
**OFFICE OF
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE REVIEW:
INCREASE IN THE NUMBER
OF DISABLED BENEFICIARIES
WHO ARE WORKING**

May 2002

A-01-01-11022

AUDIT REPORT



Mission

We improve SSA programs and operations and protect them against fraud, waste, and abuse by conducting independent and objective audits, evaluations, and investigations. We provide timely, useful, and reliable information and advice to Administration officials, the Congress, and the public.

Authority

The Inspector General Act created independent audit and investigative units, called the Office of Inspector General (OIG). The mission of the OIG, as spelled out in the Act, is to:

- Conduct and supervise independent and objective audits and investigations relating to agency programs and operations.**
- Promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency within the agency.**
- Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in agency programs and operations.**
- Review and make recommendations regarding existing and proposed legislation and regulations relating to agency programs and operations.**
- Keep the agency head and the Congress fully and currently informed of problems in agency programs and operations.**

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- Independence to determine what reviews to perform.**
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Vision

By conducting independent and objective audits, investigations, and evaluations, we are agents of positive change striving for continuous improvement in the Social Security Administration's programs, operations, and management and in our own office.



SOCIAL SECURITY

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 31, 2002

Refer To:

To: The Commissioner

From: Inspector General

Subject: Performance Measure Review: Increase in the Number of Disabled Beneficiaries Who are Working (A-01-01-11022)

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993¹ requires the Social Security Administration (SSA) to develop performance indicators that assess the relevant service levels and outcomes of each program activity. GPRA also requires disclosure of the processes used to verify and validate the measured values used to report on program performance. SSA is committed to ensuring the importance of verifying and validating performance measures, and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audits of the performance measures are a means to achieve this. Our objective was to assess the reasonableness of the methodology SSA used to measure the following two Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 GPRA performance indicators:

- 10 percent increase (over FY 1997) in the number of Disability Insurance (DI) beneficiaries beginning trial work periods (TWP).

FY 1997 Reported Baseline	FY 2000 Goal	FY 2000 Reported Performance
16,000	17,600	14,789

- 10 percent increase (over FY 1997) in the number of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disabled recipients aged 18-64 participating in 1619(a) status.²

FY 1997 Reported Baseline	FY 2000 Goal	FY 2000 Reported Performance
19,767	21,744	25,772

¹ Public Law No. 103-62.

² Section 1619(a) of the Social Security Act provides special SSI cash benefits to individuals who would otherwise lose eligibility for regular SSI payments because they engage in substantial gainful activity. To qualify, the person must continue to be severely impaired and meet all other eligibility rules.

Our audit was limited to reviewing SSA's methodology to obtain the data used to determine the number of individuals beginning TWP or participating in 1619(a) status in FYs 1997 and 2000. We did not assess the reliability of the data SSA used for these two performance indicators.³

Based on our audit, SSA's methodology for measuring the FY 2000 GPRA performance indicators related to its TWP and 1619(a) programs was reasonable. Specifically, we reviewed SSA's methodology, as well as the data⁴ used by SSA, for calculating the number of people beginning TWP and participating in the 1619(a) program.

BACKGROUND

Many beneficiaries with disabilities want to work and become independent, and many can work despite their impairments if they receive the support they need. To that end, SSA's programs contain various work incentive provisions. Currently, however, less than one-half of 1 percent of DI beneficiaries and about 1 percent of SSI recipients actually leave the programs because of work activity.⁵ SSA has established performance indicators under GPRA to increase the number of DI adult worker beneficiaries who begin TWP and to increase the number of SSI disabled recipients, aged 18 to 64, participating in 1619(a) status. For FY 2000, SSA established goals of 10 percent increases relative to the FY 1997 base year numbers for each of these indicators.

Federal regulations provide for TWP for most DI beneficiaries.⁶ The entitlement to a TWP generally begins with the month of entitlement and continues until the impairment is no longer disabling or until 9 TWP months are completed, whichever occurs earlier. The trial work provision is intended to give a disabled beneficiary the opportunity to test his or her ability to work and hold a job. The individual may work for 9 months (not necessarily consecutive) during which the work, regardless of magnitude, will not be used as the basis for determining whether there was demonstrated ability to engage in

³ The number of individuals participating in both the TWP and 1619(a) programs for FYs 1997 and 2000 changes over time because individuals can be added and removed from these programs, retroactively, on a monthly basis. Additionally, SSA's FY 1997 and 2000 1619(a) data files were based on estimated earnings as of a specific date in August 1997 and August 2000, respectively. Since we did not independently extract our own data files on these same dates, we could not test the reliability of these data.

