

# Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

August 2009



## Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) had improved its controls to prevent the direct payment of concurrent Title II and XVI benefits to individuals who had been appointed a representative payee.

## Background

SSA selects representative payees for Title II and XVI beneficiaries when representative payments would serve the beneficiaries' interests. SSA policy states that one representative payee is appointed for all benefits to which the beneficiary is entitled. In October 2008, we conducted a match of SSA's records and identified 9,276 concurrently entitled beneficiaries who were likely receiving their benefits directly and through a representative payee.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-09-09-19019.pdf>

## ***Follow-up: Concurrent Title II and Title XVI Beneficiaries Receiving Representative Payee and Direct Payments (A-09-09-19019)***

### Our Findings

SSA had reduced the number of individuals who had been receiving their benefits through conflicting payment methods and modified the Representative Payee System to prevent the selection of different payees for concurrently entitled beneficiaries.

However, we found that SSA staff could bypass system controls and establish direct payments for concurrently entitled beneficiaries who had representative payees. We also found that SSA staff did not always resolve conflicting payment information for concurrently entitled beneficiaries. Based on our sample results, we estimate that 7,931 beneficiaries received approximately \$43.6 million in direct payments, and their representative payees received about \$59.4 million on their behalf.

### Our Recommendations

We recommend that SSA:

1. Conduct periodic matches and/or develop systems alerts to identify and correct instances in which concurrent payments are made directly to beneficiaries and representative payees.
2. Remind SSA staff to use the Representative Payee System when processing representative payee actions and to review the Master Beneficiary Record/Supplemental Security Record to verify whether beneficiaries are concurrently entitled when making representative payee determinations.

SSA agreed with our recommendations.