

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

July 2010



Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) had appropriate oversight and monitoring controls for the Homeless Outreach Projects and Evaluation Demonstration Project (HOPE). In addition, we determined whether (1) expenditures for HOPE were allowed, supported, and in accordance with the grant's terms and (2) grantees accomplished the grant objectives.

Background

Congress provided SSA with about \$24 million to conduct outreach and application assistance. SSA awarded 41 grants, totaling \$21.3 million for a 4-year period, to public and private organizations for HOPE. The 41 grantees were required to provide outreach, support services, and benefit application assistance to chronically homeless adults and children.

To view the full report, visit
http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO_BEPDF/A-03-09-19073.pdf

Homeless Outreach Projects and Evaluation Demonstration Project (A-03-09-19073)

Our Findings

Several Grantees for HOPE did not meet one of the project's objectives. In total, the HOPE grantees were expected to enroll about 8,200 chronically homeless individuals. Although we found that the 41 grantees had reported enrolling 10,500 chronically homeless individuals, we could only verify that 7,243 individuals (69 percent) had actually filed an application for SSA benefits. Additionally, SSA hired a contractor to conduct an interim evaluation of HOPE to determine its outcomes, impacts, and benefits. We found grantees did not always provide the contractor with the necessary information to assess improvements in the enrollees' quality of life. Furthermore, SSA's oversight and monitoring of the 41 grantees could have been improved. We question \$118,566 in grant funds awarded to 5 of the 11 grantees reviewed because of the lack of supporting documentation. We question \$96,630 in grant funds because 6 grantees did not demonstrate that required matching funds were provided. The Office of Acquisition and Grants (OAG) had not found these unsupported costs because they did not conduct site visits to ensure grant expenditures were allowed and supported. In addition, as of January 5, 2010, OAG was at least 284 days late in closing 2 grants in which the grantees had submitted their final reports to the Agency, and 15 grantees were 156 to 516 days late in submitting their final reports to the Agency.

Recommendations

We made seven recommendation to SSA including: (1) require that the five grantees provide adequate support or return \$118,566 to SSA; (2) require that the six grantees provide adequate support for the matching share or return \$96,630 in grant funds to SSA; (3) ensure that grants are closed in accordance with SSA policy; (4) follow up with the 15 grantees to ensure they submit their final financial and/or progress reports; and (5) improve monitoring of the grants by conducting site visits when warranted so problems are identified and corrective action is taken to help grantees achieve or revise their performance objectives.