the Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments," which identified significant potential cost savings. In addition, we initiated and issued two audits at the request of U.S. Representatives John B. Larson, Chair, and Tom Reed, former Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security. One report assessed employee and visitor counts, in-office workloads and service to the public, and health and safety measures; the other report provided transparency over issues with SSA telephone services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Office of Investigations (OI) continued conducting and coordinating investigations of fraud and misconduct related to SSA programs and operations, as well as SSA employees who violate the public trust. Our investigators' commitment is demonstrated by our results, which we highlight throughout the Statistical Achievements and Investigative Overview sections of this report. We continued pursuing investigative efforts through indictments and informations, criminal convictions and civil actions, administrative actions, referrals to the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ), and referrals to state and local prosecutors. We continued to dedicate resources to raise public awareness of, and disrupt, Social Security-related imposter scams. We also initiated new complex fraud investigations under our Major Case Unit and increased our public integrity reviews of SSA through our Office of Special Reviews and Professional Responsibility.

Given that Social Security number (SSN) misuse, including identity theft, is a common thread in many pandemic-related fraud cases, the OIG continues to play an important role in combating pandemic-related fraud. During this reporting period,

OIG continued collaborating with federal, state, and local law enforcement entities on over 86 joint investigations related to misappropriations of federal pandemic relief funds. These include SSN misuse investigations and COVID-19-related fraud schemes pertaining to Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits and business loans. Throughout the reporting period, we actively participated in 25 COVID-19 fraud working groups, which improve collaboration, information sharing, and analysis, through a government-wide approach to protecting critical taxpayer dollars. Specifically, our OIG agents provide the groups with subject matter expertise, and open investigations or join existing investigations based on information shared at the meetings.

To increase our impact, we continue to invest in our employees. We previously reported developing enhanced training and developmental programs, and our work to address workforce recruitment, retention, and promotional needs through strategic workforce planning efforts. This reporting period, we initiated a Workplace Flexibilities Pilot Program (Pilot) in response to lessons we learned during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Pilot will help ensure we maintain a safe social distance between employees by reducing the percentage of employees in the office at any given time, while still allowing us to achieve or exceed our service and oversight goals. The Pilot will also offer employees additional flexibilities and help us with planning a potential reduction to OIG's physical footprint, which has the potential to reduce operational costs and further increase our return on investment to U.S. taxpayers.

Our commitment to serving the public through independent oversight of SSA's programs and operations and driving meaningful change to protect taxpayer dollars remains strong. We appreciate your interest in our work and welcome your feedback. Please contact us if you have any questions about this report or other aspects of our oversight of SSA. Thank you for sharing in our commitment to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Social Security programs that are so vital to millions of Americans.



**Gail S. Ennis**  
*Inspector General*

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<b>CARES Act</b>	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act
<b>CDI</b>	Cooperative Disability Investigations
<b>CDR</b>	continuing disability reviews
<b>CMP</b>	civil monetary penalty
<b>COVID-19</b>	novel coronavirus SARS-CoV2
<b>DDS</b>	disability determination services
<b>DI</b>	Disability Insurance
<b>DoD</b>	U.S. Department of Defense
<b>DoJ</b>	U.S. Department of Justice
<b>DoL</b>	U.S. Department of Labor
<b>DSS</b>	U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service
<b>EDD</b>	California Employment Development Department
<b>EIDL</b>	Economic Injury Disaster Loan
<b>FY</b>	fiscal year
<b>HSI</b>	Homeland Security Investigations
<b>IG</b>	Inspector General
<b>OA</b>	Office of Audit
<b>OASDI</b>	Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance
<b>OI</b>	Office of Investigations
<b>OIG</b>	Office of the Inspector General
<b>OMB</b>	Office of Management and Budget
<b>Pilot</b>	Workplace Flexibilities Pilot
<b>PPP</b>	Paycheck Protection Program
<b>PUA</b>	Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
<b>RSI</b>	Retirement and Survivors Insurance
<b>SBA</b>	Small Business Administration
<b>SSA</b>	U.S. Social Security Administration
<b>SSI</b>	Supplemental Security Income
<b>SSN</b>	Social Security number
<b>Treasury</b>	U.S. Department of the Treasury
<b>UI</b>	Unemployment Insurance
<b>USPIS</b>	U.S. Postal Inspection Service

# Office of Investigations



**\$90,922,893**

**Monetary Accomplishments**

This number includes court-ordered restitution, recoveries, settlements, judgments, fines, civil monetary penalties (CMP), and estimated savings resulting from our investigations.



**714**

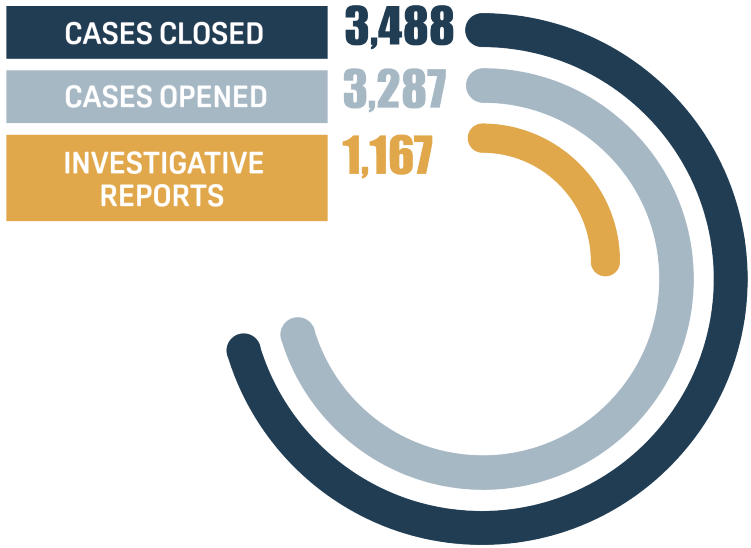
**Administrative Actions**

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



**680**

**Subjects with Administrative Actions**



At the beginning of Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, we changed how we categorized our open cases to include both full investigations, and preliminary investigations where we took some investigative action but lacked enough information to determine whether the alleged act likely occurred. This approach more accurately reflects our investigative efforts and more closely aligns with investigative case structure codified in the Attorney General’s Guidelines for Domestic Federal Bureau of Investigation Operations. The implementation of this new methodology was undertaken undertaken in FY 2021 in connection with the rollout of a new case management system.

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

**59****Program Civil Actions**

Program Civil Actions include civil judgments, settlements, and agreements, including CMPs. This number includes the 55 Section 1129 CMP cases referenced in the Legal section below.

**122,966****Total Allegations Received**

This number includes **85,295** regular allegations and **37,671** imposter-scam related allegations.

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

This number includes individual subjects or entities referred to DoJ where the investigative findings were not subject to pre-established prosecution declination guidelines.

**294****Criminal Convictions**

This number reflects the outcome of a criminal prosecution, which concludes in a judgment that the defendant is guilty of a crime charged.

**428****Total Subpoenas Issued**

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

**104****Persons Referred to State and Local Prosecutors for Criminal Prosecution**

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.

**183****Task Forces/Working Groups**

During the reporting period we were members of **183** task forces/working groups. This includes **25** related to COVID-19 fraud.

**290****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.

**211****Safety and Threats:**

During the reporting period, the OIG received **211** allegations related to employee safety issues, of which **79** involved alleged assault or harassment, over **93** were associated with threats against SSA employees or buildings, and **39** involved other safety threats. OI **opened 48 cases and closed 53 cases** nationwide related to employee safety.

## Office of Audit



### \$214,525,663

#### Questioned Costs

Questioned costs include SSA expenditures 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.

### 15

#### Reports Issued

Reports issued includes audit reports and other publications with non-monetary findings, questioned costs, and funds put to better use.



### \$33,053,936

#### Funds Put to Better Use

Funds put to better use are the expenditures that SSA could avoid by implementing our recommendations.

### 175

#### Unimplemented Recommendations

To provide SSA with adequate time to implement our recommendations, we only report unimplemented recommendations 6 months after providing them to the Agency. The FY 2021 figure includes audits issued through September 30, 2021. Numbers are comparative to prior years' fall semiannual reports. SSA reported that the COVID-19 pandemic affected implementation of 8 open recommendations; however, OIG has not done an analysis to confirm that is the case for these recommendations.



### \$7,408,899,078

#### Potential Cost Savings from Unimplemented Recommendations

This figure reflects the dollar value of aggregate potential cost savings for all reports with unimplemented monetary recommendations issued through September 30, 2021.

## Legal



## Anti-Scam



### 37,671

#### Imposter Scam Allegations Received

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



### 2

#### Public Report of Social Security-Related Imposter Scams

Since October 2019, SSA OIG has shared information on our efforts to combat Social Security-related imposter scams with the House Committee on Ways and Means, Social Security Subcommittee; Senate Committee on Finance; and Senate Special Committee on Aging. Since August 2021, we began publicly releasing the quarterly **Congressional Status Update** to raise public awareness about the scammers and their tactics.



# Social Security-Related Imposter Scams

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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, internet 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. Below, we highlight a Social Security-related imposter case.

