



Press Release

Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2012

<http://oig.ssa.gov>

Contact: Jonathan Lasher

Phone: (410) 965-2671

Social Security Inspector General Report: *Beneficiaries Who Had Not Cashed Their Social Security Checks Within 1 Year*

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has not reissued about \$133.7 million in uncashed Social Security checks that were payable to 140,977 beneficiaries, according to SSA Inspector General Patrick P. O'Carroll.

The Inspector General's office determined that benefits were payable, but uncashed checks were not reissued because:

- SSA did not take corrective actions when beneficiaries or representative payees responded to SSA's letters;
- representative payees did not cash checks for beneficiaries in their care;
- beneficiaries may have been incapable of managing their benefits when SSA issued the checks; and
- SSA did not attempt a personal contact with beneficiaries to determine why they had not cashed their checks.

Social Security benefit checks may be cashed up to one year after their issue date. If a beneficiary does not cash a check within one year, the Department of the Treasury returns the funds to SSA. When SSA receives the returned funds, it sends a letter to the beneficiary inquiring if the check was received and cashed. If the beneficiary responds to the letter, SSA reviews the beneficiary's record, and if appropriate, reissues the check. If the beneficiary does not respond to the letter or indicates the check was cashed, SSA takes no further actions.

In response to the Inspector General's report, SSA said it would not take action to reissue payments to these beneficiaries. SSA stated it properly followed its current policy for these beneficiaries, and reviewing the 140,977 cases was prohibitive and would divert scarce resources from other priority workloads.

To view the full report, visit <http://oig.ssa.gov/audits-and-investigations/audit-reports/A-09-10-20133>, or for additional information, contact Jonathan Lasher, Assistant Inspector General for External Relations, at (410) 965-2671. Refer to Common Identification Number A-09-10-20133.