May 4, 2011

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
 Social Security
Committee on Ways and Means
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Becerra:

On April 15, 2010, at a Social Security Subcommittee oversight hearing on Social Security Administration (SSA) field office service delivery, you asked my office to review the Internet claim (iClaim) application. Specifically, you expressed concern about whether individuals filing for benefits using the iClaim application were receiving an appropriate level of service from SSA. To address this concern, we initiated four reviews of the iClaim application. Specifically, these reviews evaluated the iClaim application process and obtained individuals' perceptions of the iClaim application process for both Retirement and Disability Insurance Benefits.

Enclosed is the report for the third of our four reviews. This review presents our examination of the iClaim application process for Disability Insurance Benefits.
I appreciate the opportunity to share our insights on this important matter. To ensure SSA is aware of the information provided to your office, we are forwarding a copy of this report to the Agency.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please call me or have your staff contact Misha Kelly, Congressional and Intra-Governmental Liaison, at (202) 358-6319.

Sincerely,

Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr.
Inspector General

Enclosure

cc:
Michael J. Astrue

CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSE REPORT

INTERNET CLAIM APPLICATIONS FOR DISABILITY INSURANCE BENEFITS

A-07-10-20166

May 2011

Mission

By conducting independent and objective audits, evaluations and investigations, we inspire public confidence in the integrity and security of SSA's programs and operations and protect them against fraud, waste and abuse. We provide timely, useful and reliable information and advice to Administration officials, Congress and the public.

Authority

The Inspector General Act created independent audit and investigative units, called the Office of Inspector General (OIG). The mission of the OIG, as spelled out in the Act, is to:

- ❑ Conduct and supervise independent and objective audits and investigations relating to agency programs and operations.
- ❑ Promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency within the agency.
- ❑ Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in agency programs and operations.
- ❑ Review and make recommendations regarding existing and proposed legislation and regulations relating to agency programs and operations.
- ❑ Keep the agency head and the Congress fully and currently informed of problems in agency programs and operations.

To ensure objectivity, the IG Act empowers the IG with:

- ❑ Independence to determine what reviews to perform.
- ❑ Access to all information necessary for the reviews.
- ❑ Authority to publish findings and recommendations based on the reviews.

Vision

We strive for continual improvement in SSA's programs, operations and management by proactively seeking new ways to prevent and deter fraud, waste and abuse. We commit to integrity and excellence by supporting an environment that provides a valuable public service while encouraging employee development and retention and fostering diversity and innovation.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of our review was to evaluate the Internet claim (iClaim) application process for Disability Insurance Benefits (DIB).

BACKGROUND

In response to customer requests for more Internet services and the requirements of the *Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998*,[1] the Social Security Administration (SSA) allows individuals to complete and electronically sign an online application for certain Title II Social Security benefits.[2] Specifically, individuals can use the Internet to file for DIB, Retirement Insurance Benefits, and aged spouse's benefits.[3] In December 2008, SSA implemented the iClaim application, which modified prior versions of the Internet application.[4]

After an individual submits a DIB iClaim application, it is sent to a nearby field office (FO).[5] At the FO, an SSA employee verifies the application is valid[6] and resolves discrepancies between data in SSA systems and information entered on the iClaim application.[7] After reviewing the application, the employee may need to re-contact the individual to obtain additional information or develop other issues.[8]

During the iClaim application process, individuals are alerted that, in addition to submitting the formal iClaim application for DIB, they will also need to complete and submit two additional forms to SSA: the *Adult Disability Report* and the *Authorization to*

---

[1] Pub. L. No. 105-277, 112 Stat. 2681.

[2] SSA, POMS, GN 00204.055 A.

[3] SSA, POMS, GN 00204.055 B.

[4] SSA, Teleservice Center Operating Guide, TC 31507.010 A.

[5] There are 1,297 FOs nationwide.

[6] Among other requirements, for an application to be valid, the individual must be alive when the application is filed unless before death there was a written statement of intent to claim benefits. SSA, POMS, GN 00204.001 C.1.

[7] A common discrepancy is the individual's name. For example, a name that changed after marriage may not have been reported to SSA or an individual may enter a middle name rather than the first name.

[8] SSA, POMS, GN 00204.055 G.7. Examples of other issues requiring development include, but are not limited to, possible eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicare.

