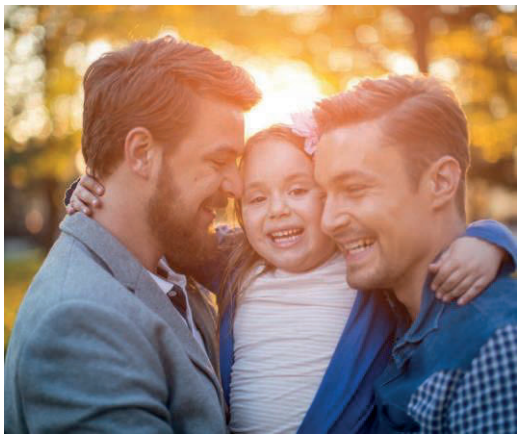




Securing today
and tomorrow

Social Security Administration Annual Performance Report Fiscal Years 2021–2023



Annual Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 2023
Revised Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 2022
Annual Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2021

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Message from the Acting Commissioner



I am pleased to present the Social Security Administration’s *Annual Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 2023, Revised Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 2022, and Annual Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2021*, which detail our priorities and goals for the next two fiscal years and our accomplishments in the past fiscal year.

My vision is to provide income security for the diverse population we serve. To deliver on that vision, we will ensure equity and accessibility in delivering Social Security services by improving the customer experience and addressing systemic barriers to participation in our programs.

Last year, despite the difficulties with operating under pandemic conditions, we made significant progress in addressing some key challenges. We reduced the hearings backlog, which is now at its lowest level in over 20 years and plan to eliminate it in FY 2023. We increased the number of registered *my Social Security* users, grew the number of customers successfully using our online services, and established liaisons in our field offices to work with community-based groups who support people who face barriers to our services.

As good stewards of our programs and as required by law, we must continue our quality reviews, cost-effective program integrity work, and payment accuracy efforts to ensure eligible individuals receive the benefits for which they are eligible. We will expand the use of data analytics and predictive modeling, and increase the number and scope of strategic partnerships, to effectively administer benefits and protect our programs from waste, fraud, and abuse.

Based on internal evaluations, I affirm that the performance data in this report is complete, reliable, and accurate.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kilolo Kijakazi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kilolo Kijakazi, Ph.D., M.S.W.

Baltimore, Maryland
April 1, 2022

Vision

Provide income security for the diverse population we serve.

Mission

Ensure equity and accessibility in delivering Social Security services by improving the customer experience and addressing systemic barriers to participation in our programs.

Programs

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

- **Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI)**: Established in 1935, the OASI program provides retirement and survivors benefits to qualified workers and their family members. In fiscal year (FY) 2021, we paid OASI benefits to an average of over 55 million beneficiaries each month, and we paid nearly \$983 billion to OASI beneficiaries through the fiscal year.
- **Disability Insurance (DI)**: Established in 1956, the DI program provides benefits for workers who become disabled and their families. In FY 2021, we paid DI benefits to an average of nearly 10 million beneficiaries each month and paid nearly \$141 billion to DI beneficiaries through the fiscal year.
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**: Established in 1972, the SSI program provides financial support to aged, blind, and disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. In FY 2021, we paid SSI benefits to a monthly average of nearly 8 million recipients (approximately 2.6 million of whom concurrently receive OASI or DI benefits), and we paid over \$58 billion in SSI Federal benefits and State supplementary payments through the fiscal year.

In addition, we support national programs administered by other Federal and State agencies, as required by law, such as Medicare, *Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974*, *Coal Industry Retiree Health Benefit Act*, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), *Help America Vote Act*, State Children's Health Insurance Program, E-Verify, Medicaid, and Federal Benefits for Veterans.

We administer our programs in accordance with law and regulations. We have implemented enterprise risk management (ERM) processes to improve the effectiveness of our organization and program administration. Our goals are informed by strategic opportunities as well as our assessment of program evaluations, our Learning Agenda, and identified risks.

Organization

Nearly 60,000 Federal employees and 15,000 State employees serve the public from a network of more than 1,500 offices across the country and around the world. We administer our programs and services online, by phone, and in-person in our offices. Our customers can access online services such as applying for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits, checking the status of an application or appeal, or requesting a replacement Social Security card.