## - Lake Elsinore Man Sentenced to 9 Years in Federal Prison for Bagman Role in Scheme to Defraud Elderly Victims with Threats of Arrest**

During this reporting period, a California man who acted as a co-conspirator in a major imposter scam investigation was sentenced. From April 2019 to March 2020, the man participated in a scheme to defraud victims. The victims were told that their SSN had been linked to crimes and that there were warrants issued by courts authorizing their arrests. He and his co-conspirators further told victims that to clear the warrants, they should withdraw their savings and send cash by mail to other members of the scheme. In March 2021, the man pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud and wire fraud. In March 2022, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 9 years in federal prison, and 3 years of supervised release and ordered him to pay \$490,500 in restitution to the victims. The case resulted from a joint investigation

with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, and several additional state and local law enforcement agencies.

## “Slam the Scam” Day

March 10, 2022, marked our third annual National Slam the Scam Day. Slam the Scam Day is an initiative to raise public awareness of the pervasive Social Security-related and other government imposter scams that continue to plague the nation and is an initiative supporting the Federal Trade Commission’s Consumer Protection Week. Our goal was to raise awareness of the tactics scammers use and encourage the public to hang up on scammers. We continue to increase the reach and impact of our effects with each successive Slam the Scam Day.

This year, we held a press call, participated in English and Spanish Twitter chats, held a Facebook Live event, and spread our message on social media. Highlights include:

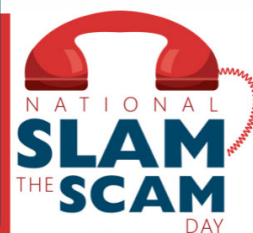
- The U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution designating March 10, 2022, as National Slam the Scam Day to raise awareness about pervasive government imposter scams, and to promote collaboration to prevent government imposter scams.
  - Twenty Members of the House and Senate, shared “Slam the Scam” messages on social media or through press releases. Other key participants included federal, state, and local government agencies, private companies, and nonprofit organizations that shared our “Slam the Scam” message through social media, blog posts, press releases, email messages, and, in some cases, print material.
  - SSA OIG’s “Slam the Scam” message received coverage from over 60 news media outlets on multiple platforms, including online and print, television, and radio.



MARCH 10, 2022

## NATIONAL SLAM THE SCAM DAY

Highlights from the 3rd National Slam the Scam Day to include press coverage, social media, support from outreach partners, and Congress



Slam the Scam Day News Media Coverage  
Estimated Audience

# 14.4 million



Scam Awareness PSA during  
National Consumer Protection Week  
Estimated Audience

# 441,000+



**3,691** stores  
display Slam  
the Scam  
slides

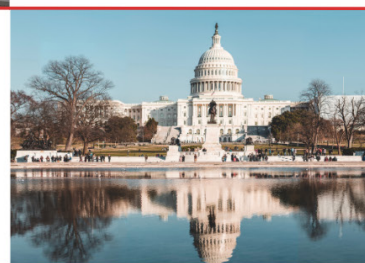


**8,000** stores  
broadcast  
SSA's PSA

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

## S. RES. 543

Designating March 10, 2022, as “National ‘Slam the Scam’ Day” to raise awareness about pervasive government imposter scams, and to promote education to prevent government imposter scams.



#SlamTheScam Followers

**29.8 million**

SSA OIG Tweets

**84K impressions during**

**National Consumer Protection Week**



#SlamTheScam Followers

**3.1 million**

SSA OIG Posts

**55K impressions during**

**National Consumer Protection Week**

## 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 House Committee on Ways and Means, Social Security Subcommittee; Senate Committee on Finance; and Senate Special Committee on Aging. This reporting period, we published two quarterly status updates on Social Security-related imposter scams covering the fourth quarter of FY 2021 (July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021) and the first quarter of FY 2022 (October 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021) on our [public website](#). The reports address our ongoing efforts to raise public awareness of, and disrupt, Social Security-related imposter scams. The reports also provide a brief analysis of scam allegation data and highlight scam-related investigations and outreach.



# Investigations Overview

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



The OIG's 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, CMPs, Administrative Sanctions, or Agency administrative actions. We received 122,966 allegations during this reporting period, shown by category in the chart below.

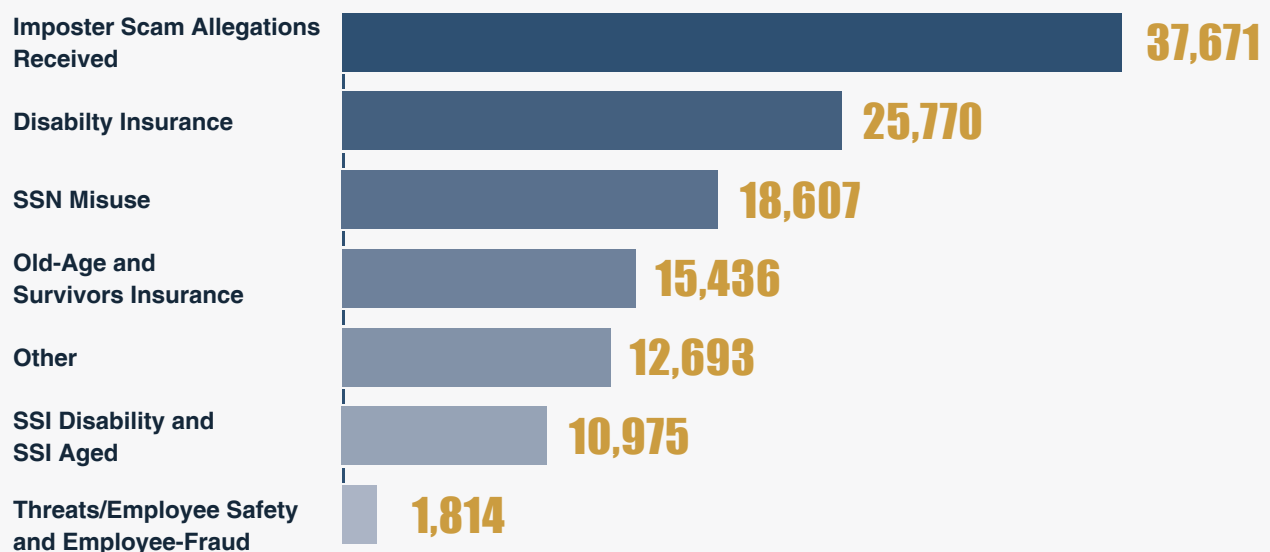
## Allegations Received by Category

October 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022

## Disability Insurance Fraud and Cooperative Disability Investigations

Disability insurance (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. Although OIG broadly investigates DI fraud, we have a dedicated CDI Program that more narrowly combats fraud within SSA's disability programs.

A CDI unit consists of an OIG special agent who leads the unit and personnel from SSA, state disability determination services (DDS) agencies, and state or local law enforcement partners. CDI units primarily investigate allegations of fraud before benefits are paid and support continuing disability reviews by providing evidence for





determinations. Stopping an improper payment before it occurs, or as soon as it is suspected, is in the best interest of SSA, the OIG, and 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. Since 1997, CDI units have improved disability program integrity by resolving questions of fraud in Social Security disability claims. CDI units have contributed to a projected savings to taxpayers of approximately \$7.8 billion. During this reporting period, the work of CDI units led to 455 disability claims being denied or ceased, \$33,207,312 in projected savings for SSA programs, and \$39,777,645 in projected savings for non-SSA programs. As of March 31, 2022, there were 49 CDI units covering 47 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, in addition to the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands. SSA and the OIG will continue to work with state and local partners to expand CDI coverage for all 50 states not later than October 1, 2022, in accordance with the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015*.

For this report, we have provided three CDI investigative case highlights and one DI case highlight that was investigated outside of the CDI program.

#### — **Sherwood Woman Sentenced to 96 Months in Prison for Bank Fraud and Stealing from Social Security**

A DI case this reporting period involved an SSA disability beneficiary who concealed her ability to work and her employment from February 2009 through November 2018. While receiving disability benefits during

that period, she worked as a legal assistant at a law firm and a bookkeeper at a sewer company. In total, she received \$122,047 in fraudulent benefits. She also embezzled \$669,600 from the sewer company. In August 2021, the woman pleaded guilty to bank fraud and theft of government funds. In March 2022, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 8 years in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release and ordered her to pay a \$100,000 fine.

#### — **Atlanta, Georgia Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit Investigation**

Acting on a referral received from the Georgia DDS, the Atlanta CDI unit investigated a 43-year-old Title II DI applicant. The applicant claimed he was unable to work due to paranoia, rage, and depression, and therefore, applied for DI benefits. When he applied, the man was also receiving Title XVI Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for schizophrenia and a personality disorder. The CDI unit discovered evidence that the man was working as a mechanic out of his home. Subsequently, an investigator interviewed witnesses who advised that he performed good mechanical work at decent prices. As a result of the investigation, the DDS denied his disability claim leading to a projected SSA savings of \$74,364 and a projected non-SSA savings of \$41,518.

