

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

March 2012



Objective

To determine whether concurrent beneficiaries' Title II benefits were reinstated along with Title XVI payments upon the beneficiaries' release from incarceration.

Background

In general, the *Social Security Act* prohibits benefits payments to prisoners.

To conduct this review, we identified 1,042 cases in which the Social Security Administration (SSA) did not reinstate concurrent beneficiaries' Title II payments after their release from incarceration while their Title XVI record was in current pay status. We randomly selected 100 cases from this population for detailed analysis.

To view the full report, visit
<http://oig.ssa.gov/audits-and-investigations/audit-reports/A-01-11-21168>

Concurrent Beneficiaries Released from Incarceration Whose Title II Benefits Have Not Been Reinstated (A-01-11-21168)

Our Findings

SSA did not reinstate some concurrent beneficiaries' Title II benefits along with their Title XVI payments upon their release from incarceration. In addition, the Agency did not properly suspend some Title XVI payments along with Title II benefits upon the beneficiaries' incarceration. Based on our review, we estimate that SSA made improper payments of about \$14 million to 823 concurrent beneficiaries. Over 97 percent of this total amount represents payments that should have been made but were not due to the problem we identified. The main cause of these errors was that SSA staff did not work on both parts of the concurrent cases.

Our Recommendations

1. Review the remaining cases in our population in which it appears the Title II benefits were not reinstated after the beneficiaries' release from incarceration and/or Title XVI payments were not suspended and take appropriate corrective action.
2. Remind staff to consider both Title II and XVI benefits when suspending and reinstating benefits because of incarceration.

SSA agreed with the recommendations.