



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Press Release

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Social Security Administration's Processing Center for International Workloads Produces Inaccurate Claims

Only one third of cases accurately processed leading to improper payments

The Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General auditors determined SSA Processing Center 8 accurately processed 33.7 percent of the sample cases reviewed. For the remaining 66.3 percent, Processing Center 8 staff did not always comply with SSA policies and the screening guide. Further, at least 12 of these cases had approximately \$211,418 in improper payments.

Processing Centers at SSA play a critical role in beneficiary service delivery and support other SSA personnel by providing direct customer service. It is essential Processing Centers accurately processed actions for beneficiaries under their jurisdiction. SSA has eight Processing Centers nationwide: Centers 1 through 6 process similar workloads and Centers 7 and 8 handle specialized workloads.

Processing Center 8 processes Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance and Medicare claims from all claimants who reside outside of the United States. Processing Center 8 also processes totalization claims for those living in the United States with work history outside of the United States. Approximately 700,000 beneficiaries in current pay status resided in foreign countries and 244,000 were covered under totalization agreements.

OIG auditors used management information on pending workloads at Processing Center 8 for Fiscal Years 2018 through 2023. At that time of the review, Processing Center 8 had 104,946 actions pending among 34 workloads. Audit staff reviewed 196 of 41,684 cases pending at Processing Center 8 as of September 29, 2023, involving 12 of the workloads.

Processing Center 8 case processing accuracy caused hardship to international beneficiaries or individuals working under totalization agreements due to the burden of improper payments and delays in processing cases. SSA agreed with the recommendations to take corrective actions on the case errors that were still unresolved as of November 2024. Further, SSA agreed to provide refresher training to Processing Center 8 staff on SSA policies. With the implementation of the recommendations, Processing Center 8 accuracy should be enhanced and should assist SSA's efforts to reduce improper payments and improve customer service. See the full report [here](#).

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