#### — **Cleveland, Ohio Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit Investigation**

Based on a complaint received by our fraud hotline, the Cleveland CDI unit investigated a 45-year-old DI beneficiary. The complaint alleged that the man was part-owner of a bail bond company and worked as a security guard. The investigation confirmed that the man began working as a bail bondsman as early as 2016 and concealed it from SSA to receive benefits for himself and his dependents. As a result, SSA determined that he was overpaid \$91,895 from February 2016 through December 2018. After SSA terminated his benefits, SSA obtained partial recovery

of the overpayment through garnishment of his wages and federal income tax returns, leaving a balance of \$86,858 owed to the Government. The man pleaded guilty to making false statements. In November 2021, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 3 years of probation and ordered him to pay the balance of \$86,858 in restitution to SSA. SSA terminated his benefits resulting in a projected SSA savings of \$169,215 and a projected non-SSA savings of \$71,042.

■ **Richmond, Virginia Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit Investigation**

Based on an anonymous complaint received by our fraud hotline, the Richmond CDI unit investigated a 53-year-old DI beneficiary. The woman was receiving disability benefits due to disorders of the back. The complaint alleged that the woman failed to notify SSA of her work activities and changes in her medical condition. The CDI unit conducted surveillance and interviewed witnesses and the subject. The investigation revealed that the woman served as a training officer for a local Sheriff's Office and made false statements to SSA to continue receiving benefits. Subsequently, the woman pleaded guilty to theft of government funds. In November 2021, the U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 3 years of probation and ordered her to pay restitution of \$96,896 to SSA. Additionally, the DDS ceased the woman's benefits, resulting in a projected SSA savings of \$102,132 and a projected non-SSA savings of \$71,042.

## COVID-19 Response Efforts

The OIG plays an important role in addressing COVID-19-related fraud throughout the Federal Government. SSN misuse, including identity theft, is a common thread running through a substantial number of the pandemic investigative cases. To address this pressing issue, during this reporting period we participated in 25 COVID-19 fraud-related workgroups and collaborated with other federal law enforcement entities on joint investigations related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including UI fraud and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) fraud.

We participate in the National COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Taskforce, led by the Deputy Attorney General of the United States. We are also working 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 fraud cases.

■ **One-Time California Employment Development Department Employee Sentenced to More Than 5 Years in Prison for Fraudulently Obtaining Nearly \$4.3 Million in COVID Relief Funds**

*A Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* case during this reporting period involved a California woman who fraudulently obtained UI benefits, including Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury).

California's EDD administered the State's UI benefit program. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed the CARES Act,



which established the PUA program. The PUA program provided UI benefits to individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic who would not otherwise have qualified for UI benefits in California. Under the program, claimants were required to provide an SSN, an address, stated income, and answer certain questions. Funds were deposited into a bank account and a debit card was mailed to the address on the application.

From at least April 2020 through at least October 2020, the woman submitted 197 fraudulent applications for PUA benefits. She falsified information to qualify under the program, including providing false income, addresses, and occupations. She obtained some of the names, SSNs, and other identifying information from her prior work as a tax preparer. Knowing that debit cards would be mailed to the addresses provided, she had many cards mailed to either her own address or addresses associated with her family and friends. She also filed applications on behalf of individuals but charged the named claimants a fee for filing. In at least one instance, the woman defrauded a named claimant by representing herself as a current EDD employee and demanding payment for filing the claim.

She caused 197 fraudulent PUA claims to be filed, resulting in losses to EDD and the Treasury of over \$4 million. In August 2021, she pleaded guilty and in February 2022, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 63 months in federal prison and ordered her to pay \$4,298,093 in restitution.

We investigated this matter with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) OIG, California EDD Investigation Division, HSI, U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

### Georgia Woman Sentenced to Federal Prison for COVID-19 Fraud

Another CARES Act case this reporting period involved a woman who fraudulently applied for funds through the Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) program, authorized by the CARES Act. In July 2020, she applied for an EIDL for her cosmetic company by providing inaccurate financial information, including stating that she had 30 employees, \$750,000 in gross revenue, and \$300,000 in costs of goods sold. Further, on the EIDL application, she used the SSN of another person. Based upon her false statements, the Small Business Administration (SBA) deposited money into her bank account. In April 2021, she pleaded guilty to wire fraud and in January 2022, the U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 4 years in prison. The judge also ordered her to serve 3 years of supervised release, to pay restitution of \$150,000, and to pay a fine of \$5,000.

We investigated this case with the U.S. Secret Service, and the SBA OIG.

## Supplemental Security Income Fraud

SSI is a means-tested benefit program, and we work to ensure that only those who are truly 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 conceals a marriage, real estate or other assets, or their true country of residence from SSA while receiving SSI payments. Below, we highlight three SSI cases.

- **Lakeland Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for Theft of Public Money and Aggravated Identity Theft**

An SSI case from this reporting period involved a Florida resident who gained access to the bank accounts of four individuals who failed to report to SSA that they relocated to Puerto Rico in 2014. Due to SSA regulations, the four individuals were not entitled to receive benefits once they became residents of Puerto Rico. SSA was unaware of the relocation and continued to deposit SSI payments into the bank accounts of the four individuals. The Florida man accessed their bank accounts and used the SSI benefits to make purchases and automated teller machine (ATM) withdrawals until 2018. In addition to fraudulently obtaining their benefits, in December 2015, he misused the identity of one individual to obtain a Florida driver's license. In total, the man stole \$110,103 in SSI benefits that SSA improperly paid to the individuals. In May 2021, he pleaded guilty to theft of government property and aggravated identity theft. In October 2021, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 2 years and 10 months in prison and ordered \$110,103 in restitution to SSA, as well as a forfeiture money judgment of \$28,527.

- **East Alton Woman Sentenced to 14 Months in Prison for Stealing Disabled Daughter's Social Security Funds**

A case investigated by our Chicago Field Division involved a woman serving as the representative payee for her disabled child, who failed to notify SSA when her child was no longer living in her household. As a result of concealing the child's departure, she continued to receive SSI benefits for her child. From at least November 2011 to May 2019, she knowingly used the SSI benefits for her own expenses. In July 2021, she pleaded guilty to wire fraud. In October 2021, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 14 months in prison and 2 years of supervised release and ordered her to pay \$58,345 in restitution to SSA.

- **Menominee Man Sentenced to Prison for Theft of Government Funds After He Obtained Over \$297,000 in Benefits to Which He Was Not Entitled**

This case involved a Michigan man who concealed his earnings and assets to receive SSI benefits from SSA and Medicaid benefits from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The man applied for SSI benefits in March 2010 and received benefits based upon information presented. As a result of receiving SSI benefits, he and his family became eligible for Medicaid benefits. His eligibility for Medicaid benefits arose from and was dependent on his ability to receive SSI benefits. He began receiving Medicaid benefits in April 2010. While he received SSI and Medicaid benefits, SSA sent him information regarding his obligation to report work activity. During his initial application for SSI, and in subsequent redeterminations for eligibility, the man reported that he was not working. However, he owned and operated his own construction and excavating business. From March 2010 through September 2019, he concealed his earnings and assets from SSA because he did not want to risk entitlement to Medicaid. Based on his concealment, he improperly received \$82,824 in SSI benefits, and \$197,008 in Medicaid benefits. Additionally, based on his eligibility to these benefits, he received \$16,508 in benefits from the Michigan Food Assistance Program and \$1,428 in Michigan SSI benefits. In May 2021, he pleaded guilty to theft of government property. In December 2021, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 18 months in prison and ordered him to pay \$297,768 in restitution, of which \$82,824 is payable to SSA.

## Retirement and Survivors Insurance Fraud

These investigations pertain primarily to 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.

### ■ **Baltimore Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for Spending Deceased Mother's Social Security Benefit Checks for More Than 20 Years**

This case involved a Maryland resident who became his mother's representative payee in 1996. When his mother passed away in 1997, he did not report her death to SSA, but continued to falsely inform SSA that he was using the benefits for his mother's food, housing, and personal items. From September 1997 through around May 2019, he received \$223,655 in funds to which he was not entitled. He pleaded guilty in April 2021 to theft of government funds. In November 2021, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 1 year and 1 day in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release, and ordered him to pay restitution to SSA in the amount of \$223,655.

### ■ **Montz Woman Sentenced for Theft of Government Funds**

This case involved a woman who stole RSI benefits issued to her deceased father. The woman's father, the beneficiary, received the funds in a joint account that he shared with his daughter. The funds, however, were not

transferable to her. The beneficiary died in 2012, but the daughter never advised SSA of her father's death. Since SSA was unaware of the beneficiary's death, SSA issued \$202,417 in RSI benefits to the account from August 2012 until December 2020. The woman wrongfully converted \$200,396 for personal use, including mortgage and vehicle loan payments, purchases, and transfers. In August 2021, she pleaded guilty to theft of government funds. In November 2021, the U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 5 years of probation, 100 hours of community service, and full restitution to SSA.

## 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 are authorized to 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 three cases of SSN misuse.

### ■ **Convicted Kidnapper and Rapist Sentenced to 22 Years After Having Assumed Another's Identity for More Than 40 Years**

In a joint investigation with the U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) and other federal and state law enforcement agencies, a man was found to have stolen the identity of another individual.<sup>1</sup>

1. Partners include the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, with substantial support from the Department of State's National Passport Center, the U.S. Marshals Service, and the Connecticut U.S. Marshals Task Force.