⁴ Since these two performance measures were expressed as percentage changes between two FY numbers, we reviewed (1) SSA's 1619(a) data for FY 1997 and FY 2000 under the SSI program; and (2) SSA's TWP data for FYs 1997 and 2000 under the DI program.

⁵ SSA report, *Social Security and Supplemental Security Income Disability Programs: Managing for Today Planning for Tomorrow*, March 11, 1999.

⁶ 20 C.F.R. § 404.1592.

substantial gainful activity (SGA).⁷ After the end of the TWP, the work may be considered in determining whether the individual demonstrated the ability to engage in SGA.⁸ If a beneficiary is determined to be engaging in SGA, SSA no longer considers the individual to be disabled.⁹

A work incentive for SSI recipients is the 1619(a) provision. Section 1619(a) of the Social Security Act provides special SSI benefits to individuals who otherwise would lose eligibility for SSI payments under the regular rules because they engage in SGA. The person must continue to be severely impaired and meet all other eligibility rules.

The TWP and 1619(a) GPRA measures are interim measures that are being used by SSA while it implements the return to work provisions included in the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999.¹⁰ In SSA's Annual Performance Plan for FY 2002, the following Strategic Objective was included: "By 2005, increase by 100 percent from 1999 levels, the number of [DI] and of SSI disability beneficiaries who achieve steady employment and no longer receive cash benefits."

RESULTS OF REVIEW

Based on our audit, SSA's methodology for measuring the FY 2000 GPRA performance indicators related to its TWP and 1619(a) programs was reasonable. Specifically, we reviewed SSA's methodology, as well as the data¹¹ used by SSA, for calculating the number of people beginning TWPs and participating in the 1619(a) program.

TWP DATA

The chart below shows information published by SSA regarding its TWP GPRA goal, which was a 10-percent increase (over FY 1997) in the number of DI beneficiaries beginning TWPs.

⁷ Program Operations Manual System (POMS), section DI 10501.001, states that SGA means performance of significant physical or mental activities in work for pay or profit or in work of a type generally performed for pay or profit. Significant activities are useful in the accomplishment of a job or the operation of a business and have economic value.

⁸ If a beneficiary is not entitled to a TWP, benefits will be ceased effective the first month the beneficiary engages in SGA, as stated in SSA's POMS, section DI 13010.080.

⁹ POMS, section DI 13010.035.

¹⁰ Public Law No. 106-170. The 1999 Ticket to Work legislation is being implemented by SSA over several years; and, by 2005, SSA plans to have a new measure in place for returning beneficiaries to work, which will replace the current TWP and 1619(a) measures.

¹¹ Since these two performance measures were expressed as percentage changes between two FY numbers, we reviewed (1) SSA's 1619(a) data for FY 1997 and FY 2000 under the SSI program and (2) SSA's TWP data for FYs 1997 and FY 2000 under the DI program.

FY 1997 Reported Baseline	FY 2000 Goal	FY 2000 Reported Performance
16,000	17,600	14,789

To test SSA's methodology for this measure, we requested from SSA data on its FY 1997 and FY 2000 participation levels. SSA provided a file containing 16,376 beneficiaries with TWP start dates in FY 1997 and a file containing 14,789 beneficiaries with TWP start dates in FY 2000.¹² To test whether beneficiaries included in these files participated in TWPs, we selected a random sample of 100 cases each from the FY 1997 and FY 2000 files.

**FY 1997
TWP Data** Of the 100 cases reviewed, we determined that 99 cases were correctly identified, and 1 case was incorrectly identified as having participated in a TWP. In this one case, the Master Beneficiary Record (MBR) for the beneficiary did not show that any TWP months were worked, and this beneficiary's Detailed Earnings Query (DEQY) did not show any earnings for calendar years (CY) 1997, 1998 or 1999. Projecting the results of our sample to the population, we estimate that 16,212 beneficiaries included in SSA's FY 1997 TWP file participated in TWPs. (See Appendix C.) Since our estimate of 16,212 beneficiaries participating in TWPs exceeds SSA's published FY 1997 base year number of 16,000 beneficiaries by only 1.3 percent, we concluded that SSA's methodology for developing its FY 1997 TWP performance measure baseline data was reasonable.