Disclose Information to the Social Security Administration (Form SSA-827).[9] Individuals are given the option to complete the *Adult Disability Report* online, using the *Internet Adult Disability and Work History Report* (i3368), or call SSA's 800-number to arrange for in-office or telephone assistance. The Form SSA-827 is available online for the claimant to print and sign. The Form SSA-827 must be mailed to SSA or delivered in person to an SSA FO. If an individual does not submit both an *Adult Disability Report* and a Form SSA-827, SSA must re-contact the individual to obtain the missing form(s).

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, SSA received approximately 3 million DIB applications with approximately 800,000 (27 percent) received via iClaim. SSA projects 38 percent of DIB applications will be submitted using the iClaim application in FY 2012.[10]

At an April 15, 2010 hearing before the House of Representatives' Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security, Congressman Xavier Becerra asked the Office of the Inspector General to review the iClaim application to ensure individuals filing for benefits using the iClaim application were receiving an appropriate level of service from SSA.

To address Congressman Becerra's request, we selected a random sample of 250 DIB iClaim applications filed in May 2010.[11] We surveyed the SSA employees who processed the DIB iClaim applications to determine the number of times the Agency had to re-contact individuals for additional information or clarification and the reasons for the re-contacts. We also obtained the employees' perceptions of the iClaim application process. Finally, we reviewed 50 of the DIB iClaim applications from our sample to determine whether the information provided by the individuals in their iClaim applications corresponded with the information recorded in SSA's system that was used to determine individuals' eligibility for benefits and their benefit amounts.

---

[9] SSA, POMS, GN 00204.055 L.

[10] SSA, *Social Security Administration Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Overview*, February 2011, p. 14.

[11] See Appendix B for a detailed discussion of the scope and methodology of our review.

To process most iClaim applications, SSA must re-contact individuals to obtain additional information or clarification regarding their iClaim applications. The majority of individuals in our review was re-contacted by an SSA employee after filing an iClaim application. The most common reasons employees re-contacted individuals were because the Form SSA-827 had not been received, because the *Adult Disability Report* had not been received or was incomplete, or to take an application or discuss eligibility for SSI.

SSA employees generally indicated iClaim applications were faster to process than in-person or telephone applications. However, employees were concerned about the number of re-contacts related to the Form SSA-827 and the *Adult Disability Report*.

In addition, we found that the information provided by individuals in their iClaim applications corresponded with the information recorded in SSA's system. The information in SSA's system was used, in part, to determine individuals' eligibility for benefits and their benefit amounts.

REASONS FOR RE-CONTACT

Re-contacts with individuals are a necessary and important part of processing most iClaim applications. In fact, of the 243 individuals in our review who filed a DIB iClaim application, SSA re-contacted 170 individuals (70 percent) to obtain additional information or clarification.[12] SSA employees re-contacted individuals predominantly for three issues (see Table 1). Specifically,

- 124 individuals (73 percent) were re-contacted because the Form SSA-827 had not been received;

- 107 individuals (63 percent) were re-contacted because the *Adult Disability Report* had not been received or was incomplete; and

- 96 individuals (56 percent) were re-contacted to take an application or discuss eligibility for SSI.

---

[12] Although we selected a sample of 250 DIB iClaim applications for review, 7 employees did not respond to our request to review the iClaim applications for 7 individuals.

Table 1: Issues Causing Re-contact[13]		
Re-contact Issue[14]	Number of iClaims with Re-contact	Percent of iClaims with Re-contact (Of 170 iClaims with Re-contact)
Missing Form SSA-827	124	73%
Missing or Incomplete *Adult Disability Report*	107	63%
SSI	96	56%
Disability Onset Date	59	35%
Other Work Issues	55	32%
Earnings Records	28	16%
Workers' Compensation/ Public Disability Benefits	24	14%
Auxiliaries	20	12%
Documentation	14	8%
Incomplete/Inconsistent Information	9	5%
Military	2	1%
Other Issues	2	1%
Medicare and Medicaid	2	1%
Windfall Elimination Provision/ Government Pension Offset	1	1%

We did not determine whether the Agency made all necessary re-contacts with the individuals in our review. However, our review did provide evidence that SSA was following up with individuals to obtain additional information or clarification regarding the iClaim application.