In 1975, after the man was convicted of violent felony and sexual offenses including robbery, kidnapping, sexual contact, rape, and deviate sexual intercourse, he assumed the identity of a deceased individual to avoid incarceration. In July 2016, he submitted a passport application using the assumed identity of this deceased individual, which triggered a joint DDS and OIG investigation. Following the joint investigation, the man pleaded guilty in September 2021 to passport fraud, aggravated identity theft, and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. In February 2022, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 22 years of imprisonment, 1 year of supervised release, and ordered him to pay a fine of \$200,000.

■ **Cincinnati Woman Sentenced to Prison for Misusing Social Security Number, Lying to Court About Military Service and Address Before Failing to Appear**

An SSN misuse case involved an Ohio woman who misused another individual's SSN and made false statements to the court. From 2013 to 2016, the woman applied for and was denied bankruptcy seven times using her true SSN. In February 2017, the bankruptcy court ordered her not to file for bankruptcy again for at least 3 years. However, in March 2019, she illegally used another person's SSN to file for bankruptcy. After pleading guilty in March 2021 to misuse of a SSN, she provided false information to a federal probation office, including claiming that she had served in the U.S. military when she had not, and providing the office an address that did not exist. She also failed to appear for her sentencing hearing. In November 2021, the U.S. District Court judge sentenced her to 17 months in prison for misusing the SSN of another person.

■ **Dominican National Sentenced for Social Security Misuse and Making a False Statement**

We assisted in an investigation of a Dominican Republic national who had misused the SSN of a U.S. citizen. On three occasions in 2010, the man applied for and received an identification card, a learner's permit, and a driver's license from the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles. The State agency issued these documents in the name of the stolen identity, but with the man's photograph. In February 2015, he renewed the license and again received a license in the name of the stolen identity but again with his own photograph. In April 2015, he was stopped by the Massachusetts State Police and provided them with the fraudulent driver's license. In 2015, he used the fraudulent license to apply for benefits through MassHealth, the State's health safety insurance program, and received \$9,567 in benefits. In 2016, he used the fraudulent license to apply for an auto loan to purchase a \$46,000 vehicle. In 2018, in a search of his residence, investigators uncovered the man's true identity. He pleaded guilty in July 2021. In November 2021, the U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to 1 year in prison, followed by 1 year of supervised release. He is also subject to deportation once his sentence is complete. SSA OIG and several other federal agencies provided valuable assistance to the HSI's Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force, a specialized field investigative group that conducted the investigation. Other partners include the USPIIS; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations; DSS; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development OIG; DOL OIG; and the Lynn, Lawrence and Taunton Police Departments.



## 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. Below, we highlight two cases related to employee fraud and another related to employee safety.

### — **Former Syracuse Social Security Administration Employee Sentenced for Aggravated Identity Theft and Theft of Funds**

While working as an SSA Claims Specialist at the Syracuse, New York, SSA field office, a man used the names and SSNs of SSI beneficiaries or their representative payees to steal SSI benefits. In November 2020, he was promoted to Claims Technical Expert. Between February 2020 and February 2021, the man used his Government-issued pin to gain access to SSA's electronic systems and obtain personal information of beneficiaries or representative payees for beneficiaries. He used that information to open bank accounts, and then issued payments to the beneficiaries into those accounts, which he controlled. In total, he stole \$103,799 in benefit payments and used those funds to pay his home mortgage and utility bills, to purchase a custom suit, jewelry, video-game systems, airline tickets to the Caribbean, and for gambling. In November 2021, he pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft and theft of government property. In March 2022, he was sentenced to 25 months in federal prison,

received a 3-year term of supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$103,799 in restitution to SSA.

### — **Warren Man Sentenced for Threatening Social Security Administration Official**

We investigated an Ohio resident who threatened a DDS employee in the performance of official duties. DDS employees are contractors for SSA. In March 2020, on two separate occasions, the man left a message on the DDS voicemail threatening to assault and murder the adjudicator working on his case. He pleaded guilty in June 2021, and in November 2021, the U.S. District Court judge sentenced him to a 3-year term of probation.

## Whistleblower Retaliation

Section 5(a)(20) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, requires SSA 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

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SSA OIG Identified \$247 Million in Potential Cost Savings

Potential Cost Savings from Unimplemented Recommendations

Improper Payments

Significant Audit Findings During the Reporting Period





Our audits help 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**.

These challenges include: (1) **responding to the COVID-19 pandemic**; (2) **improving administration of the disability programs**; (3) **improving the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper payments**; (4) **improving service delivery**; (5) **protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of SSA's information systems and data**; and (6) **modernizing information technology**. We also conduct reviews at the request of Congress.

## SSA OIG Identified \$247 Million in Potential Cost Savings

This reporting period, we issued 15 reports, two with recommendations related to over \$247 million in potential cost savings, three with nonmonetary recommendations, and 10 reports with no recommendations. Reports with no recommendations included three mandatory reviews (**related to information security program and practices, major management and performance challenges, and financial reporting**); two informational reports (related to **SSA DDS' workload statistics during COVID** and **data provided to support issuance of Economic Impact Payments**);

two Congressional Response Reports (related to **telephone service performance** and **safety of employees and visitors** during the COVID-19 pandemic); an audit of **SSA's information on the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Information Technology Dashboard**; a **single audit of Vermont's disability program**; and a peer review report of the audit functions of the U.S. Department of Transportation OIG. See **Appendix A** and **Appendix B** for statistical tables showing potential cost savings and **Appendix D** for the full list of reports issued during this reporting period.

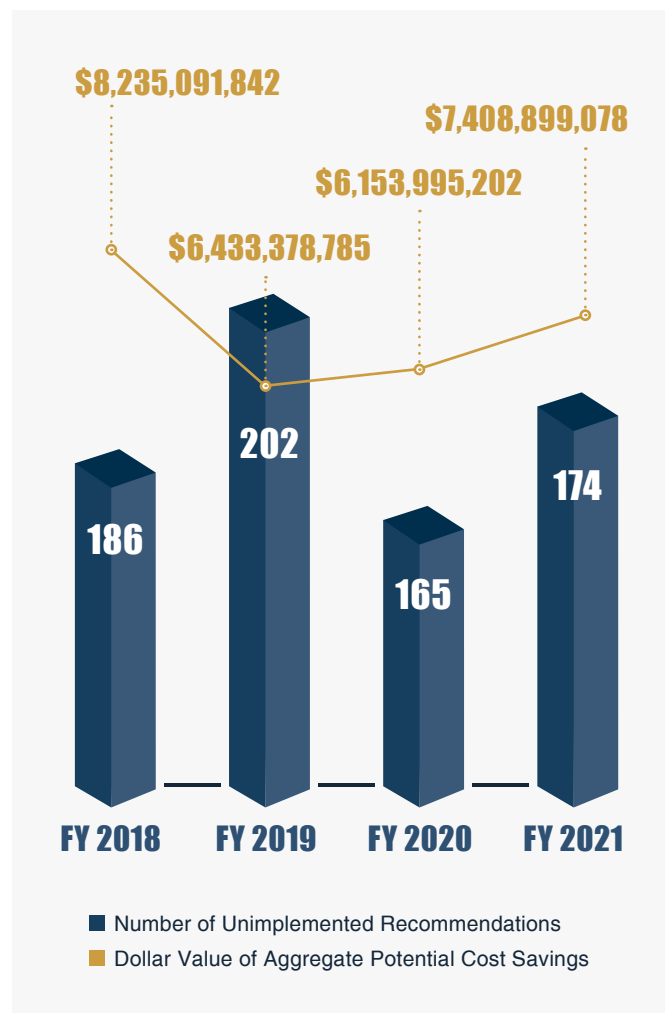
One audit report issued during this period was completed in response to the management challenge, "Improve the Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments." Our work related to this management challenge identified over \$214 million in questioned costs and over \$33 million in funds put to better use, and included nine recommendations. As of March 31, 2022, we had two additional reports that were with SSA for comment and will add to our cost savings and recommendations related to this management challenge.

We continuously engage SSA to ensure timely resolution of all recommendations. As shown in detail in **Appendix F**, SSA had not implemented 21 significant monetary recommendations from FYs 2017 through 2021, offering potential savings of more than \$2.7 billion. As shown on the following chart, potential cost savings from all unimplemented recommendations increased from \$6.15 billion to \$7.41 billion from FY 2020 through FY 2021. The number of unimplemented recommendations increased from 165 to 174 over the same period.<sup>2</sup>

2. To provide SSA with adequate time to implement our recommendations, we only report unimplemented recommendations 6 months after providing them to the Agency. The FY 2021 figure includes audits issued through September 30, 2021. Numbers are comparative to prior years' spring semiannual reports. We will report figures for FY 2022 (October 1, 2021, through March 31, 2022) in the Fall 2022 Semiannual Report.



## Potential Cost Savings from Unimplemented Recommendations



## Improper Payments

According to an SSA-published program summary, also called a **Fact Sheet**, an average of 65 million Americans per month will receive an SSA benefit, totaling over 1 trillion dollars in benefits paid during the year.<sup>3</sup> Given the magnitude of SSA payments, even the slightest error in the payment process can result in millions

of dollars in over or underpayments. For FY 2021, SSA estimated it made approximately \$8.3 billion in improper payments.<sup>4</sup> Of those, \$6.8 billion were overpayments and \$1.5 billion were underpayments.