**FY 2000
TWP Data** Of the 100 cases reviewed, we determined that 98 cases were correctly identified, and 2 cases were incorrectly identified as having participated in TWPs. In these two cases, the MBRs for the beneficiaries did not show that any TWP months were worked, and these beneficiaries' DEQYs did not show any earnings for CY 2000. Projecting the results of our sample to the population, we estimate that 14,493 beneficiaries included in SSA's FY 2000 file participated in TWPs. (See Appendix C.) Since our estimate of 14,493 beneficiaries is only 2 percent less than SSA's published number of 14,789, we concluded that SSA's methodology for developing its FY 2000 TWP performance measure figures was reasonable. However, as reported by SSA, the Agency did not meet its FY 2000 TWP goal of 17,600 TWP participants.

¹² These data files were extracted from the MBR in January 1998 and January 2001, respectively. SSA's 1997 file contained 16,376 beneficiaries, which is slightly higher than SSA's published FY 1997 base year number because SSA rounded the number down to 16,000. Even though SSA classifies this measure as a FY number, the FY 2000 Performance and Accountability Report (SSA Pub. No. 31-231, issued December 2000) states that the TWP GPRA data are actually captured on a CY basis.

1619(a) DATA

The chart below shows information published by SSA regarding its 1619(a) GPRA goal, which was a 10-percent increase (over FY 1997) in the number of SSI disabled recipients, aged 18-64, participating in 1619(a) status.

FY 1997 Reported Baseline	FY 2000 Goal	FY 2000 Reported Performance
19,767	21,744	25,772

To test SSA's methodology for this measure, we requested from SSA data on its FY 1997 and FY 2000 participation levels. SSA provided us a file containing 19,443 recipients in 1619(a) status in September 1997 and a file containing 25,772 recipients in 1619(a) status in September 2000.¹³ These files were based on estimated September 1997 and September 2000 wages and were extracted from the Supplemental Security Record (SSR) in August 1997 and August 2000, respectively. To test whether recipients included in these files were in 1619(a) status, we selected a random sample of 100 cases from each of the FY 1997 and FY 2000 files. Based on the results of our testing of SSA's September 1997 and September 2000 1619(a) data files, we were unable to reach a conclusion to meet our objective. (See below.) As an alternative audit test, we then created and reviewed 1619(a) participant files for September 1997 and September 2000 based on information on the SSR at later dates.

**FY 1997
1619(a) Data** For each sample case, we reviewed September 1997 wage and benefit payment information as of July 2001. Of the 100 cases reviewed, we determined:

- 47 cases were correctly identified as having participated in 1619(a) status in September 1997.
- 53 cases were incorrectly identified as being in 1619(a) status. For 37 of these cases, the estimated wages were equal to or higher than the \$700 SGA amount. However, the verified September 1997 wages were actually lower than the SGA amount. Therefore, the recipient qualified for regular SSI payments—not 1619(a) benefit payments. The remaining 16 cases were not in 1619(a) status because their September 1997 wages increased—making them ineligible for any SSI payments.

¹³ SSA's original FY 1997 1619(a) baseline number was 30,000, based on an SGA level of \$500 per month. However, in May 1999, the SGA level was increased from \$500 to \$700. With that change, the FY 1997 baseline of 30,000 was recomputed to 19,767. When SSA recomputed its FY 1997 1619(a) number, it did not delete recipients who were under age 18 or over age 64. Before providing us a file for this audit, SSA deleted from its published 1997 number of 19,767 recipients, individuals under age 18 or over age 64—resulting in a file containing 19,443 recipients. The 1997 and 2000 numbers are listed as FY numbers in SSA's FY 2000 Performance and Accountability Report. However, these numbers represent recipients in 1619(a) status in September 1997 and September 2000, respectively.

Based on the results of our sample of SSA's FY 1997 1619(a) data file—in which we found that only 47 of 100 sampled recipients were in 1619(a) status—we could not support SSA's reported performance indicator level. This occurred because SSA's FY 1997 performance level was computed based on estimated wages reported to SSA as of August 1997. Since, over time, those estimated wages were changed to verified wage amounts, many of the recipients identified by SSA to be in 1619(a) status during September 1997 were not actually in 1619(a) status based on their verified wages. Conversely, we recognized that the number of recipients who were actually in 1619(a) status in September could be higher if we identified people in 1619(a) status on a later date—after their estimated wages were verified by SSA.

