

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

March 2011



Objective

To assess the Social Security Administration's (SSA) efforts to address State furloughs and their effect on the Agency's disability programs.

Background

To address budget deficits, some States have taken actions that affect SSA's disability programs. For example, some States have implemented furloughs or hiring freezes for State employees—including staff in the disability determination services (DDS), which are 100-percent funded by SSA.

Our March 2009 report, *Impact of State Employee Furloughs on the Social Security Administration's Disability Programs*, stated that furloughs of DDS employees would affect SSA's ability to process the disability workload. Working with SSA, we compiled a list of options for addressing the effect of DDS furloughs.

To view the full report, visit http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO_BEPDF/A-01-11-11116.pdf.

The Social Security Administration's Response to State Furloughs Impacting Its Disability Programs (A-01-11-11116)

Our Findings

We found that SSA had been proactive in addressing State furloughs affecting its disability programs. The Agency implemented all the options from our March 2009 report that did not require legislative changes. Despite SSA's efforts, some States continued to furlough DDS employees—resulting in delayed benefits to disabled claimants and the loss of administrative funding to those States. As of January 2011, SSA had

- contacted State officials to deter DDS furloughs;
- expanded adjudicative capacity; and,
- transferred over 167,000 disability cases to other offices to assist DDSs that furloughed employees.

These furloughs resulted in delayed benefits to disabled claimants and the loss of administrative funding to States. Therefore, we encouraged SSA to continue its efforts to deter DDS furloughs and to provide resources for processing disability claims.