A diverse, engaged, and well-trained workforce is critical to meeting our service delivery goals. Most of our employees directly serve the public or provide support to employees who do. We care about the well-being of our workforce and support them throughout their chosen career paths through employee engagement, training, and development.

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has significantly affected our operations and how we serve the public. We have remained open for business throughout the pandemic, while taking steps to keep our workforce and the public safe.

Our highest priority during this unprecedented time is to provide mission-critical services while ensuring the health and safety of the public and our employees, including maximizing remote work during the height of the pandemic and implementing policy and process flexibilities. Our goal is to provide services the public expects and needs in order to access the benefits for which they are eligible. We are accelerating our planning and implementation of alternative digital and remote services, as well as expanding the use of data exchanges to obtain evidence.

During the pandemic, most Social Security services have been available to the public online at www.ssa.gov, by telephone, or via in-person appointments for limited, critical situations, depending upon local office conditions. If a person cannot use our online services, they can call our National 800 Number or their local office (www.ssa.gov/locator/) for assistance. Our National 800 Number callers can conduct business through our 24-hour automated services or by speaking directly with a customer service representative. Our automated services include requesting benefit verification letters, ordering replacement Medicare cards, and obtaining claim status updates. In early April 2022, we will expand appointments and open walk-in service at our field offices for those who need to reach us in person.

In FYs 2020 and 2021, we received significantly fewer disability claims, particularly for SSI benefits. We are working to understand why fewer people applied for SSI during the pandemic, and prioritizing efforts to ensure our SSI program is accessible to underserved communities and people facing barriers to our services.

State agency disability determination services (DDS) make disability determinations for initial claims, reconsiderations, and continuing disability reviews (CDR). We are increasing processing capacity to address the existing backlog of initial disability claims and an anticipated increase in claims in FYs 2022 and 2023.

Administrative law judges (ALJ) in our hearing offices and administrative appeals judges in our Appeals Council decide appealed cases. In response to the pandemic, we have been holding voluntary telephone and online video hearings. We are beginning to resume limited in-person hearings. We continue to make progress toward our goal of eliminating the disability hearings backlog. The hearings backlog is now at its lowest level in 20 years.

Our processing centers (PC) handle the most complex benefit payment decisions, in addition to issuing benefit payments after appeals decisions, determining and collecting debt, correcting records, and performing program integrity work.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to meet many of our service goals—improving National 800 Number wait times and reducing busy signals, enhancing our digital services, handling the backlogs in our PCs, and accelerating our information technology (IT) modernization plans to make our services more customer-centric.

The pandemic has highlighted opportunities and driven creative solutions to provide alternate service options to the public, lessening the need for people to visit a local office. We made more of our paper processes electronic, added online service options, and examined how we can enhance service delivery for our customers. In particular, we are examining our internal policies and procedures for opportunities to improve and provide additional avenues to give our customers more efficient access to our services, including by helping our customers access other Federal benefits, such as SNAP.

For more information about our organization and its functions, visit our organizational structure webpage at www.ssa.gov/org.

Agency Plans and Performance

This Annual Performance Report addresses the strategic goals, objectives, and strategies in our *Agency Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2022–2026* as required by the *Government Performance and Results (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010*. We assess our progress by the performance measures and targets for each strategic objective.

Cross-Agency Priority Goals

The *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010* requires agencies to address Cross-Agency Priority Goals in our strategic plan and the annual performance plan. Refer to www.performance.gov for our contributions to those goals and progress.

Agency Priority Goals

As required by the *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010*, we established three agency priority goals (APG) for FYs 2020–2021:

1. Improve customer service in the hearings process by prioritizing those individuals who have waited the longest for a hearing decision.
2. Improve the integrity of the Supplemental Security Income program by focusing our efforts on reducing overpayments.
3. Improve the customer experience by reducing the Average Speed of Answer on the National 800 Number.

We established three APGs for FYs 2022–2023 that support multiple objectives across our strategic plan. Annotated below are the strategic objectives most closely aligned with each APG.