To determine the actual number of recipients in 1619(a) status in September 1997, we performed additional audit tests. Specifically, using information contained on the SSR in June 2000, we created a file that contained 21,517 recipients in 1619(a) status as of September 1997. To test the reliability of these data, we randomly selected 100 of these 21,517 recipients for review. Based on wage and benefit payment information on the recipients' SSRs for September 1997, all 100 cases were correctly identified as having participated in 1619(a) status in September 1997. Projecting the results of our sample to the population, we are 90-percent confident that at least 21,028 recipients (which is 6.4 percent greater than SSA's published FY 1997 base year number of 19,767) were in 1619(a) status in September 1997. (See Appendix C.) Thus, although SSA's FY 1997 data file of 19,443 cases was based on estimated earnings for September 1997, our review of individuals with verified earnings for September 1997 showed that SSA's methodology for developing the FY 1997 1619(a) performance indicator was reasonable. Since earnings can take months—and sometimes years—to verify, SSA's use of estimated earnings was reasonable for developing this performance measure. The estimated earnings data was the best information available to SSA at the time.

**FY 2000
1619(a) Data**

For each sample case, we reviewed September 2000 wage and benefit payment information as of July 2001. Of the 100 cases reviewed, we determined:

- 62 cases were correctly identified as having participated in 1619(a) status in September 2000.
- 38 cases were incorrectly identified as being in 1619(a) status. For 22 of these cases, the estimated wages were equal to or higher than the \$700 SGA amount. However, the verified September 2000 wages were actually lower than the SGA amount. Therefore, the recipient qualified for regular SSI payments—not 1619(a) benefit payments. The remaining 16 cases were not in 1619(a) status because their September 2000 wages increased—making them ineligible for any SSI payments.

Based on the results of our sample of SSA's FY 2000 1619(a) data file—in which we found that only 62 of 100 sampled recipients were in 1619(a) status—we could not support SSA's reported performance indicator level. This occurred because SSA's

FY 2000 performance level was computed based on estimated wages reported to SSA as of August 2000. Since, over time, those estimated wages were changed to verified wage amounts, many of the recipients identified by SSA to be in 1619(a) status during September 2000 were not actually in 1619(a) status based on their verified wages. Conversely, we recognized that the number of recipients who were actually in 1619(a) status in September 2000 could be higher if we identified people in 1619(a) status on a later date—after their estimated wages were verified by SSA.

To determine the actual number of recipients in 1619(a) status in September 2000, we performed additional audit tests. Specifically, using information contained on the SSR in November 2001, we created a file that contained 34,184 recipients in 1619(a) status as of September 2000. To test the reasonableness of SSA's methodology, we randomly selected 100 of these 34,184 recipients for review. Based on wage and benefit payment information on the recipients' SSRs for September 2000, all 100 cases were correctly identified as having participated in 1619(a) status in September 2000. Projecting the results of our sample to the population, we are 90-percent confident that at least 33,407 recipients (which is 29.6 percent greater than SSA's published FY 2000 number of 25,772) were in 1619(a) status in September 2000. (See Appendix C.) Thus, although SSA's FY 2000 data file of 25,772 cases was based on estimated earnings for September 2000, our review of recipients with verified earnings for September 2000 showed that SSA's methodology for developing the FY 2000 1619(a) performance indicator was reasonable. Since earnings can take months—and sometimes years—to verify, SSA's use of estimated earnings was reasonable for developing this performance measure. The estimated earnings data was the best information available to SSA at the time.

OCTOBER 2001 PAY STATUS OF INDIVIDUALS IN OUR SAMPLES

To assess whether participating in a TWP or being in 1619(a) status resulted in these individuals leaving SSA's programs due to work activities, we determined the payment status for our FY 1997 sample cases as of October 2001. For this analysis, we used the pay status of the individuals included in our two samples extracted from SSA's FY 1997 TWP and 1619(a) files. The pay status on the MBRs or SSRs as of October 2001 are shown in the following table:

October 2001 Pay Status of FY 1997 Sample Cases					
	Received Payments	No Payment Received Due to Income or Resources	Terminated due to Death	Terminated or Suspended for Other Reasons	Total
FY 1997 TWP Sample Cases	64	24	9	3 ^a	100
FY 1997 1619(a) Sample Cases	39	54	2	5 ^b	100

Notes:

^a The three TWP cases are in nonpayment status for the following reasons: refusal to receive vocational rehabilitation, reason not defined, and deferred to recover overpayment not separately defined.

^b The five 1619(a) cases are in nonpayment status for: failure to provide a required report, inmate in a penal institution, failure to submit to consultative examination, and whereabouts unknown (two cases).

The table above shows that 78 of the 200 sampled cases (39 percent) did not receive benefit payments in October 2001 due to income or resource issues.¹⁴ This indicates that SSA's TWP and 1619(a) work incentive programs may be encouraging individuals to return to work.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on our audit, SSA's methodology for measuring the FY 2000 GPRA performance indicators related to its TWP and 1619(a) programs was reasonable. However, we found that—to report on this performance measure in a timely manner—SSA must rely on estimated wages to calculate the number of recipients in 1619(a) status. Since SSA is using estimated wages to calculate this measure, we recommend that SSA include a statement in future performance reports that its "actual" performance levels are based on estimated wage amounts, and, as a result, may change over time as those wage amounts are verified.