Form SSA-827

As previously stated, 124 individuals (73 percent) were re-contacted because SSA had not received the Form SSA-827. This Form authorizes SSA to retrieve relevant medical and non-medical information to assist the Agency in determining whether the individual meets SSA's definition of disability. Specifically, SSA and State disability determination services (DDS) use the Form SSA-827 to obtain evidence of the alleged medical

---

[13] Numbers do not equal 170 and percentages do not total 100 because some iClaim applications required re-contact for more than 1 issue.

[14] See Appendix C for a description of each issue and enhancements to the iClaim process provided by SSA employees that address some of these issues.

conditions and treatments from the doctors, hospitals, and other sources provided by the individual.[15] If SSA does not receive the Form SSA-827, the application will likely be denied.[16]

To reduce the number of re-contacts regarding the Form SSA-827, SSA employees suggested allowing individuals to electronically sign and submit the Form SSA-827 instead of requiring that the Form be mailed or hand delivered to an SSA FO.[17] SSA staff stated that the Agency is developing an electronic signature option for the Form SSA-827. However, staff did not provide a date as to when the electronic signature option would be available.

Adult Disability Report

As previously stated, 107 individuals (63 percent) were re-contacted because the *Adult Disability Report* had not been received or was incomplete. In the *Adult Disability Report*, individuals provide information regarding their medical conditions, work history, education, medicines, and treatments. DDSs use the *Adult Disability Report* to develop medical or other types of evidence, establish the correct disability onset date, and assess the alleged disability in conjunction with non-medical factors.[18] If SSA does not receive the *Adult Disability Report*, the individual's application will likely be denied.[19]

SSA allows individuals to complete and electronically sign the *Adult Disability Report* using the i3368.[20] According to SSA employees, a lack of clarity about how to access the i3368 may have contributed to individuals having difficulty accessing the i3368.[21] In addition, individuals who did use the i3368 often did not provide complete contact information for doctors and hospitals. SSA employees offered the following enhancements to the iClaim application process that could reduce the number of re-contacts for these reasons.

---

[15] SSA, POMS, DI 11005.055 A.

[16] SSA can still process an application without the Form SSA-827 if the individual provided medical evidence. SSA, POMS, DI 11018.005 C.3.a.

[17] Employees also identified missing Forms SSA-827 as a main cause of re-contacts in DIB telephone applications.

[18] SSA, POMS, DI 11005.023 A. Non-medical factors include the individual's education and work history.

[19] SSA can still process an application without the *Adult Disability Report* if the individual provided medical evidence. SSA, POMS, DI 11018.005 C.3.a.

[20] SSA, POMS, DI 1105.024 A.

[21] Of the 243 individuals in our review who filed a DIB iClaim application, 205 individuals submitted an *Adult Disability Report*. Of these, 123 individuals (60 percent) used the i3368.

Accessing the i3368

According to SSA employees, a lack of clarity about how to access the i3368 may have contributed to the large number of re-contacts related to the *Adult Disability Report*. Specifically, the May 2010 version of the iClaim application did not have the link to the i3368 on the same screen as the instructions for accessing the i3368. The May 2010 iClaim application also instructed individuals to navigate to the next screen where they should select "Continue" to access the i3368. However, the next screen did not discuss the i3368, though it did include important information for the individual's application.

In August 2010, SSA updated the iClaim application to better direct individuals to the i3668 after completing the iClaim application. Specifically, SSA

- placed the link to the i3368 on the same screen as the instructions for accessing the i3368,

- renamed the button linking the iClaim application to the i3368 from "Continue" to "Continue to *Adult Disability Report*," and

- placed more emphasis that the iClaim application is only one of three steps in the disability application process and that the individual must also submit a Form SSA-827 and an *Adult Disability Report*.

According to SSA, this update reduced re-contacts regarding missing *Adult Disability Reports*. Specifically, SSA staff stated that, after this update, there was a slight increase in disability applications where both a DIB iClaim application and i3368 were submitted within the same week. Furthermore, one employee stated, "The enhanced link between the Benefit Application and the i3368 has increased the number of [individuals] who are completing the i3368 on their own behalf."

To further reduce the number of re-contacts regarding missing *Adult Disability Reports*, SSA employees suggested creating one, seamless disability application that would include all pertinent questions from both the iClaim application and the i3368. Specifically, this enhancement would eliminate individuals from having to access and submit the i3368 separately from the iClaim application. SSA staff stated they are discussing a seamless disability application for a future release of the iClaim application, but did not have a planned release date.

