



# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

<https://oig.ssa.gov>

Media Inquiries (410) 965-2671

## **Oregon Man Allegedly Received and Used Deceased Relative's Social Security Benefits for Over Four Decades** *Defendant Accused of Stealing Over \$460,000 of Public Funds*

Federal criminal charges were filed against George Doumar, 76, of Klamath Falls, Oregon for cashing social security checks issued in the name of his deceased aunt for more than 40 years. Based on a joint investigation with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon [announced](#) yesterday, August 11, 2020, that it has charged Doumar by complaint with theft of public funds and mail theft.

According to the affidavit in support of the complaint, Doumar's aunt applied for retirement benefits in August 1970 but did not receive any payments until she obtained benefit eligibility in 1977. Upon reaching eligibility, the Social Security Administration (SSA) began issuing monthly retirement benefits to Doumar's aunt in September 1977 apparently based on her initial benefit application in 1970. Meanwhile, she passed away in March 1971.

Our joint investigation found evidence indicating that for over 40 years—from September 1977 to July 2020—SSA mailed checks intended for Doumar's aunt, and Doumar continued to receive and cash the social security checks issued in the name of his deceased aunt. He also allegedly changed her mailing address to continue receiving these benefits, and deposited an Economic Impact Payment of \$1,200 issued to his aunt by the U.S. Treasury, as authorized by the CARES Act. The total estimated loss is \$460,192.30.

"This case represents one of the highest fraud amounts we have ever seen from a deceased beneficiary case, so we are gratified by the U.S. Attorney's decision to file charges," said Gail S. Ennis, Inspector General for Social Security. "This should stand as a warning to anyone who is receiving and misusing Social Security benefits intended for someone else. We will continue to work with SSA and our law enforcement partners to identify these cases, pursue those responsible, and recover funds for SSA and the taxpayers."

"The Social Security Administration is committed to identifying potential fraud and referring cases to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation," Andrew Saul, Commissioner of Social Security, said. "Our employees, including our dedicated Office of Anti-Fraud Programs, are the key to the prevention and identification of potential fraud in our programs."

Members of the press may make inquiries to Social Security OIG at [oig.dcom@ssa.gov](mailto:oig.dcom@ssa.gov) or (410) 965-2671.



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Inspector General Ennis commends SSA for its efforts to identify this case and refer it to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for investigation. Inspector General Ennis extends appreciation to the USPIS for its investigative efforts and the U.S. Attorney's Office for its support.

This case was investigated by the Social Security OIG's Seattle Field Division, led by Special Agent in Charge Stuart Markley, and the USPIS Seattle Division, led by Inspector in Charge Anthony Galetti. Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Rachel Sowray is prosecuting this matter.

A criminal complaint is only an accusation of a crime, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, Doumar faces up to 10 years in prison, a \$25,000 fine, and 3 years of supervised release. The U.S. Attorney's Office also intends to seek restitution on behalf of SSA.

Inspector General Ennis encourages the public to report suspected fraud to the Social Security Fraud Hotline. Please visit <https://oig.ssa.gov/> to learn more, and to report suspected fraud.

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