¹⁴ For the 78 cases, 74 did not receive benefit payments due to income and the remaining 4 did not receive benefit payments due to resources.

AGENCY COMMENTS

In response to our draft report, SSA agreed with our recommendation. Specifically, SSA will include a statement in future performance reports. (See Appendix F for SSA's comments.)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James G. Huse, Jr."

James G. Huse, Jr.

Appendices

APPENDIX A – Acronyms

APPENDIX B – Scope and Methodology

APPENDIX C – Sample Results

APPENDIX D – Flowchart for Input of Trial Work Period (TWP) Information to the Master Beneficiary Record and Extraction of TWP Performance Measure Files

APPENDIX E – Flowchart for Input of 1619(a) Information to the Supplemental Security Record and Extraction of 1619(a) Performance Measure Files

APPENDIX F – Agency Comments

APPENDIX G – OIG Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

Acronyms

CY	Calendar Year
DEQY	Detailed Earnings Query
DI	Disability Insurance
FO	Field Office
FY	Fiscal Year
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
MBR	Master Beneficiary Record
MSSICS	Modernized Supplemental Security Income Claims System
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
POMS	Program Operations Manual System
PSC	Payment Service Center
SGA	Substantial Gainful Activity
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
SSR	Supplemental Security Record
TWP	Trial Work Period

Scope and Methodology

Our objective was to assess the reasonableness of the methodology the Social Security Administration (SSA) used to measure the number of disabled beneficiaries who are working.

To test the accuracy and reliability of SSA's performance data, we:

- identified the data collection process used by SSA in preparing the data for its Annual Performance Plan;
- interviewed personnel at data entry/collection sites to gain an understanding of how data is collected and input into SSA's systems;
- obtained files from SSA of the individuals who began trial work periods (TWP) and participated in the 1619(a) program in Fiscal Years (FY) 1997 and 2000;
- obtained a random sample of 100 beneficiaries/recipients from each group and tested those records to determine whether the individuals actually began TWPs or received 1619(a) benefits;
- created a file (as of June 2000) of recipients in 1619(a) status in September 1997, and reviewed 100 sample cases; and
- created a file (as of November 2001) of recipients in 1619(a) status in September 2000, and reviewed 100 sample cases.

In conducting this audit, we also:

- reviewed SSA's Performance and Accountability Report and SSA's Annual Performance Plan for FY 2000 to determine the baseline data, definition, and data source for the performance indicator;
- researched the Program Operations Manual System, the Code of Federal Regulations, and the Social Security Act; and
- determined the pay status in October 2001 of the beneficiaries/recipients in our random samples based on SSA's FY 1997 TWP and 1619(a) files.

Our audit was limited to reviewing SSA's methodology in determining the number of individuals beginning TWPs or participating in the 1619(a) program in FYs 1997 and 2000. We could not assess the reliability of the data SSA used for these two

performance indicators.¹ Also, we could not test the completeness of SSA's FY 1997 or FY 2000 TWP files. Our audit tests were limited because SSA extracted these files from the MBR in January 1998 and January 2001, respectively, but continued to retroactively place individuals in TWPs after creating these files.

We performed our audit between June and December 2001 in Boston, Massachusetts. The entity audited was the Office of Employment Support Programs within the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Disability and Income Security Programs. We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

¹ The number of individuals participating in both the 1619(a) and TWP programs for FY 1997 and FY 2000 changes over time because individuals can be added and removed from these programs, retroactively, on a monthly basis. Additionally, SSA's FY 1997 and FY 2000 1619(a) data files were based on estimated earnings as of a specific date in 1997 and 2000, respectively. Since we did not independently extract our own data files on these same dates, we could not test the reliability of this data.

Appendix C

Sample Results

From the Social Security Administration (SSA), we obtained files of individuals who began trial work periods (TWP) in Fiscal Years (FY) 1997 and 2000 and individuals who were in 1619(a) status in September 1997 and September 2000.

Based on the results of our testing of SSA's September 1997 and September 2000 1619(a) data files that were based on estimated income, we were unable to reach a conclusion to meet our audit objective. As an alternative audit test, we created and reviewed files of recipients in 1619(a) status in September 1997 and September 2000 based on information on the Supplemental Security Record (SSR) at later dates. Our second sample of September 1997 1619(a) data was based on information on the SSR in June 2000, and our second sample of September 2000 1619(a) data was based on information on the SSR in November 2001.

