



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

## Fraud Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 9, 2018

### **Inspector General Warns Public About OIG Impersonation Scheme**

The Acting Inspector General of Social Security, Gale Stallworth Stone, is warning citizens about an ongoing Office of the Inspector General (OIG) impersonation scheme. The OIG has recently received reports from citizens about suspicious phone calls claiming to be from the Acting Inspector General.

The reports indicate the caller identifies as “Gale Stone” and states the person’s Social Security number (SSN) is at risk of being deactivated or deleted. The caller then asks the person to call a provided phone number to resolve the issue. Citizens should be aware that the scheme’s details may vary; however, citizens should avoid engaging with the caller or calling the number provided, as the caller might attempt to acquire personal information.

The Acting Inspector General does not make these types of phone calls to citizens. OIG employees occasionally contact citizens for investigative, audit, or customer-service purposes, but they will not request sensitive personal information over the phone

“It is unfortunate that scammers are exploiting the OIG’s reputation and authority to mislead and harm innocent people,” Stone said. “We will continue to track these scams and alert citizens of their prevalence, so that citizens can stay several steps ahead of these thieves.”

The Acting Inspector General urges citizens to be cautious, and to avoid providing information such as your SSN or bank account numbers to unknown persons over the phone or internet unless you are certain of who is receiving it. If you receive a suspicious call from someone alleging to be the Acting Inspector General or from the OIG, you should report that information to the OIG online via <https://oig.ssa.gov>.

*For more information, please visit <https://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/scam-awareness>. For media inquiries, please contact Andrew Cannarsa, OIG’s Communications Director, at (410) 965-2671.*