## Significant Audit Findings During the Reporting Period

### ■ The Social Security Administration's Information Security Program and Practices for Fiscal Year 2021 (A-14-20-50958 – issued October 20, 2021)

SSA OIG engaged Grant Thornton LLP to conduct the FY 2021 performance audit to determine whether SSA's overall information security program and practices were effective and consistent with Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 requirements.

With regard to incident response, Grant Thornton determined SSA's program and processes were generally effective. However, it concluded the Agency's programs and processes related to the following domains were not effective: risk management; supply chain risk management; configuration management; identity and access management; data protection and privacy; security training; information security continuous monitoring; and contingency planning. Using the guidance provided by the OMB, Department of Homeland Security, and Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, Grant Thornton concluded the Agency's overall information security program was not effective.

SSA believes its overall information security program is effective. The Agency assessed some aspects of its program to be more mature than what Grant Thornton concluded. According to SSA, it considers mitigating

3. SSA benefits include disability, retirement, and survivor benefit payments.

4. SSA considers payments to be improper if they result from its mistake in computing the payment, its failure to obtain or act on available information, a beneficiary's failure to report an event, or a beneficiary's incorrect report. Improper payments can be overpayments, when SSA pays someone more than they were due, or underpayments, when SSA pays someone less than they were due.

controls and overall risk when conducting self-assessments, and believes it often met portions of the higher maturity level. The Agency believes its approach is in line with OMB's guidance to move away from strict compliance and toward risk-based maturity assessments. Grant Thornton considered the Agency's approach and position and continues to disagree, as noted above.

Without appropriate security, SSA may not be able to protect its mission assets and the Agency's systems, and the sensitive data they contain are at risk. Some deficiencies could negatively affect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the Agency's systems and personally identifiable information. In addition to the recommendations provided throughout the performance audit, Grant Thornton provided 12 overarching recommendations to address the identified issues. In response to the audit report, the Agency commented, "We agree with all of Grant Thornton's recommendations, and we will incorporate the recommendations into the ongoing improvement of our cybersecurity program."

## - Fiscal Year 2021 Inspector General's Statement on the Social Security Administration's Major Management and Performance Challenges (A-02-20-50976 – issued November 10, 2021)**

SSA OIG assessed the most serious management and performance challenges facing SSA, as required by *The Reports Consolidation Act of 2000*. In FY 2021 (October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021), we found that SSA: (1) 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; (2) 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; (3) 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; (4) faces growing workloads and the expected retirement of experienced employees as it pursues its mission to deliver quality service to the public; (5) must ensure its information systems are secure and sensitive data are protected; and (6) must continue modernizing its information technology to accomplish its mission despite budget and resource constraints.

## - The Social Security Administration's Telephone Service Performance (A-05-20-50999 – issued November 29, 2021)**

In response to a request from the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security, SSA OIG reviewed SSA telephone services, particularly as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic. In FY 2020, SSA received over 151 million calls at its field offices and the national 800-number. SSA handled over half of those calls through a combination of calls answered by SSA employees and addressed by automated services. SSA's telephone services shifted to more calls to field offices in FY 2020 when the Agency limited in-person service and provided the public with more field office telephone numbers. The increase in field office calls resulted in increased busy messages and wait times toward the end of FY 2020. SSA adjusted national 800-number operations during the pandemic to reduce wait times and the number of callers who received a busy message. National 800-number performance began to decline toward the end of FY 2020, though it was still better than pre-pandemic performance. When comparing SSA to 13 customer service call centers from 10 other federal agencies, SSA had a higher call volume in FY 2020 with similar or better performance. The Agency took steps to strengthen telephone services by hiring 1,000 new employees in its teleservice centers and by making it easier for callers to check claim statuses, request benefit verification letters, and make address changes.

However, the Agency faced setbacks as it tried to implement a new telephone system intended to combine the national 800-number, field office, and headquarters telephone systems into a cohesive platform. In May 2021, when SSA attempted to move existing systems to the new system, users could not access the new system due to unforeseen capacity issues. As a result, SSA reverted back to one of its older systems and, for approximately 1 week, the Agency answered less than 60 percent of calls to the national 800-number, and callers experienced wait times up to 48 minutes. In September 2021, the Agency attempted to unify the telephone system again, but only half of the migration was successful. In November 2021, SSA re-started its unification process by incrementally migrating employees to its new unified platform. SSA said it will continue to migrate its call agents incrementally to the new platform until the implementation is complete.

claimants waited longer for DDSs to make medical determinations. Furthermore, even though receipts decreased for initial claims, reconsiderations, and CDRs, the pending workloads for these groups increased—which indicates the DDSs could not keep pace with workloads received. Finally, we noted that DDSs significantly decreased the use of consultative examinations; however, allowance and continuance rates remained relatively the same when comparing the COVID-19 pandemic period to the prior-year period. We are planning a review to determine why some DDS workload categories significantly changed in the COVID-19 pandemic period compared to prior-year period. We also have a report in-process that addresses SSA's workloads during the COVID-19 pandemic period, and we are planning to conduct an audit that will analyze SSA's workloads in-depth.

## - Comparing the Social Security Administration's Disability Determination Services' Workload Statistics During the COVID-19 Pandemic to Prior Years** **(A-01-21-51038 – issued December 1, 2021)**

SSA OIG reviewed state DDS workloads during the COVID-19 pandemic period of April 2020 to March 2021 and compared it to DDS workloads in prior years. Although the DDSs experienced some increases/decreases in its workload categories from year-to-year for the period April 2016 through March 2021, the largest year-to-year changes occurred from the COVID-19 pandemic period of April 2020 to March 2021 compared to the prior-year period (April 2019 to March 2020). DDSs received 15.9 percent fewer initial claims during the COVID-19 pandemic period compared to the prior-year period. Additionally, SSA sent 40.2 percent fewer continuing disability reviews (CDR) to the DDS during the COVID-19 pandemic period compared to the prior-year period. Despite the decrease in initial claims, DDS processing times increased during the COVID-19 pandemic period, which indicates



# Legal Overview

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- Civil Monetary Penalty Program
- Section 1129
- Section 1140
- Review of Legislation and Regulations



## Civil Monetary Penalty Program

SSA's CMP program, delegated to the OIG, allows the Inspector General (IG) to impose CMPs for certain violations of the *Social Security Act*. The CMP program is an effective administrative enforcement alternative when criminal or civil prosecution is declined or not feasible.

### Section 1129

Section 1129 of the *Social Security Act*, as amended, authorizes a CMP under Titles II, VIII, and XVI of the *Social Security Act* against anyone who: (1) makes a false or misleading statement to SSA to obtain or retain benefits or payments; (2) receives benefits or payments while withholding disclosure of a material fact; or (3) wrongfully converts a beneficiary's payments while acting as a representative payee. We are authorized to impose penalties of up to \$8,708 for each false or misleading statement, material omission, or conversion.<sup>5</sup> Violators may also be subject to an assessment, in lieu of damages, of up to twice the amount of any resulting overpayment or conversion.

During this reporting period, we resolved 55 Section 1129 cases and imposed \$2,860,957 in penalties and assessments resulting from Section 1129 violations. In one case, OI investigated a South Carolina man who continued to access his mother's bank account for 10 years following her death, withdrawing her SSA funds for his own personal use and benefit. From July 2009 through October 2019, the man wrongfully received a total of \$88,890 in Title XVI disability benefits meant for his deceased mother. OIG settled the case with the man, imposing a CMP of \$57,500, which included a penalty as well as an assessment in the amount of the overpayment still owed following a prior SSA reclamation of a portion of the overpayment.

In another case, a Vermont man used his deceased girlfriend's ATM card to access and use her Title II Retirement Insurance Benefits after her death. He admitted that he withdrew the benefits and converted them to his own use for over 7 years. OIG settled the case with the Vermont man, imposing a \$101,502 CMP.

### Section 1140

Section 1140 of the *Social Security Act*, as amended, prohibits people and companies from misleading consumers by giving a false impression of an official association with, or endorsement by SSA. Section 1140 also prohibits the reproduction and sale of SSA publications and forms without authorization.

During the reporting period, we resolved 10 Section 1140 cases and imposed \$43,000 in penalties and assessments resulting from 1140 violations. We imposed a \$39,000 CMP against an Illinois resident who was selling customizable Social Security Card templates on Etsy.com. The Office of the Counsel to the Inspector General considered this matter to be egregious and to warrant the imposition of a penalty because fictitious Social Security cards are often used in identify theft and other serious economic crimes.

In another case, a California disability attorney hired an information technology technician to update her law firm's website. During the update, the SSA emblem was added to the website and was visible on every link. The presence of the SSA emblem gave the impression that the firm was approved by, sanctioned, or otherwise affiliated with SSA. OIG attorneys reached out to the attorney, and the attorney took steps to immediately remove the SSA emblem from the firm's website. Due to her prompt compliance, no fine was imposed.