Contact Information for Doctors and Hospitals

SSA employees also indicated individuals had difficulty completing the i3668. Specifically, 59 percent of SSA employees indicated individuals seem to have had more difficulty completing the i3368 online than individuals who completed the *Adult Disability Report* in person at an SSA FO or by telephone. For example, employees responded that individuals frequently fail to provide complete addresses and telephone numbers for doctors and hospitals on the i3368. According to SSA employees, when an individual

completes the *Adult Disability Report* in person or by telephone, SSA employees can quickly search SSA's systems for doctors' and hospitals' addresses and telephone numbers. However, this information is not available to individuals using the i3368.

To reduce the number of re-contacts regarding incomplete i3368s, SSA employees suggested allowing individuals the ability to search SSA's systems for addresses and telephone numbers for doctors and hospitals. SSA staff stated they were conducting analysis on how to better serve individuals filing for disability online. However, they did not indicate whether they would consider this enhancement for future implementation.

Supplemental Security Income

As previously stated, SSA employees re-contacted 96 individuals (56 percent) to take an application or discuss eligibility for SSI. The predominant reasons individuals were re-contacted regarding SSI follow.

- The individual indicated on the iClaim application intent to file an application for SSI.

- The individual was not eligible for Title II benefits.

- The employee's office policy was to re-contact all individuals who file a DIB iClaim application to discuss SSI.

To reduce the number of re-contacts regarding SSI, SSA employees suggested the Agency create an SSI iClaim application. SSA staff stated they are considering the functionality of an SSI iClaim application for future implementation but did not have a planned release date.

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF INTERNET CLAIM APPLICATIONS

While SSA employees had both positive and negative comments, the employees generally indicated iClaim applications were faster to process than in-person or telephone applications.[22] In fact, 52 percent of employees responded an iClaim application with re-contact takes an average of 40 minutes or less to process (see Table 2). In contrast, 89 percent of employees responded an in-person application takes more than 40 minutes, on average, to process. To that end, one employee stated, "The [iClaim] process is far from perfect, but is a timesaver."

---

[22] We obtained the perceptions of 227 SSA employees regarding the DIB iClaim application process. These 227 employees reviewed the 243 DIB iClaim applications in our sample.

Table 2: SSA Employees' Estimates of DIB Application Processing Times				
Minutes	**Percent of Employees**			
	iClaims Without Re-contact[23]	iClaims With Re-contact[24]	Telephone Application[25]	In-person Application[26]
1-20	47%	16%	1%	1%
21-40	38%	36%	15%	10%
41-60	10%	31%	57%	61%
More than 60	5%	17%	27%	28%

While iClaim applications generally take the least amount of time to process, employees were concerned about re-contacting individuals. To fully develop the claim, we found employees had to re-contact individuals in our sample up to 11 times, for an average of 2 times per individual. This included at least 1 unsuccessful re-contact attempt for 57 percent of the 170 iClaim applications with a re-contact in our sample.[27]

Employees were especially concerned about the number of re-contacts related to the Form SSA-827 and the *Adult Disability Report*. For example, employees made the following comments.

- "The [individual] needs to be informed, repeatedly, to complete the [*Adult Disability Report*] and submit the 827."

- "A lot of internet [filers] do not cooperate. It's like pulling teeth to develop these claims. They don't return phone calls, don't return signed 827, and don't finish the i3368 forms."

While time-consuming, re-contacts are often a necessary part of the iClaim application process. Although SSA made or plans to make enhancements to the iClaim application process, SSA's ability to limit the number of re-contacts is a challenge.

---

[23] These responses were from 187 employees. The remaining 40 employees responded that all iClaim applications required at least one re-contact.

[24] These responses were from 227 employees.

[25] These responses were from 156 employees. The remaining 71 employees did not process telephone applications.

[26] These responses were from 156 employees. The remaining 71 employees did not process in-person applications.

[27] We defined an unsuccessful re-contact attempt as occurring when the individual does not answer the telephone or the employee must leave a message for the individual.

VERIFICATION OF INTERNET APPLICATIONS

As an individual completes an iClaim application, the information is stored in SSA's Internet Database. Once SSA receives the iClaim application, an SSA employee establishes a claim in SSA's Modernized Claims System (MCS),[28] and the information from the Internet Database is automatically entered into MCS.[29] If the SSA employee determines changes are needed to the individual's application based on re-contact with the individual, the employee will make those changes in MCS. The information in MCS, in conjunction with the disability determination by the DDS, is used to determine whether the individual is eligible for benefits and, if so, the benefit amount.

