



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2019

<https://oig.ssa.gov>

Inspector General Announces \$10,000 Penalty for Company Using Social Security's Seal to Mislead Consumers

The Inspector General for the Social Security Administration, Gail S. Ennis, announced today that the New Jersey-based software company, Sawhney Systems, Inc., has agreed to pay a \$10,000 penalty for its misleading use of the Social Security Administration's official seal.

Sawhney Systems, Inc. entered into a settlement agreement to resolve the Government's claim that the company violated Section 1140 of the *Social Security Act* by using the Social Security Administration's official seal in the marketing of a mobile app. The app purports to help its users decide when to claim Social Security retirement benefits. The company marketed the app on several Internet platforms, including Apple's App Store and the Google Play store.

Sawhney Systems, Inc. cooperated with the Social Security Office of the Inspector General (OIG) inquiry into this matter and acknowledged its violation of the law. The company also immediately discontinued using Social Security's official seal in its marketing efforts, and agreed to pay a \$10,000 civil monetary penalty.

The Social Security OIG is authorized to enforce Section 1140 of the *Social Security Act*, a consumer protection law that prohibits people and companies from misleading consumers by giving a false impression of association with, or endorsement by, the Social Security Administration. Section 1140 also prohibits reproducing and selling Social Security publications and forms without authorization, as well as charging for services that the SSA provides free, without providing proper notice.

The Social Security OIG can impose civil monetary penalties against individuals, organizations, or other entities that violate Section 1140. All monies collected go directly to Social Security's Old-Age and Survivors Trust Fund.

Inspector General Ennis encourages the public to report suspected Section 1140 violations online at <https://oig.ssa.gov>.

For more information on Section 1140, please visit <https://oig.ssa.gov/section-1140>. For press inquiries, please contact Tracy Lynge, OIG Communications Director, at (410) 965-2671.