Our sample results and projections are detailed in the tables below.

FY 1997 TWP Sample Results and Projection	
Population size	16,376
Sample size	100
Sampled cases which show participation in a TWP	99
Projection of cases with participation in a TWP	16,212
Projection lower limit	15,615
Projection upper limit	16,368

Note: All projections are at the 90 percent confidence level.

FY 2000 TWP Sample Results and Projection	
Population size	14,789
Sample size	100
Sampled cases which show participation in a TWP	98
Projection of cases with participation in a TWP	14,493
Projection lower limit	13,879
Projection upper limit	14,736

Note: All projections are at the 90-percent confidence level.

**SSA Provided Files for 1619(a) Program for FYs 1997 and 2000
Sample Results**

Population size – FY 1997 File	19,443
Sample size	100
Sampled cases which show participation in 1619(a) status	47
Population size – FY 2000 File	25,772
Sample size	100
Sampled cases which show participation in 1619(a) status	62

Note: All projections are at the 90 percent confidence level.

**Auditor Prepared 1619(a) Extract File for FY 1997
Sample Results and Projections**

Population size	21,517
Sample size	100
Sampled cases which show participation in 1619(a) status	100
Projection of cases in 1619(a) status	21,517
Projection lower limit	21,028

Note: All projections are at the 90 percent confidence level.

**Auditor Prepared 1619(a) Extract File for FY 2000
Sample Results and Projections**

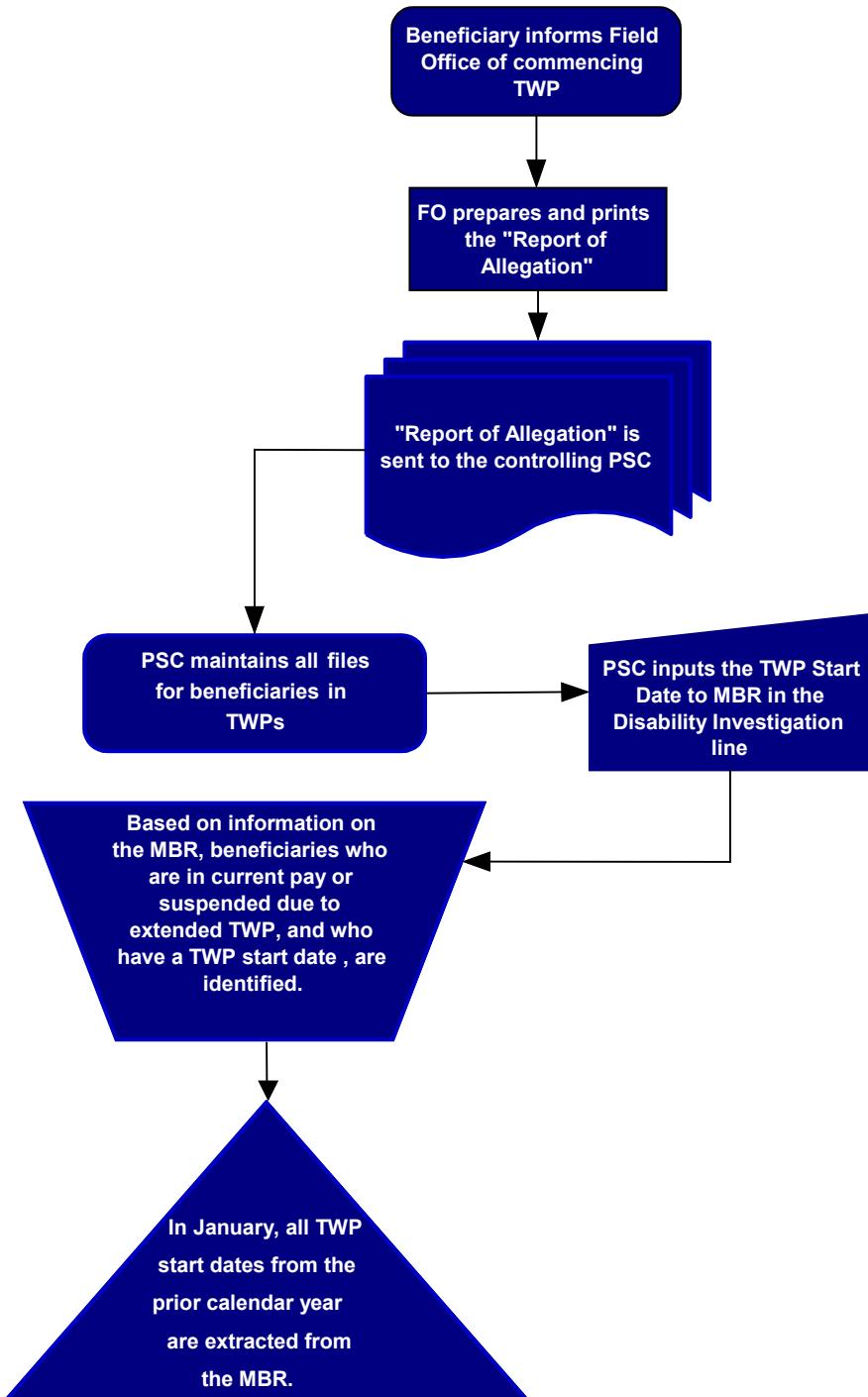
Population size	34,184
Sample size	100
Sampled cases which show participation in 1619(a) status	100
Projection of cases in 1619(a) status	34,184
Projection lower limit	33,407