We reviewed 50 of the DIB iClaim applications from our sample and found the information provided by individuals in their iClaim applications corresponded with the information recorded in SSA's system.[30]

In addition, SSA's Office of Quality Performance (OQP) conducts biannual reviews to measure the compliance of FOs and Payment Service Centers with SSA's policies. As part of the review, OQP redevelops claims to determine whether SSA's standards were met. For the first half of FY 2010, OQP found the accuracy rate for claims initiated over the Internet was almost 99 percent.[31]

---

[28] MCS is also the system employees use to record individuals' information obtained during in-person and telephone applications for benefits. SSA, POMS, GN 00201.015 F.1.

[29] SSA, POMS, GN 00204.055 D.2.

[30] We are also performing additional work in this area by assessing SSA's *Controls over Social Security Internet Benefit Applications* (A-09-11-21165).

[31] SSA OQP, *Transaction Accuracy Review Report,* October 2009 – March 2010, p. 3.

During our review of DIB iClaim applications, there were no indications that individuals filing for DIB using the iClaim application did not receive an appropriate level of service from SSA. In fact, SSA employees re-contacted 70 percent of the individuals in our sample to obtain additional information or clarification. While employees raised concerns regarding re-contacting individuals about the Form SSA-827 and the *Adult Disability Report*, they also recognized that iClaim applications were typically faster to process than in-person or telephone applications. In addition, we found that the information individuals provide on their iClaim applications corresponded with the information in SSA's system used to determine benefit eligibility and amount.

Appendices

Acronyms

DDS	Disability Determination Services
DIB	Disability Insurance Benefits
DOD	Disability Onset Date
FO	Field Office
FY	Fiscal Year
i3368	Internet Adult Disability and Work History Report
iClaim	Internet Claim
MCS	Modernized Claims System
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OQP	Office of Quality Performance
PDB	Public Disability Benefits
POMS	Program Operations Manual System
Pub. L. No.	Public Law Number
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
WC	Workers' Compensation

Forms

Form SSA-820	*Work Activity Report (Self-employed Person)*
Form SSA-821	*Work Activity Report – Employee*
Form SSA-827	*Authorization to Disclose Information to the Social Security Administration*

Scope and Methodology

To address Congressman Becerra's request related to the Internet claim (iClaim) application process, we:

- Reviewed applicable Federal laws and regulations and sections of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Program Operations Manual System related to the iClaim application process.

- Reviewed prior Office of the Inspector General reports related to SSA electronic services.

- Reviewed the Office of Quality Performance's *Transaction Accuracy Report*.

- Obtained a data extract from SSA of 60,943 Disability Insurance Benefits (DIB) iClaim applications filed in May 2010.[1]

- From the data extract, we selected a random sample of 250 DIB iClaim applications.[2] For each sampled DIB iClaim application, we contacted the SSA employee who adjudicated the claim or another employee in the office where the claim was adjudicated.[3] We asked each employee to:

  o Provide information specific to the application, such as whether the individual was re-contacted, why the individual was re-contacted, and the number of re-contacts needed to develop the application.

---

[1] SSA's Management Information Report for May 2010 reported 65,579 DIB iClaim applications were filed in May 2010. Therefore, the data extract contained 4,636 applications fewer than SSA identified. According to SSA, the discrepancy was due to a timing issue between the system that produces the Management Information Report and the system from which the data extract was pulled. We accepted this explanation from SSA and determined the data extract was materially complete to meet the objectives of this review.

[2] Although we selected a sample of 250 DIB iClaim applications for review, 7 employees did not respond to our request to review the iClaim applications for 7 individuals.

[3] If the employee who adjudicated the claim was no longer working for SSA or in the office where the claim was adjudicated, we sent the sampled iClaim application to another employee in the office or to a manager in the office for assignment to another employee.

- o Provide information regarding general experiences developing DIB applications, such as the average amount of time needed to fully develop an iClaim application and other types of applications, the average length of a re-contact, and whether there were any enhancements SSA could make to the iClaim application to reduce the number of re-contacts.

- From the randomly sampled 250 DIB iClaim applications, we reviewed 50 DIB iClaim applications to determine whether the information provided by the individuals in their applications corresponded with information in SSA's Modernized Claims System.