Further, an app developer voluntarily discontinued marketing two Social Security-related apps upon receiving notification that OIG was reviewing whether Section 1140 action was warranted.

5. The *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015* authorized the annual adjustment of CMP amounts for inflation. Effective Jan 15, 2022, we are now authorized to impose penalties of up to \$9,250.

## Review of Legislation and Regulations

**Reviewed proposed legislation and regulations, including the following:**

- have engaged in as a result of fraud, and to determine how SSA might revise its rules to better assist victim-beneficiaries.

- A bill modifying the frequency of reporting requirements for IGs from yearly, to every 3 FYs, for executive agencies, related to oversight of agency identification, recovery, and prevention of improper payments.
- A bill expanding authority to disclose information when requested as part of an effort to prevent, detect, recover, or otherwise address fraud and improper payments in a federal benefits program or other expenditure of federal funds, or any use or disbursement of federal funds otherwise authorized by law.



# Appendix A-P

- **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 Management Decision with Which the Inspector General Disagrees
- **Appendix F:** Significant Monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed
- **Appendix G:** Significant Non-Monetary Recommendations from Prior Fiscal Years for Which Corrective Actions Have Not Been Completed
- **Appendix H:** Open Recommendations and Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations
- **Appendix I:** Audit Reports Issued Prior to the Reporting Period for Which No Management Decision Had Been Made by the End of This Reporting Period
- **Appendix J:** Significant Management Decisions That Were Revised
- **Appendix K:** Draft Audit Reports for Which Agency Comments Were Not Provided Within 60 Days
- **Appendix L:** Closed Audits and Investigations Not Available to the Public
- **Appendix M:** *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 Compliance*
- **Appendix N:** Instances of Agency Interference or Refusal to Provide Information
- **Appendix O:** Peer Reviews
- **Appendix P:** 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.

Section	Requirement	Page(s)
4(a)(2)	Review of legislation and regulations	28
5(a)(1)	Significant problems, abuses, and deficiencies	22-25
5(a)(2)	Recommendations concerning significant problems, abuses, and deficiencies	22-25
5(a)(3)	Significant recommendations described in previous semiannual reports on which corrective action has not been completed	37-43
5(a)(4)	Matters referred to prosecutive authorities and the prosecutions and convictions that have resulted	5-6
5(a)(5), 6(c)(2)	Summary of any report made from the Inspector General (IG) to the Commissioner regarding instances when Social Security Administration (SSA) employees refused to provide information or assistance to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG)	55
5(a)(6)	A listing, subdivided according to subject matter, of each audit/evaluation report issued, and where applicable, the total dollar value of questioned costs and dollar value of recommendations that funds be put to better use	34-35
5(a)(7)	Summary of significant reports	22-25
5(a)(8)	Table showing the total number of audit reports and total dollar value of questioned costs	32
5(a)(9)	Table showing the total number of audit reports and total dollar value of funds put to better use	33
5(a)(10)	Summary of reports: (1) with outstanding unimplemented recommendations; (2) for which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period; and (3) for which SSA did not provide comments within 60 days	44-49, 50, 52
5(a)(11)	Description and explanation of the reasons for any significant revised management decision made during the reporting period	51
5(a)(12)	Significant management decisions with which the IG disagrees	36
5(a)(13)	Information described under section 804(b) of the <i>Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996</i>	54
5(a)(14)	The results of any peer review conducted by another OIG during the reporting period	56
5(a)(15)	List of any outstanding recommendations from any peer review conducted by another OIG that have not been fully implemented, including a statement describing the status of the implementation and why implementation is not complete	56
5(a)(16)	List of any peer reviews conducted by the IG of another OIG 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	56

Section	Requirement	Page(s)
<b>5(a)(17), (18)</b>	Table showing total number of investigative reports issued, persons referred to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution, persons referred to state and local prosecuting authorities for criminal prosecutions, and number of indictments/informations, as well as a description of the metrics used	<b>5-6</b>
<b>5(a)(19)</b>	Detailed report on each investigation involving a senior government employee where allegations of misconduct were substantiated	<b>57</b>
<b>5(a)(20)</b>	Detailed description of any instances of whistleblower retaliation	<b>20</b>
<b>5(a)(21)</b>	Description of any attempt by the establishment to interfere with the independence of the OIG	<b>55</b>
<b>5(a)(22)</b>	Description of inspection, evaluation, and audit conducted that was closed and was not disclosed to the public; and investigation conducted involving a senior government employee that is closed and was not disclosed to the public	<b>53</b>



## Reports with Questioned Costs

Questioned costs include Social Security Administration (SSA) expenditures 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 SSA management has sustained or agreed should not be charged to the government.

Section 5(a)(8) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, requires that we provide statistical tables showing the total number of audit reports, inspection reports, and evaluation reports, and the total dollar value of questioned costs (including a separate category for the dollar value of unsupported costs), for reports—

- A. for which no management decision had been made by the commencement of the reporting period;
- B. which were issued during the reporting period;
- C. for which a management decision was made during the reporting period, including—
  - i. the dollar value of disallowed costs; and
  - ii. the dollar value of costs not disallowed; and
- D. for which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period.

Reports with Questioned Costs for October 1, 2021, through March 31, 2022			
	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.	38	\$2,272,053,125	\$289,396,880
B. Which were issued during the reporting period. <sup>1</sup>	2	\$214,525,663	\$0
<b>Subtotal (A + B)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>\$2,486,578,788</b>	<b>\$289,396,880</b>
<b>Less:</b>			
C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period.			
i. Dollar value of disallowed costs. <sup>2</sup>	15	\$177,446,666	\$45,203
ii. Dollar value of costs not disallowed. <sup>2</sup>	6	\$76,574,695	\$11,820,980
<b>Subtotal (i + ii)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>\$254,021,361</b>	<b>\$11,866,183</b>
D. For which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period. <sup>2</sup>	27	\$2,232,557,427	\$277,530,697

<sup>1</sup> See **Appendix D** for a detailed listing of all reports issued, including reports with questioned costs.

<sup>2</sup> Some reports have multiple monetary recommendations with different decisions on the dollar values and are accounted for as follows: (1) one report has one recommendation recorded in C.i. and four recommendations recorded in C.ii.; (2) three reports have one recommendation recorded in C.i. and one recommendation recorded in D.; (3) one report has two recommendations recorded in C.i. and C.ii. and a third recommendation recorded in C.ii.; (4) one report has one recommendation recorded in C.i. and C.ii. and one recommendation recorded in D.; (5) one report has one recommendation recorded in C.i. and two recommendations recorded in D.

## Reports with Funds Put to Better Use

Funds may be put to better use when the Social Security Administration could avoid expenditures by implementing our recommendations. Section 5(a)(9) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, requires that we provide statistical tables showing the total number of audit reports, inspection reports, and evaluation reports, and the dollar value of recommendations that funds be put to better use by management, for reports—

- A. for which no management decision had been made by the commencement of the reporting period;
- B. which were issued during the reporting period;
- C. for which a management decision was made during the reporting period, including—
  - i. the dollar value of costs agreed to by management; and
  - ii. the dollar value of costs not agreed to by management; and
- D. for which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period.

Reports with Funds Put to Better Use for October 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022		
	Number of Reports	Dollar Value
A. For which no management decision had been made by the commencement of the reporting period.	22	\$2,225,599,946
B. Which were issued during the reporting period. <sup>1</sup>	1	\$33,053,936
<b>Subtotal (A + B)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>\$2,258,653,882</b>
<b>Less:</b>		
C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period.		
i. Dollar value of costs agreed to by management. <sup>2</sup>	5	\$32,464,474
ii. Dollar value of costs not agreed to by management. <sup>3</sup>	3	\$10,123,229
<b>Subtotal (i + ii)</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$42,587,703</b>
D. For which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period. <sup>2</sup>	18	\$2,216,066,179

1. See **Appendix D**, 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: (1) one report has one recommendation recorded in C.i. and C.ii. and two recommendations recorded in D.; (2) one report has two recommendations recorded in C.i. and one recommendation recorded in C.ii.

3. Some reports have multiple monetary recommendations with different decisions on the dollar values and are accounted for as follows: (1) one report has one recommendation recorded in C.i. and C.ii. and two recommendations recorded in D.; (2) one report has two recommendations recorded in C.i. and one recommendation recorded in C.ii.

## Office of Audit Reports Issued

We issued 15 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. Reports may be listed more than once in the charts that follow. All reports are available on our website at [this link](#).

