



# Office of the Inspector General

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## Report Fraud

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### [How Do I Contact the Fraud Hotline?](#)

Internet: [Fraud Reporting Form](#)

U.S. Mail: Social Security Fraud Hotline  
P.O. Box 17785  
Baltimore, Maryland 21235

FAX: 410-597-0118

Telephone: 1-800-269-0271 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

TTY: 1-866-501-2101 for the deaf or hard of hearing.

### [What is the Fraud Hotline?](#)

The Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Fraud Hotline provides an avenue for individuals to report fraud, waste, and abuse within SSA's programs and operations. We handle allegations regarding violations of law or regulations affecting SSA programs and operations.

### [What Should I Report to the Fraud Hotline?](#)

A variety of situations may be considered fraud in the SSA programs. Some examples are:

- ▶ Conceals work activity while receiving disability benefits
- ▶ Receives Social Security Benefits for a child not under their care
- ▶ Fails to notify SSA of the death of a beneficiary and continues to receive and cash the checks of the deceased
- ▶ Conceals their marriage or assets from the Social Security Administration while receiving Supplemental Security Income payments
- ▶ Resides overseas and is receiving Supplemental Security Income Payments

Below are several examples of potential violations that affect Social Security programs or operations. Click on each topic below to learn more.

- ▶ [False statements on claims](#)
- ▶ [Concealing material facts or events that affect eligibility for benefits](#)

- ▶ [Misuse of benefits by a Representative Payee](#)
- ▶ [Buying or selling Social Security Cards or SSA information](#)
- ▶ [SSN misuse involving people with links to terrorist groups or activities](#)
- ▶ [Crimes involving SSA employees](#)
- ▶ [Scams involving the impersonation of an SSA employee](#)
- ▶ [Bribery of a Social Security Administration Employee](#)
- ▶ [Fraud or misuse of grant or contracting funds](#)
- ▶ [Standards of conduct violations](#)
- ▶ [Workers' Compensation fraud](#)

## What Should I not Report to the Fraud Hotline?

### Questions About Social Security Benefits

The Fraud Hotline cannot assist individuals with questions about their Social Security account, requests for new or replacement Social Security number (SSN) cards, or issues involving the granting or denial of benefits. These issues are referred to SSA.

### Medicare or Medicaid Fraud

In addition, Medicare or Medicaid fraud is referred to DHHS:

- ▶ The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General at 1-800-447-8477, or
- ▶ Visit their website at <http://oig.hhs.gov/index.asp>

### Identity Theft

The use of your Social Security number by someone else to obtain credit, loans, telephone accounts, or other goods and services should be reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The FTC collects complaints about identity theft from those whose identities have been stolen. Although the FTC does not have the authority to bring criminal cases, the FTC can help victims of identity theft by providing information to assist them in resolving the financial and other problems that can result from this crime. The FTC puts your information into a secure consumer fraud database and may, in appropriate instances, share it with other law enforcement agencies and private entities, including any companies about which you may complain. Individuals can reach the FTC directly by:

- ▶ Calling toll-free at 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338).
- ▶ The FTC can also be reached at its website at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/>.

The Social Security Administration cannot fix the credit record of someone whose Social Security Number (SSN) has been misused to obtain credit by an authorized individual. To resolve your credit problems, individuals must contact the institution that authorized the credit and/or issued the credit card, as well as the major credit reporting agencies. The three major credit reporting agencies are:

- ▶ Equifax — 1-800-525-6285
- ▶ Trans Union — 1-800-680-7289
- ▶ Experian — 1-888-397-3742

The Federal government and numerous states have passed laws prohibiting identity theft. Anyone who intentionally uses the Social Security number of

another person to establish a new identity or defraud the government is breaking the law.

To get more information about the Social Security Numbers and identity theft, download the following publications and/or visit the following websites.

#### FTC Information

- ▶ [Identity Theft, Privacy & Security](#) (04/07)

#### Social Security Information

- ▶ [Identity Theft And Your Social Security Number](#) (05-10064)
- ▶ [New Rules For Getting A Social Security Number And Card](#) (05-10120)
- ▶ [Your Social Security Number and Card](#) (05-10002)

### What Do I Need to Know When Contacting the Hotline?

To act on your allegation, we need you to provide as much identifying information as possible regarding the suspect, victim, and the details of what occurred. The more you can tell us, the better chance we have of determining whether a crime has been committed. Your information should include the following:

- ▶ Who committed the Fraud? (Include Suspect Name, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Address, and Telephone Number)
- ▶ Who the Victims are? (Include Victim Name, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Address, and Telephone Number)
- ▶ What exactly did the suspect do?
- ▶ Where did the fraud take place?
- ▶ When did it happen?
- ▶ How was the Fraud committed?
- ▶ Do you know why the person committed the fraud?
- ▶ Who else has knowledge of the potential violation?

### May I Remain Anonymous?

Yes, however, please keep in mind that your decision for anonymity may limit our ability to conduct a complete investigation.

### Will My Identity Remain Confidential?

In some instances, informants may believe that the disclosure of their identities may create problems or place them in danger. We will protect the identity of complainants to the maximum extent allowed by law and only release your identity to those officials who have a need to know. Specifically, Section 7(b) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 precludes the IG from disclosing the identity of a Social Security employee who reports an allegation or provides information, without the employee's consent, unless the IG determines that disclosure is unavoidable during the course of the investigation. Non-SSA employees who report allegations may also request confidentiality.

## ? What Can I Expect If I Make A Report to the Hotline?

We cannot provide information regarding what action we have taken on any allegation reported to our office. Federal regulations prohibit the disclosure of information contained in law enforcement records even to the individual making the allegation. Unless you are contacted directly by one of our investigators, there will be no communication from our office. Under no circumstances will we provide you with the "status" of action taken on the allegation.

If you are an SSA employee, SSA may not take action against you solely because of your submission of an allegation to the SSA OIG hotline. Federal laws protect employees from reprisals by their employers for "blowing the whistle" on illegal activity.

### Privacy Act Notice

Our authority to request information concerning fraud, waste and abuse in connection with the programs and operations of SSA is found in the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 3, sec. 4.

Information submitted will be used principally for investigations into fraud, waste, and abuse in connection with the programs and operations of the SSA. This includes benefits fraud, fraud in connection with obtaining a Social Security Number, and all other possible criminal and civil violations of the Social Security Act.

Submission is voluntary. There is no penalty for failing to report a possible violation. However, in some instances criminal or civil penalties may result from reporting false information to SSA. Therefore, it is important that individuals report the truth as they know it.

SSA may make disclosures of information submitted to others, including other Federal and State law enforcement agencies, as necessary to complete their investigation, or as required under Federal law. Allegations may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency if SSA believes an alleged criminal or civil violation falls within their jurisdiction. SSA refers all allegations of identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission.

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