- Provided possible enhancements to the iClaim application to SSA to determine which, if any, were either feasible to implement into the iClaim application or already being implemented in an upcoming version of the iClaim application (see Appendix C).

Our work was conducted at the Office of Audit in Kansas City, Missouri, from May 2010 through March 2011. The entity reviewed was the Office of Operations. We determined that the data used in this review were sufficiently reliable given our objective and their intended use. We conducted our review in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*.

Issues Causing Re-contact

Of the 243 individuals in our sample of Disability Insurance Benefits (DIB) Internet claim (iClaim) applications, 170 individuals (70 percent) were re-contacted.[1] Social Security Administration (SSA) employees suggested enhancements to improve the iClaim application process that could result in fewer re-contacts.[2] SSA has plans to implement some of these enhancements into the iClaim application, but did not have release dates.

Issue Causing Re-contact	Employee Suggestions	SSA's Response
Missing *Authorization to Release Information to the Social Security Administration* (Form SSA-827): Employees re-contacted individuals if SSA had not received the individuals' Forms SSA-827.[3]	Allow for electronic submission of the Form SSA-827.	SSA is developing an electronic authorization process that captures the individual's electronic signature on the Form SSA-827.

---

[1] Although we selected a sample of 250 DIB iClaim applications for review, 7 employees did not respond to our request to review the iClaim application.

[2] Employees also suggested enhancements that were provided to SSA during our review of *Internet Claim Applications for Retirement Insurance Benefits* (A-07-10-20165). We did not include those enhancements in this report.

[3] See page 4 for a discussion of missing Forms SSA-827.

Issue Causing Re-contact	Employee Suggestions	SSA's Response
Missing or Incomplete *Adult Disability Report*: Employees re-contacted individuals if their *Adult Disability Reports* had not been received or were incomplete.[4]	Create a seamless application that would ask all applicable questions for both the DIB iClaim and the *Internet Adult Disability and Work History Report* (i3368) prior to providing the individual with an overall claim summary or receipt.	SSA is exploring how to better serve the community of disability filers. A "seamless" application has been discussed for a future release of iClaim. The release date is not known.
	Provide a single application number used for both the DIB iClaim application and the i3368.	SSA is exploring how to better serve the community of disability filers. Including a single application number has been discussed for a future release of iClaim. The release date is not known.
	Make a database of doctor and hospital information accessible to individuals completing the i3368.	SSA is exploring how to better serve the community of disability filers. Further analysis is being conducted to determine how SSA can better serve the online disability applicants.

---

[4] See page 5 for a discussion of missing or incomplete *Adult Disability Reports*.

Issue Causing Re-contact	Employee Suggestions	SSA's Response
Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Employees re-contacted individuals if they requested to file for SSI or the individual was not eligible for Title II benefits.[5]	Provide a more in-depth explanation of the SSI qualifications.	Currently, the public is unable to file for SSI online. The current field office (FO) procedures include a 100-percent re-contact for anyone who wants to file for SSI. Until the public is able to apply for SSI online, the more in-depth discussions regarding eligibility factors happen when the FO representatives contact the individual to determine eligibility and take the application.
	For individuals who wish to file for SSI, ask the individuals a series of questions to determine whether they qualify for SSI, such as questions about spouse's income, checking and savings account balances, and multiple vehicle or real property ownership.	Currently, the public is unable to file for SSI online. The current FO procedures include a 100-percent re-contact for anyone who wants to file for SSI. Until the public is able to apply for SSI online, the more in-depth discussions regarding eligibility factors happen when the FO representatives contact the individual to determine eligibility and take the application.
	Develop an SSI iClaim application.	The functionality of developing an SSI iClaim application will be considered for future Systems release. The release date is not known.
Disability Onset Date (DOD): Employees re-contacted individuals if there was other information that conflicted with the alleged DOD.	Include questions that would assist employees in determining the correct DOD when an individual alleges an end work date after their alleged DOD.	The iClaim application collects information about work and earnings. If there is reported work after the alleged DOD, development must be done via *the Work Activity Report* (Self-employed Person) (Form SSA-820) or *Work Activity Report – Employee* (Form SSA-821). This also includes development for special work expenses. Currently the FO technicians will re-contact the individual and complete the necessary forms, including the Forms SSA-820 or SSA-821. There is no future plan to incorporate this development within iClaim.

