

Summary of the Social Security Administration's Plan to Reduce Improper Payments Under Executive order 13520, as reported in March 2012
A-15-12-12141



September 2012

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

Objective

To review the Social Security Administration (SSA) Accountable Official's Annual Report to the Office of the Inspector General, as required by Executive Order 13520, *Reducing Improper Payments*, and determine whether the (1) figures presented were accurate and (2) Agency complied with all requirements of the Executive Order.

Background

On November 20, 2009, the President signed Executive Order 13520. When the Government makes payments to individuals and businesses, or on behalf of program beneficiaries, it must make every effort to confirm that the right recipient is receiving the correct payment. The purpose of this Executive Order is to reduce improper payments by intensifying efforts to eliminate payment error, waste, fraud, and abuse in the major Government-administered programs.

Our Findings

During our review, we noted the Agency's Annual Report generally presented all information required for Executive Order 13520. The Agency did not report all required information for the corrective actions for the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. We also noted two instances of monetary figures and one non-monetary figure that were inaccurate based on the supporting documentation provided. The Agency should have detected the errors through its quality review process.

Our Recommendations

SSA should ensure that all figures in the report are properly stated based on supporting documentation and all required information is reported.

To ensure the prevention, collection, and detection of improper payments continues improving, SSA should continue efforts to address improper payments. Specifically, SSA should evaluate legislative proposals to determine those that would have a positive effect on the prevention, collection, and detection of improper payments. Additionally, SSA should continue seeking funding to cover the full cost of program integrity workloads, such as continuing disability reviews and SSI redeterminations.

Since the two corrective actions, Access to Financial Institutions and SSI Automated Telephone Wage Reporting System, have been rolled out nationwide, SSA should continue evaluating the SSI and Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance programs to identify additional improvements in the processes for preventing, collecting, and detecting improper payments. The Agency has not shared any additional initiatives with us. Continuous efforts are needed to ensure improper payments are detected timely.