1. Improve Equity in the Supplemental Security Income Program. Improve equity in our Supplemental Security Income program through increased outreach and improved benefit delivery, including to communities of color and underserved communities (*see Strategic Objective 1.1 – Identify and Address Barriers to Accessing Services*)
 - a) By September 30, 2023, increase the number of all SSI applications by 15 percent, relative to the 2021 baseline, restoring rates closer to pre-pandemic levels.
 - b) By September 30, 2023, increase the number of SSI applications from underserved communities by 25 percent, relative to the 2021 baseline.
2. Improve the National 800 Number Service. Improve the customer experience by reducing the Average Speed of Answer on the National 800 Number (*see Strategic Objective 1.3 – Build a Customer-Focused Organization*)
 - a) By September 30, 2023, achieve an average speed of answer of less than 12 minutes, including implementation of estimated wait time and call back options.
3. Improve Initial Disability Claims. Improve the customer experience by reducing the average processing time for initial disability claims and by prioritizing those individuals who have waited the longest for initial disability determinations (*see Strategic Objective 1.3 – Build a Customer-Focused Organization*)
 - a) By September 30, 2023, achieve an average processing time for initial disability claims of 164 days.
 - b) By September 30, 2023, decide 85 percent of pending initial disability claims that begin the fiscal year 180 days old or older.

APGs are 24-month goals that reflect our top performance improvement priorities and key commitments for advancing the President’s Management Agenda. Visit www.performance.gov for more information about how our APGs reflect our key priorities.

Strategic Goal 1: Optimize the Experience of SSA Customers

Through our OASI, DI, and SSI programs, we provide essential benefits to retirees, survivors, elderly, or blind and disabled individuals, including those with limited income and resources who rely on us to meet life's basic needs. We also support our nation's workforce who are paying into Social Security, by providing Social Security numbers, recording wages and earnings, and maintaining and improving services for workers and their families when they need to access our programs.

Serving our customers is at the heart of all we do. We listen to our customers and adjust how we do business to meet their needs. For example, partially in response to customer feedback, we have offered more services online, expanded ways to obtain claims status, and changed how employers share information with us. Now, we are strengthening our commitment to optimizing customer experience through all steps of accessing our programs. Optimizing the experience of our customers means we provide timely, accurate, and more efficient access to our services through the delivery channel customers prefer. Doing so requires a better understanding of our customers' evolving needs, advancing inclusive policies, and ensuring equity throughout our programs (e.g., targeted outreach to communities of color and underserved communities). It also requires that we continue to examine our current policies and procedures to ensure they are as efficient and equitable as possible.

We are dedicating agency resources to focus on customer experience, including transforming the way we obtain and use customer feedback and how our actions impact service delivery. We expect our customer experience strategies to result in continually improving service delivery. These strategies include adopting human-centered design and standardizing customer experience and satisfaction data collection.

Strategic Objective 1.1: Identify and Address Barriers to Accessing Services

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Operations and Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy

Strategies

Identify and address potential inequities in current policies and programs

We will routinely engage in conversations with external stakeholders to discuss service delivery methods and how we can achieve efficiencies. We will extend our outreach campaigns to national organizations to reach underserved communities across the country. We will continue to develop and maintain a network of advocates and community-based organizations and meet with them regularly to address the needs of people facing barriers.

In addition, we will look inward to examine the effects of our policies, procedures, and systems on service delivery. For example, we will increase our collection of data by race and ethnicity and employ it to discern whether there are differences in the rate of participation in our programs or disparities in average benefit levels. If there are, we will assess the potential factors contributing to these differences and work to address them.

Increase support services for unrepresented claimants

Our customers have a right to have a representative to help them conduct business with us. However, nearly 20 percent of claimants at the hearing level do not have representation. We will support unrepresented claimants at the hearing level during our administrative review process. Through improved outreach, our goal is to prepare unrepresented individuals to participate in the hearing process before an administrative law judge. We will also examine our processes and procedures for potential actions that may result in disparate outcomes for unrepresented individuals.

Conduct implicit bias training for employees

We established a workgroup on implicit bias and worked with training experts to assess and develop new training and a proposed curriculum. We will devise and implement agency-wide policies and trainings to increase equity and equality in our programs. We will use pre- and post-training evaluations to better understand implicit bias within our organization and the impact of our trainings to mitigate bias.

