

# The Social Security Administration's Reporting of High-dollar Overpayments Under Executive Order 13520 in Fiscal Year 2013

## A-15-13-13115



December 2013

Office of Audit Report Summary

### Objectives

To review the Accountable Official's Quarterly High-dollar Overpayment Report to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), as required by Executive Order 13520, *Reducing Improper Payments and Eliminating Waste in Federal Programs*, for the quarters ended December 2012 and March, June, and September 2013. We also determined whether the (1) method used to identify high-dollar overpayments detected overpayments that met the Executive Order criteria and (2) Agency complied with all requirements of the Executive Order.

### Background

As part of Executive Order 13520, each agency head is required to submit a quarterly report on high-dollar overpayments identified by the agency. The report shall describe any actions the agency has taken, or plans to take, to recover improper payments as well as any actions the agency intends to take to prevent improper payments from occurring in the future.

### Our Findings

We reviewed reports on quarterly high-dollar overpayments for the quarters ended December 31, 2012, and March 31, June 30, and September 30, 2013 to ensure the Agency implemented a methodology for identifying high-dollar overpayments that detected overpayments and addressed all the Executive Order's requirements. Overall, we determined the Social Security Administration's (SSA) methodology for identifying high-dollar overpayments addressed all of the Executive Order's requirements. However, SSA's methodology did not detect any overpayments that met the Executive Order's criteria.

### Conclusions

We noted that, while the data obtained through the stewardship reviews provided adequate results for payment accuracy, it limited the proper analysis of cases as part of the reporting of high-dollar overpayments. SSA has stated, ". . . it is highly unlikely that the agency would identify improper overpayments to individuals, including via its stewardship reviews in [Supplemental Security Income] that would meet the criteria in the Executive Order's implementing guidance . . ." Although we presented these limitations to SSA in previous reviews, and it has acknowledged the unlikelihood of identifying high-dollar overpayments using the current methodology, SSA continues using the stewardship reviews to identify high-dollar overpayments based on approval from the Office of Management and Budget.