

OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

OUR MISSION

Deliver Social Security services that meet the changing needs of the public

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS AMERICA

Few government agencies touch the lives of as many people as we do. We administer three programs under the *Social Security Act*:

- **Old-Age and Survivors Insurance:** Created in 1935, the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) program provides retirement and survivors benefits to qualified workers and their family members. In fiscal year (FY) 2017, we paid approximately \$793 billion in OASI benefits to an average of approximately 51 million beneficiaries a month, including 88 percent of the population age 65 and over.
- **Disability Insurance:** Established in 1956, the Disability Insurance (DI) program provides benefits for workers who become disabled and their families. In FY 2017, we paid approximately \$141 billion in DI benefits to an average of more than 10 million disabled beneficiaries and their family members a month.
- **Supplemental Security Income:** Established in 1972, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides financial support to aged, blind, and disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. In FY 2017, we paid approximately \$51 billion in Federal benefits and State supplementary payments to over 8 million SSI recipients on average each month.

In addition, we support other national programs, such as Medicare, *Employees Retirement Income Security Act of 1974*, *Coal Act*, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps), *Help America Vote Act*, State Children's Health Insurance Program, E-Verify, Medicaid, and Federal Benefits for Veterans.

We have implemented enterprise risk management processes to improve the effectiveness of our organization. Our goals are informed by both the strategic opportunities ahead, as well as our management of risks that threaten our core mission activities.

HOW SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITED AMERICA IN FISCAL YEAR 2017

- A combined total of around \$986 billion was paid in Social Security and SSI benefits;
- About 88 percent of the American population age 65 and over received Social Security benefits;
- About 95 percent of individuals age 20–49 who worked in covered employment had survivors protection for their young children and a surviving spouse caring for the children; and
- On average each month, more than 1.2 million blind or disabled children under age 18 received SSI benefits.

HOW WE SERVED AMERICA IN FISCAL YEAR 2017

- Issued 16 million new and replacement Social Security cards;
- Performed over 2.1 billion automated Social Security number verifications;
- Posted 290 million earnings items to workers' records;
- Handled over 36 million calls on our National 800 Number;
- Assisted 42 million visitors in field offices;
- Mailed nearly 250 million notices;
- Registered over 5.7 million users for *my Social Security*, a personalized online account;
- Processed 155.5 million online transactions;
- Completed 10 million claims for benefits;
- Completed 685,657 hearing dispositions;
- Completed 160,776 Appeals Council requests for review;
- Handled 18,590 disability cases in Federal court;
- Completed 874,411 full medical continuing disability reviews (CDR);
- Performed nearly 2.6 million non-medical redeterminations of SSI eligibility;
- Through data exchange partnerships with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, we identified over \$23 million in estimated incorrect payments; and
- Provided access to the Social Security Benefit Statement (Statement), mailing 13,673,994 paper Statements and allowing beneficiaries to access their Statements online more than 46.2 million times.

OUR ORGANIZATION

More than 61,000 Federal employees and approximately 16,000 State employees serve the public from a network of offices across the country and around the world. The vast majority of our employees serve the public directly or provide support to employees who do.

We administer our programs and services through a network of more than 1,200 field offices. Each day, over 170,000 people visit and 260,000 call one of our field offices nationwide for a variety of reasons such as to file claims, ask questions, or update their information.

Our National 800 Number handles over 30 million calls each year. Callers can conduct a variety of business transactions by speaking directly with a customer service representative or through our 24-hour automated services, which include requesting benefit verification letters, ordering replacement Medicare cards, and obtaining claim status updates.

Our processing centers handle complex Social Security retirement, survivors, and disability claims, as well as provide support to our National 800 Number. State agencies make disability determinations for initial claims, reconsiderations, and CDRs. Administrative law judges in our hearings offices and administrative appeals judges in our Appeals Council decide appealed cases.

For information about our components and their functions, visit our [Organizational Structure webpage \(www.socialsecurity.gov/org\)](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/org).