Conduct and analyze customer satisfaction surveys to identify areas for improvement

We will analyze data to identify areas for improvement. We will consider the perspectives of different data sources, such as our ongoing customer satisfaction, prospective client, and retirement application surveys. We will also review and analyze civil rights complaints submitted by the public.

Key Initiatives

Equity and Outreach

We are the nation's largest Federal program, serving as a safety net for millions of individuals. Our vision is to provide income security for the diverse populations we serve, including individuals with disabilities as well as retirees and their families. Our intent is to serve all who are eligible for our programs and remove barriers for people who have few resources and may need our programs the most. We are taking action to ensure equity and accessibility in delivering Social Security services by improving customer experience and addressing systemic barriers to participation in our programs, including potential internal barriers. For more information, please view our Equity Action Plan (<https://www.ssa.gov/policy/about/racial-equity-resources.html>).

- In FY 2021:
 - We established the Agency Equity Team, including executives from across the agency, in accordance with Executive Order 13985 Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government, to coordinate agency-wide and interagency efforts and discuss opportunities to ensure equity in our programs.
 - We established several workgroups, including executives and 180 staff at all levels, to advance equity in the following areas of focus:
 - Improve our stakeholder engagement processes;
 - Assess and create a comprehensive implicit bias curriculum training for all employees;
 - Improve pre-hearing development contacts and outreach to further reach unrepresented claimants and better prepare them to participate in a hearing before an ALJ;
 - Implement a barrier analysis program to identify and address any potential barriers that impede free and open competition in the workplace and in leadership development programs;
 - Improve data collection, use, and sharing of program data on race and ethnicity;
 - Conduct research to determine the impact of our programs and policies on different racial and ethnic groups;
 - Conduct market research on equity and support for underserved communities through Federal government-based guidelines for research grants and contracts to broaden the range of bidders and awardees; and
 - Review gender identity and sexual orientation guidelines prohibiting discrimination and update policy, notices, and other guidance documents to be more inclusive.
 - We identified Social Security beneficiaries whose monthly benefits are less than the maximum monthly Federal SSI benefit and initiated the SSI mailer project to encourage those beneficiaries to apply for SSI as they may be eligible for additional payments under the SSI program, with plans to send several hundred thousand more over the next year.
 - In total, we identified 1.4 million potentially eligible individuals.
 - From mid-December 2020 through January 2022, we released 665,000 mailers. We are releasing the remaining 735,000 mailers from April 2022 to December 2022.
 - We increased communications to field offices to encourage reporting and increased public engagement to voluntarily report race and ethnicity (RE) through our targeted recruitment efforts.

- In FY 2022, we plan to:
 - Review our outreach initiatives to determine the impact on equity and outreach goals, ensuring that our efforts improve customer service and maximize access to our programs.
 - Use administrative and Census data to identify underserved communities,¹ conduct targeted outreach to these communities, and increase access to the SSI program.
 - Conduct the following research activities on our Disability Insurance and SSI programs:
 - Use our Disability Research Surveys to learn about barriers applicants face and implement changes to our DI and SSI programs, as appropriate;
 - Partner with States, private foundations, and other non-Federal groups and organizations and conduct research to test strategies for assisting claimants in underserved communities; and
 - Create journey maps of customer experiences in our DI and SSI programs to determine how we can simplify these programs.
 - Work with the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives, to increase representation for DI and especially SSI claimants, as they tend to have lower levels of representation.
 - Reach out to unrepresented claimants to prepare them for the hearing process.
 - Host a listening session with advocates, medical professionals, and stakeholders to learn about improving policy, service, and access to our disability programs for individuals in the LGBTQIA+ community.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we will:
 - Simplify our service delivery by providing alternatives to in-person visits when possible.
 - Examine the impact of internal processes on outcomes for unrepresented claimants in the disability application process, as well as examine the effects of other internal policies, processes, and systems on service delivery as part of our cross-goal activities.