October 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022

### Reports with Non-Monetary Findings, by Category

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date
<b>Mandatory Reviews</b>		
The Social Security Administration's Information Security Program and Practices for Fiscal Year 2021	A-14-20-50958	10/20/2021
The Social Security Administration's Compliance with the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014	A-15-20-50917	11/5/2021
Fiscal Year 2021 Inspector General's Statement on the Social Security Administration's Major Management and Performance Challenges	A-02-20-50976	11/10/2021
The Social Security Administration's Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2021	A-15-20-50950	11/10/2021
External Peer Review of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General	A-21-21-51113	3/15/2022
<b>Improve Service Delivery</b>		
Beneficiaries Who Received Vocational Rehabilitation Services	A-02-18-50544	10/13/2021
Beneficiary and Recipient Data Provided to Support Issuance of Economic Impact Payments Authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021	A-06-21-51061	12/13/2021
<b>Modernize Information Technology</b>		
The Social Security Administration's Information on the Office of Management and Budget's Information Technology Dashboard	A-14-18-50435	10/15/2021
<b>Improve Administration of the Disability Programs</b>		
Single Audit of the State of Vermont for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020	A-77-22-00001	10/25/2021
The Social Security Administration's Expansion of Health Information Technology to Obtain and Analyze Medical Records for Disability Claims	A-01-18-50342	1/3/2022



October 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022

## Reports with Non-Monetary Findings, by Category

## SSA's Response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Pandemic

The Social Security Administration's Telephone Service Performance	A-05-20-50999	11/29/2021
Comparing the Social Security Administration's Disability Determination Services' Workload Statistics During the COVID-19 Pandemic to Prior Years	A-01-21-51038	12/1/2021
Safety of Employees and Visitors Since March 2020 (Congressional Response Report)	A-15-21-51103	2/24/2022

April 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021

## Reports with Questioned Costs, by Category

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
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## Improve Administration of the Disability Programs

Single Audit of the State of Indiana for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020	A-77-22-00002	11/22/2021	\$241,108
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## Improve the Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments

Deceased Beneficiaries in Suspended Payment Status	A-08-19-50800	11/22/2021	\$214,284,555
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<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$214,525,663</b>
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April 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021

## Reports with Funds Put to Better Use, by Category

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
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## Improve Administration of the Disability Programs

Follow-up on Transferring Supplemental Security Income Overpayments from Prior Records to the Current Record for Recovery	A-01-17-50226	6/3/2021	\$14,845,298
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<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$1,309,679,830</b>
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## Significant Management Decision with Which the Inspector General Disagrees

The Social Security Administration had no significant management decisions with which the Inspector General disagreed.

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



Total Unimplemented  
Significant Monetary Recommendations  
Fiscal Years 2017 – 2021 (through March 31)  
**\$2,651,637,137**

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

## ■ Fiscal Year 2021

**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.

**Follow-up on Disabled Supplemental Security Income Recipients Potentially Eligible for Childhood Disability Benefits**  
(**A-13-18-50714** – issued 12/10/20)

**\$18,537,060 Questioned Costs**  
**\$3,578,220 Funds Put to Better Use**

**Recommendation 1:** Review the 37 Supplemental Security Income recipients we identified in this audit and the remaining 967 recipients in our audit population to determine whether the recipients are eligible for, or technically entitled to childhood disability benefits; and if appropriate, pay the underpayments and/or Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) benefits.

**Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Child Beneficiaries Receiving Benefits Under Multiple Records**  
(**A-08-19-50814** – issued 12/7/20)

**\$14,822,593 Questioned Costs**  
**\$2,540,017 Funds Put to Better Use**

**Recommendation 2:** Review and correct the payments, where needed, for the remaining population of 2,676 child beneficiaries receiving benefits on multiple records.

**Benefits Payable to Widow(er)s Subject to Government Pension Offset Had They Delayed Their Application**  
(**A-09-19-50791** – issued 11/19/20)

**\$12,649,321 Questioned Costs**  
**\$42,229,574 Funds Put to Better Use**

**Recommendation 2:** Evaluate the results for the 18 beneficiaries in our sample and take appropriate action to notify the remaining population of beneficiaries of their option to withdraw their application and reapply for widow(er)'s benefits.



## ■ Fiscal Year 2020

**Miscellaneous Benefit Suspensions for Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries** (A-07-19-50799 – issued 9/21/20)

**\$376,829,722 Questioned Costs**

**Recommendation 2:** Analyze a sample of beneficiaries whose benefits have been in miscellaneous suspense status for an extended period to determine the appropriate corrective actions and assess the feasibility of broadening the review.

**The Social Security Administration's Rejection of State Electronic Death Registration Reports** (A-08-18-50499 – issued 9/21/20)<sup>1</sup>

**\$30,294,449 Questioned Costs  
\$23,088,955 Funds Put to Better Use**

**Recommendation 1:** Record deaths on the Numident, terminate payments, and collect the overpayments for the 1,947 remaining deceased beneficiaries.

**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.

**Manual Actions on Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Post-entitlement Alerts** (A-07-18-50621 – issued 3/9/20)

**\$616,427,374 Questioned Costs**

**Recommendation 5:** Monitor Title II Redesign alerts employees cleared without taking corrective actions.

**Beneficiaries with Representative Payees and Earnings** (A-02-17-50143 – issued 3/5/20)

**\$7,942,555 Questioned Costs  
\$2,739,108 Funds Put to Better Use**

**Recommendation 2:** Establish a process to review the accuracy of earnings records and primary insurance amount increases of beneficiaries likely to have inaccurate earnings posted to their records after their entitlement to Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI). The Social Security Administration (SSA) should apply criteria such as, but not limited to, the criteria we used in our review and revise its criteria based on the results of its reviews to continuously improve the effectiveness of the process.

## ■ 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.

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

## ■ Fiscal Year 2019 (Continued)

**The Social Security Administration's Accounting for, and Monitoring of, Court-ordered Restitutions**  
(A-04-18-50633 – issued 9/24/19)

### \$6,734,317 Funds Put to Better Use

**Recommendation 2:** Use the reconciled list, mentioned in recommendation 1, to ensure the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) is collecting the court-ordered restitutions, and if not being collected, use all methods of recovery and/or contact DoJ, as required by policy, to determine whether civil actions should be taken.

**Dedicated Account Underpayments Payable to Children Receiving Supplemental Security Income** (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.

**Follow-up: Minor Children Receiving Social Security Benefits Without a Representative Payee** (A-13-17-50169 – issued 6/6/19)

### \$22,499,184 Funds Put to Better Use

**Recommendation 2:** Implement a process to periodically identify all children under age 17 and 5 months being paid directly; and determine and document whether the Agency needs to appoint representative payees.

**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)<sup>2</sup>

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

**Processing of Deferred Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Cases with a High Risk of Benefit Payment Error**  
(A-05-18-50620 – issued 3/15/19)

### \$39,514,050 Questioned Costs

**Recommendation 3:** Review the population of deferred OASDI cases we identified to assess whether additional cases need correction.

**Accuracy of Disability Entitlement Dates for Primary Beneficiaries Who Previously Filed Disability Claims**  
(A-07-18-50257 – issued 12/21/18)

### \$376,918,787 Questioned Costs \$279,264,694 Funds Put to Better Use

**Recommendation 4:** Determine whether SSA needs to review additional beneficiaries who had prior Disability Insurance benefits filings and may have incorrect entitlement dates.

2. 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.

## ■ 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 1:** 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)<sup>3</sup>

**\$88,295,888 Questioned Costs**

**Recommendation 1:** 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)<sup>4</sup>

**\$131,817,936 Questioned Costs**  
**\$9,847,464 Funds Put To Better Use**

**Recommendation 1:** Take action, as appropriate, for the 41 beneficiaries identified by our audit.

**Recommendation 2:** 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)<sup>5</sup>

**\$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.

3. 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.
4. SSA considers these recommendations implemented; however, it has not provided sufficient information to enable our audit team to verify that it has fully implemented them.
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.



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



**Total Unimplemented Significant Non-Monetary Recommendations  
Fiscal Years 2017 – 2021 (through March 31)**

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

## ■ Fiscal Year 2021

**Follow-up on Disabled Supplemental Security Income Recipients Potentially Eligible for Childhood Disability Benefits**  
(**A-13-18-50714** – issue 12/10/20)

**Recommendation 2:** Continue reviewing from the prior audit the 6 recipients we identified and the remaining 519 recipients to determine whether they are technically entitled to or eligible for childhood disability benefits and pay applicable underpayments and/or Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance benefits, as appropriate.

**Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Child Beneficiaries Receiving Benefits Under Multiple Records**  
(**A-08-19-50814** – issued 12/7/20)

**Recommendation 3:** Perform periodic reviews, until the Social Security Administration (SSA) implements system improvements that prevent duplicate payments to child beneficiaries, to ensure technicians timely and appropriately take action to correct records and stop improper payments on child beneficiaries receiving benefits under multiple records.

## ■ 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.

**Retirement Beneficiaries Potentially Eligible for Widow(er)'s Benefits**  
(**A-13-13-23109** – issued 6/9/20)

**Recommendation 5:** Develop additional processes to identify retirement beneficiaries who are potentially eligible for widow(er)'s benefits.

**Manual Actions on Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Post-entitlement Alerts**  
(**A-07-18-50621** – issued 3/9/20)

**Recommendation 6:** Implement a quality review focused specifically on manually processed Title II Redesign alerts to ensure the accuracy of this workload improves.

### 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 Social Security Administration (SSA), and instructions on reporting errors.

## Fiscal Year 2019

### Dedicated Account Underpayments Payable to Children Receiving Supplemental Security Income (A-04-18-50607 – issued 9/17/19)

**Recommendation 3:** Improve controls to ensure it timely pays dedicated account underpayments for children receiving Supplemental Security Income, such as establishing management reports, retaining diaries, and/or adding automation as discussed in the report.

