

# Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

November 2008



## Objective

Our objective was to determine whether this individual volume representative payee was providing the Social Security Administration's (SSA) most vulnerable beneficiaries the full support and benefit their payments were intended to deliver.

## Background

Some individuals cannot manage or direct the management of their finances because of their youth or mental and/or physical impairments. Congress granted SSA the authority to appoint representative payees to receive and manage these beneficiaries' payments. A representative payee may be an individual or an organization. SSA selects representative payees for Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance beneficiaries or Supplemental Security Income recipients when representative payments would serve the individuals' interests.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-15-08-28093.pdf>

## *Individual Volume Representative Payee in Hartford, Connecticut (A-15-08-28093)*

### Our Findings

We randomly selected a sample of 50 beneficiaries for whom the representative payee served as both court-appointed conservator and payee. We also reviewed all the beneficiaries' files where the representative payee served only as the payee. We found that the representative payee did not use and account for SSA benefits in accordance with SSA policies and procedures.

We also found that the representative payee did not have effective safeguards over the receipt and disbursement of Social Security benefits.

### Our Recommendations

We recommend that SSA: (1) refrain from placing additional beneficiaries with this individual representative payee until the representative payee has implemented corrective actions to ensure Social Security benefits are properly used and accounted for; (2) take appropriate actions to seek restitution of \$3,965 on behalf of the 15 beneficiaries from whom the representative payee collected unallowable fees from January 1 through December 31, 2007; (3) instruct the representative payee to inform SSA of events that may affect individuals' entitlement or benefit payment amount in a timely manner; (4) instruct the representative payee to implement physical security controls to safeguard beneficiaries' financial records and assets; (5) ensure the corrective actions stated in SSA's June 11, 2008 letter to the representative payee are completed; and (6) review the independent accounting firm's work conducted at the other 15 representative payees to determine if follow-up reviews need to be performed.