Note: All projections are at the 90 percent confidence level.

Appendix D

FLOWCHART

Input of Trial Work Period (TWP) Information to the Master Beneficiary Record (MBR) and Extraction of TWP Performance Measure Files¹

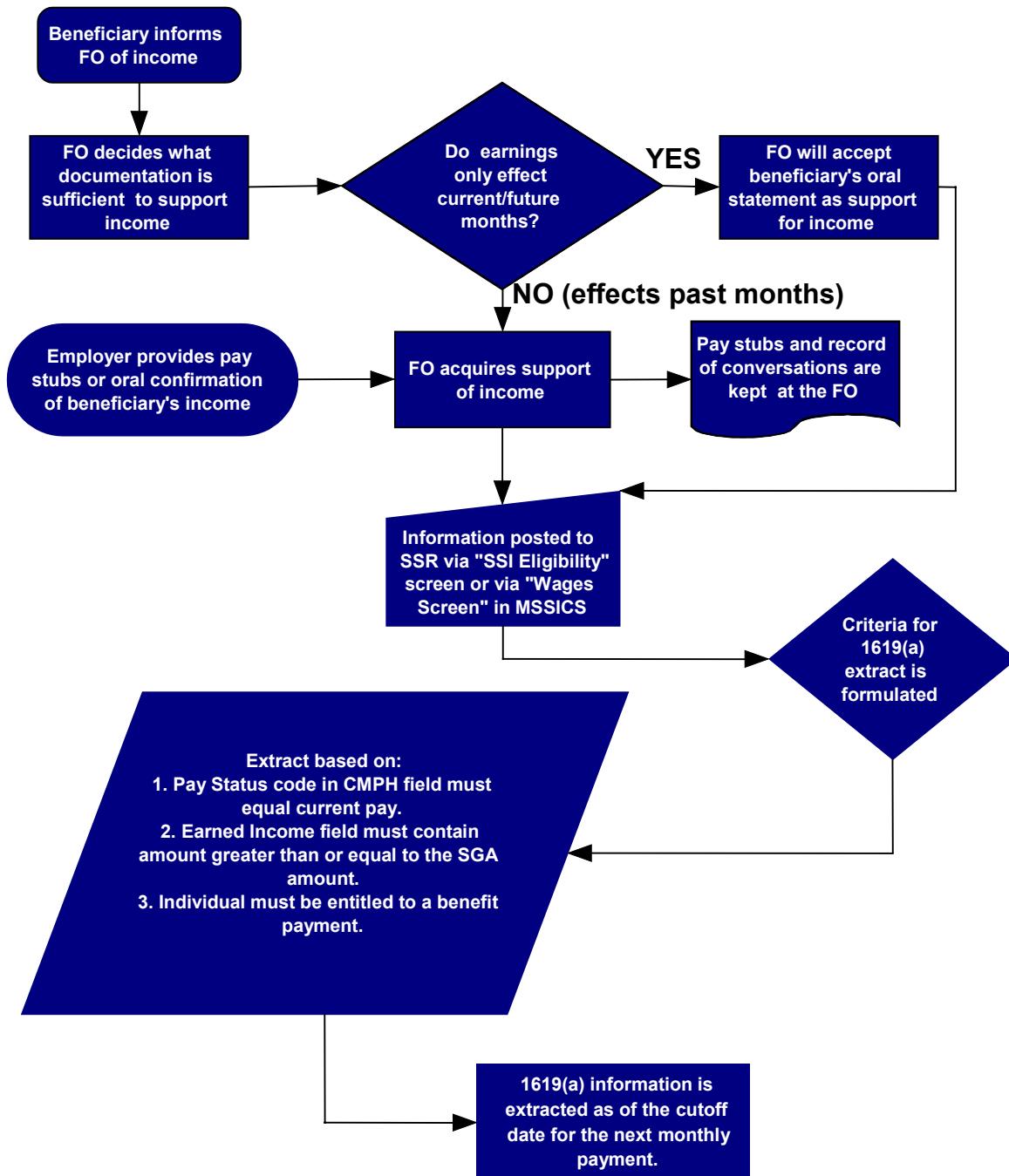


¹ Refer to Appendix A for acronyms.