### 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.

### Beneficiaries Whose Payments Have Been Suspended and Who Have Death Information on the Numident (A-09-15-15039 – issued 12/21/18)

**Recommendation 2:** Develop controls for suspended beneficiaries with death information on the Numident to ensure they are resolved in a timely manner.

## 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)<sup>1</sup>

**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.

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.

## ■ 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)<sup>2</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** Determine whether additional customer service or production metrics would assist in measuring how telework affects field offices' ability to provide customer service and employee productivity.

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

2. SSA considers these recommendations implemented; however, it has not provided sufficient information to enable our audit team to verify that it has fully implemented them.



## 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 years prior to FY 2012 are closed. The chart below identifies the number of reports with unimplemented recommendations by year and the aggregate potential cost savings of those recommendations.

Reports Issued through September 30, 2021			
Reports with Open Recommendations			
Fiscal Year	Number of Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations	Number of Unimplemented Recommendations	Dollar Value of Aggregate Potential Cost Savings
2021	24	86	\$3,170,783,771
2020	8	19	\$1,155,235,466
2019	17	30	\$1,940,982,362
2018	8	12	\$260,113,081
2017	3	6	\$657,415,697
2016	4	9	\$27,974,234
2015	2	2	0
2014	5	5	\$136,153
2013	2	2	0
2012	3	3	\$196,258,314
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>\$7,408,899,078</b>

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

\*Denotes that report contains significant unimplemented recommendation as reported in **Appendix D** or **Appendix E**.

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
The Social Security Administration's Controls over High-priority Modernized Development Worksheets	A-07-18-50363	9/28/21	\$49,476,491
Overpayments with Recovery Agreements that Will Extend Beyond 2049	A-07-19-50775	9/28/21	\$1,240,312,343
Costs Claimed by the New York Division of Disability Determinations	A-55-20-00004	9/27/21	\$168,247,472

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
Costs Claimed by the Michigan Disability Determination Services	A-55-20-00005	9/27/21	\$12,979,064
Match of California Death Information Against Social Security Administration Records	A-06-18-50706	9/24/21	\$33,421,495
Costs Claimed by the California Disability Determination Services	A-55-20-00007	9/24/21	\$10,497,712
Costs Claimed by the Texas Disability Determination Services	A-55-20-00001	9/22/21	\$10,339,206
Match of Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Death Information Against Social Security Administration Records	A-06-18-50653	8/13/21	\$159,070,184
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
Follow-up on Transferring Supplemental Security Income Overpayments from Prior Records to the Current Record for Recovery	A-01-17-50226	6/3/21	\$14,845,298
The Social Security Administration's Administrative Finality Policy	A-01-19-50859	5/28/21	N/A
Achieving a Better Life Experience Accounts	A-02-18-50357	3/26/21	\$18,140
Follow-up on Underpayments Payable to Terminated Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries*	A-09-19-50848	12/11/20	\$149,205,334
Follow-up on Disabled Supplemental Security Income Recipients Potentially Eligible for Childhood Disability Benefits*	A-13-18-50714	12/10/20	\$22,115,280
Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Benefits to Individuals Who Are Recorded as Deceased on the Supplemental Security Record	A-13-17-50176	12/9/20	\$1,051,582
Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Child Beneficiaries Receiving Benefits Under Multiple Records*	A-08-19-50814	12/7/20	\$18,022,510
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	\$135,144,563

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
Security of the Social Security Administration's Disability Case Processing System	A-14-20-50896	11/20/20	N/A
Benefits Payable to Widow(er)s Subject to Government Pension Offset Had They Delayed Their Application*	A-09-19-50791	11/19/20	\$54,878,895
Social Security Administration Beneficiaries Eligible for Total and Permanent Disability Federal Student Loan Discharge	A-06-17-50281	11/9/20	\$25,933,386
Improper Payments to Retired Beneficiaries Who Worked Before Full Retirement Age	A-09-18-50685	11/4/20	\$8,350,912
Disabled Beneficiaries Whose Benefits Have Been Suspended for Address Development, Whereabouts Unknown or Miscellaneous Reasons	A-09-18-50523	10/21/20	\$986,597,569
The Social Security Administration's Rejection of State Electronic Death Registration Reports*	A-08-18-50499	9/21/20	\$53,383,404
Miscellaneous Benefit Suspensions for Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Beneficiaries*	A-07-19-50799	9/21/20	\$376,829,722
Accuracy of Supplemental Security Income Recipients' Reports of Separation	A-02-14-31417	7/30/20	\$496,382
Retirement Beneficiaries Potentially Eligible for Widow(er)'s Benefits*	A-13-13-23109	6/9/20	N/A
Manual Actions on Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Post-entitlement Alerts*	A-07-18-50621	3/9/20	\$616,427,374
Beneficiaries with Representative Payees and Earnings*	A-02-17-50143	3/5/20	\$10,853,640
Follow-up: Beneficiaries Who Had Not Cashed Their Checks Within 1 Year	A-09-18-50562	12/23/19	\$97,244,944
The Social Security Administration's Controls over Malware Introduced by Email Phishing	A-14-18-50710	12/4/19	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 Restitutions*	A-04-18-50633	9/24/19	\$9,541,711
Overpayments Pending Collection for Miscellaneous Reasons	A-04-18-50546	9/24/19	N/A



Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
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
The Social Security Administration's Processing of Returned Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Payments	A-07-18-50570	9/12/19	\$18,964,672
Supplemental Security Income Underpayments Due Deceased Recipients	A-06-18-50608	9/10/19	\$467,994,323
Security of the Social Security Administration's Cloud Environment	A-14-18-50498	8/29/19	N/A
Follow-up: Aged Beneficiaries Whose Benefits Have Been Suspended for Address, Whereabouts Unknown, or Foreign Enforcement	A-09-16-50077	8/6/19	\$497,883,609
Follow-up: Minor Children Receiving Social Security Benefits Without A Representative Payee*	A-13-17-50169	6/6/19	\$22,499,184
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
Processing of Deferred Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Cases with a High Risk of Benefit Payment Error*	A-05-18-50620	3/15/19	\$39,514,050
Supplemental Security Income Underpayments	A-15-18-50612	12/28/18	N/A
Accuracy of Disability Entitlement Dates for Primary Beneficiaries Who Previously Filed Disability Claims*	A-07-18-50257	12/21/18	\$656,183,481
Beneficiaries Whose Payments Have Been Suspended and Have Death Information on the Numident*	A-09-15-15039	12/21/18	N/A
The Social Security Administration's Programs and Projects that Assist Beneficiaries in Returning to Work	A-04-18-50600	11/5/18	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
Beneficiaries in Suspended Payment Status Pending the Selection of a Representative Payee	A-09-17-50202	6/1/18	N/A

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
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
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
Access to the Social Security Administration's my Social Security Online Services	A-14-15-15010	9/29/16	N/A
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

Report Title	Report Number	Issue Date	Dollar Value
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
Benefit Payments Managed by Representative Payees of Children in Pennsylvania's State Foster Care Programs	A-13-12-11245	12/4/12	N/A
Management Advisory Report: Supplemental Security Income Payments to Multi-recipient Households	A-06-09-29149	8/7/12	\$62,563,749
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

## 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, 2021, for which no management decision had been made by the end of this reporting period.



## Significant Management Decisions That Were Revised

We have no significant management decisions to report that were revised during this reporting period.

## Draft Audit Reports for Which Agency Comments Were Not Provided Within 60 Days

The Social Security Administration responded to all reports issued to it for comment by September 30, 2021, within 60 days.

## Closed Audits and Investigations Not Available to the Public

For this reporting period, we did not have any audits not made available to the public. Of the 15 audit reports issued this period, 1 was issued as containing “restricted information” due to the sensitivity of the reported information and findings.

A summary for the report, **The Social Security Administration's Information Security Program and Practices for Fiscal Year 2021**, is posted to our public website. We do not have any investigations involving a senior Government employee that were closed and not disclosed to the public.

## *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 Compliance*

Section 804(b) of the *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996* requires the Office of the Inspector General to report whether the agency has met the milestones in a remediation plan. Because the Social Security Administration is in compliance with the *Federal Financial Management Integrity Act of 1996*, it does not have a remediation plan. Therefore, we have no information to report.



## Instances of Agency 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 that 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.

- The final System Review Report related to our most recent peer review, conducted by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Inspector General (OIG), was issued in September 2021. We received a rating of “pass,” which means that the review team concluded that the system of quality control for the audit organization had been suitably designed and complied with, to provide us with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements in all material respects. The DoD OIG identified no deficiencies that affected the nature of the report. Further, there were no findings or recommendations because of this peer review.
- During Fiscal Year 2022, we conducted a peer review of the Department of Transportation OIG audit organization. We issued our report on March 15, 2022, and made no recommendations because of this peer review.
- There are no outstanding recommendations from prior peer reviews we completed of other OIGs, nor from prior peer reviews other OIGs completed of our OA.

### ■ 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 the 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 that ensures 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 our OI.

## Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated

During this reporting period, the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General did not have any cases of alleged misconduct by senior government officials that was not disclosed to the public.



# Semiannual Report to Congress

October 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022

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Office of the Inspector General | OIG 85-007

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