

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

October 2011



Objective

To assess the accuracy of survivors benefit transactions greater than \$30,000 that Social Security Administration (SSA) staff processed through the Manual Adjustment, Credit and Award Process (MADCAP) system.

Background

Under the Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance program, SSA provides monthly survivors benefits to individuals who meet specific eligibility requirements. Generally, SSA's automated systems process monthly survivors benefit payments. However, for the cases we tested, SSA's automated or direct-input systems could not completely process the actions. As such, authorized technicians at SSA's program service centers manually processed the actions through the MADCAP system.

To view the full report, visit <http://oig.ssa.gov/audits-and-investigations/audit-reports/A-04-10-10119>

Accuracy of Title II Survivors Benefit Transactions Greater Than \$30,000 Processed Through the Manual Adjustment, Credit and Award Process System (A-04-10-10119)

Our Findings

SSA did not always accurately process the MADCAP action that determined the preliminary past-due survivors benefits and Supplemental Security Income offset amount. As such, of the 50 sampled MADCAP transactions tested, 8 (16 percent) had payment errors totaling \$87,238 (\$54,840 in overpayments and \$32,398 in underpayments.) Based on these payment errors, we estimate that approximately 171 MADCAP transactions in our population had related payment errors totaling about \$1.9 million.

Many of the cases we reviewed required that SSA staff determine past-due survivors benefits for numerous years, which often involved changes in eligibility periods and benefit rates. Additionally, SSA staff had to compute Supplemental Security Income payments and net these against the survivors benefits due. Finally, before issuing payments, staff had to recognize and adjust for overpayments. Our review found that payment errors resulted from various processing mistakes.

Our Recommendations

Accordingly, we recommended SSA provide additional training to staff and managers responsible for processing past-due MADCAP survivors benefit transactions greater than \$30,000. SSA agreed with our recommendation.