Appendix E

FLOWCHART

Input of 1619(a) Information to the Supplemental Security Record (SSR) and Extraction of 1619(a) Performance Measure Files¹



¹ Refer to Appendix A for acronyms.

Appendix F

Agency Comments



SOCIAL SECURITY

MEMORANDUM

31165-24-775

Date: May 9, 2002

Refer To: S1J-3

To: James G. Huse, Jr.
Inspector General

From: Larry Dye /s/
Chief of Staff

Subject: Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Draft Report, "Performance Measure Review: Increase in the Number of Disabled Beneficiaries Who are Working" (A-01-01-11022)—INFORMATION

We appreciate the OIG's efforts in conducting this review. Our comments on the report content and recommendation are attached.

Please let us know if we may be of further assistance. Staff questions may be referred to Trudy Williams on extension 50380.

Attachment:
SSA Response

COMMENTS OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA) ON THE
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL (OIG) DRAFT REPORT, "PERFORMANCE
MEASURE REVIEW: INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF DISABLED
BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE WORKING" (A-01-01-11022)

Recommendation

SSA should include a statement in future performance reports that its "actual" performance levels are based on estimated wage amounts, and as a result, may change over time as those wage amounts are verified.

Comment

We agree and will include a statement in future performance reports.

Appendix G

OIG Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

OIG CONTACTS

Rona Rustigian, Director, Northern Audit Division, (617) 565-1819

Judith Oliveira, Deputy Director, (617) 565-1765

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In addition to the persons named above:

Arthur Giterman, Auditor

Katie Hallock, Auditor

Kevin Joyce, Auditor

David Mazzola, Senior Auditor

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Chairman, Senate Special Committee on Aging	1
Ranking Minority Member, Senate Special Committee on Aging	1
Vice Chairman, Subcommittee on Government Management Information and Technology	1
President, National Council of Social Security Management Associations, Incorporated	1
Treasurer, National Council of Social Security Management Associations, Incorporated	1
Social Security Advisory Board	1
AFGE General Committee	9
President, Federal Managers Association	1
Regional Public Affairs Officer	1
Total	97

Overview of the Office of the Inspector General

Office of Audit

The Office of Audit (OA) conducts comprehensive financial and performance audits of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) programs and makes recommendations to ensure that program objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Financial audits, required by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, assess whether SSA's financial statements fairly present the Agency's financial position, results of operations, and cash flow. Performance audits review the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA's programs. OA also conducts short-term management and program evaluations focused on issues of concern to SSA, Congress, and the general public. Evaluations often focus on identifying and recommending ways to prevent and minimize program fraud and inefficiency.

Office of Executive Operations

The Office of Executive Operations (OEO) provides four functions for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) – administrative support, strategic planning, quality assurance, and public affairs. OEO supports the OIG components by providing information resources management; systems security; and the coordination of budget, procurement, telecommunications, facilities and equipment, and human resources. In addition, this Office coordinates and is responsible for the OIG's strategic planning function and the development and implementation of performance measures required by the Government Performance and Results Act. The quality assurance division performs internal reviews to ensure that OIG offices nationwide hold themselves to the same rigorous standards that we expect from the Agency. This division also conducts employee investigations within OIG. The public affairs team communicates OIG's planned and current activities and the results to the Commissioner and Congress, as well as other entities.

Office of Investigations

The Office of Investigations (OI) conducts and coordinates investigative activity related to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement of SSA programs and operations. This includes wrongdoing by applicants, beneficiaries, contractors, physicians, interpreters, representative payees, third parties, and by SSA employees in the performance of their duties. OI also conducts joint investigations with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

Counsel to the Inspector General

The Counsel to the Inspector General provides legal advice and counsel to the Inspector General on various matters, including: 1) statutes, regulations, legislation, and policy directives governing the administration of SSA's programs; 2) investigative procedures and techniques; and 3) legal implications and conclusions to be drawn from audit and investigative material produced by the OIG. The Counsel's office also administers the civil monetary penalty program.