---

[5] See page 7 for a discussion of SSI.

Issue Causing Re-contact	Employee Suggestions	SSA's Response
Workers' Compensation (WC)/Public Disability Benefits (PDB): Employees re-contacted individuals if they stated they were receiving or applied for WC or PDB.	Include WC/PDB questions, similar to those in SSA's system, for individuals who allege receiving WC or PDB in the iClaim application.	The iClaim application currently asks "lead-in" questions for both WC and PDB. These questions result in 100 percent re-contacts for claims involving WC or PDB because of the complexity of the WC and PDB programs. Expanding the number of questions iClaim asks for WC and PDB is expected in a future release of iClaim. The release date is not known.

Employees did not provide specific enhancements to address the following issues that caused re-contacts for DIB iClaim applications.

- **Other Work Issues:** Employees re-contacted individuals if they indicated they were still working when they filed their iClaim application or if the individual did not agree with, or have, his or her Social Security Statement.

- **Earnings Record:** Employees re-contacted individuals when an earnings alert query appeared on the individual's record.

- **Auxiliaries:** Employees primarily re-contacted individuals when they listed a minor or disabled adult child.

- **Documentation:** Employees re-contacted individuals if they did not provide documents (other than the Form SSA-827 and the *Adult Disability Report*) necessary for SSA to process the application.

- **Incomplete Information:** Employees re-contacted individuals if there was incomplete information on the iClaim application.

- **Military:** Employees re-contacted individuals if they did not respond to questions regarding military service before 1968.

- **Medicare and Medicaid:** Employees re-contacted individuals if they were eligible for Medicare or Medicaid.

- **Windfall Elimination Provision/Government Pension Offset:** The employee re-contacted individuals because the individual did not answer the questions regarding Government employment.

DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE

Commissioner of Social Security

Chairman and Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means

Chief of Staff, Committee on Ways and Means

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Social Security

Majority and Minority Staff Director, Subcommittee on Social Security

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives

Chairman and Ranking Minority, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations,
   House of Representatives

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Finance

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Social Security Pensions and Family Policy

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Senate Special Committee on Aging

Social Security Advisory Board

Overview of the Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is comprised of an Office of Audit (OA), Office of Investigations (OI), Office of the Counsel to the Inspector General (OCIG), Office of External Relations (OER), and Office of Technology and Resource Management (OTRM). To ensure compliance with policies and procedures, internal controls, and professional standards, the OIG also has a comprehensive Professional Responsibility and Quality Assurance program.

Office of Audit

OA conducts financial and performance audits of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) programs and operations and makes recommendations to ensure program objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Financial audits assess whether SSA's financial statements fairly present SSA's financial position, results of operations, and cash flow. Performance audits review the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA's programs and operations. OA also conducts short-term management reviews and program evaluations on issues of concern to SSA, Congress, and the general public.

Office of Investigations

OI conducts investigations related to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in SSA programs and operations. This includes wrongdoing by applicants, beneficiaries, contractors, third parties, or SSA employees performing their official duties. This office serves as liaison to the Department of Justice on all matters relating to the investigation of SSA programs and personnel. OI also conducts joint investigations with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

Office of the Counsel to the Inspector General

OCIG provides independent legal advice and counsel to the IG on various matters, including statutes, regulations, legislation, and policy directives. OCIG also advises the IG on investigative procedures and techniques, as well as on legal implications and conclusions to be drawn from audit and investigative material. Also, OCIG administers the Civil Monetary Penalty program.

Office of External Relations

OER manages OIG's external and public affairs programs, and serves as the principal advisor on news releases and in providing information to the various news reporting services. OER develops OIG's media and public information policies, directs OIG's external and public affairs programs, and serves as the primary contact for those seeking information about OIG. OER prepares OIG publications, speeches, and presentations to internal and external organizations, and responds to Congressional correspondence.

Office of Technology and Resource Management

OTRM supports OIG by providing information management and systems security. OTRM also coordinates OIG's budget, procurement, telecommunications, facilities, and human resources. In addition, OTRM is the focal point for OIG's strategic planning function, and the development and monitoring of performance measures. In addition, OTRM receives and assigns for action allegations of criminal and administrative violations of Social Security laws, identifies fugitives receiving benefit payments from SSA, and provides technological assistance to investigations.