¹ As defined in [EO 13985](#), the term “underserved communities” refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Establish Enterprise Voice of Customer (VoC) Feedback Collection

We have been conducting annual customer re-contact studies, online satisfaction surveys, and automated post-call surveys for many years. However, our understanding of the customer’s experience has been limited because feedback is collected and managed by different parts of the organization. An enterprise VoC will allow us to capture real-time customer feedback across all service channels to help identify pain points along customers’ journeys.

As we increase access to our in-person services, we are considering new approaches to scheduling appointments, completing customer intake, and avoiding crowded waiting rooms. We will use the VoC to guide and validate the effectiveness of these processes from the customer perspective, in addition to other workload, internal process, and benefit delivery measures.

- In FY 2021, we procured an industry-leading customer feedback management platform and deployed a persistent “Feedback” option to multiple high-traffic ssa.gov pages. We launched a voluntary survey to claimants and representatives who participated in online video hearings to assess customer satisfaction with this new hearing option.
- In FY 2022, we plan to communicate and market a feedback survey to customers across all major service channels (i.e., online, National 800 Number, and field offices), deploy the “Feedback” option to all ssa.gov pages, standardize surveys across service channels, and establish a baseline satisfaction measurement compliant with Federal requirements.
- In FY 2023, we plan to set agency Customer Experience performance targets and goals for improvement using FY 2022 baseline data.

Performance Measures

1.1a Improve equity in our Supplemental Security Income program through increased outreach and improved benefit delivery, including to communities of color and underserved communities (also a two-year APG)

Fiscal Year	2023	
Target	By September 30, 2023, increase the number of all SSI applications by 15 percent, relative to the 2021 baseline, restoring rates closer to pre-pandemic levels	By September 30, 2023, increase the number of SSI applications from underserved communities by 25 percent, relative to the 2021 baseline

Data Definition: The targets represent the total number of total SSI applications received and the subset received from underserved communities.

Strategic Objective 1.2: Expand Digital Services

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Operations and Deputy Commissioner for Systems

Strategies

Better understand our customers' service preferences

To improve customer experience, we will deepen our understanding of our customers, including what drives their evolving service preferences. We will learn more about our customers' journey through various service channels and touchpoints. We will use Voice of Customer feedback to understand our customers' needs and preferences and adjust to improve their experience.

Specifically, an enterprise-wide Voice of Customer feedback will allow us to capture real-time customer feedback across all service channels, which we will use to identify customers' pain points and assess effectiveness of current and new processes.

Address our customers' service needs

We will implement industry leading customer experience best practices to analyze our customers' journey from start to finish. Through this analysis we will identify opportunities for improvement and develop and implement solutions that will improve our customers' experiences. Solutions will include expanding options that provide a fully digital service experience for many of our services on a variety of electronic devices and from any location with internet service. We will also introduce new online options and continue to provide and improve service through our phone and in-office service channels. For example, customers will be able to express an intent to file for SSI benefits online and use a mobile-accessible, online process to upload forms and other documentation.

Increase the use of secure digital services

While we provide the public with additional digital services such as online, remote, and self-service options that represent the best of current technology, we must do so in a way that maintains our strong commitment to protect our customers from current and emerging threats including identity theft and scams to steal money or personal information. The combination of additional service options and secure access allows our customers to confidently use our digital services.

Key Initiatives

Enhance the Digital Experience

Noteworthy Progress

We are making noteworthy progress toward Enhancing the Digital Experience. We are exploring ways to enhance customer experience by providing convenient, user-friendly, and

secure digital self-service options. We are adding services online and exploring more self-service options to help reduce wait times. We are modernizing customer experience by enabling the customer to submit and sign documents electronically. (see Figure 1.)

- In FY 2021, we implemented a *beta* site for ssa.gov that includes streamlined content and a redesigned home page and web template.² We continue to use customer feedback, solicited from online surveys and focus groups, to make appropriate adjustments to the *beta* site.
- In FY 2022, we plan to transition the final redesigned ssa.gov website into production based on *beta* site customer feedback. We also are developing a mobile-accessible, online process for individuals applying for or receiving services to upload forms, documentation, evidence, or correspondence without needing to travel to a field office.
- In FY 2023, we plan to introduce online capabilities and add enhancements to the online experience based on customer feedback and on our internal analyses.

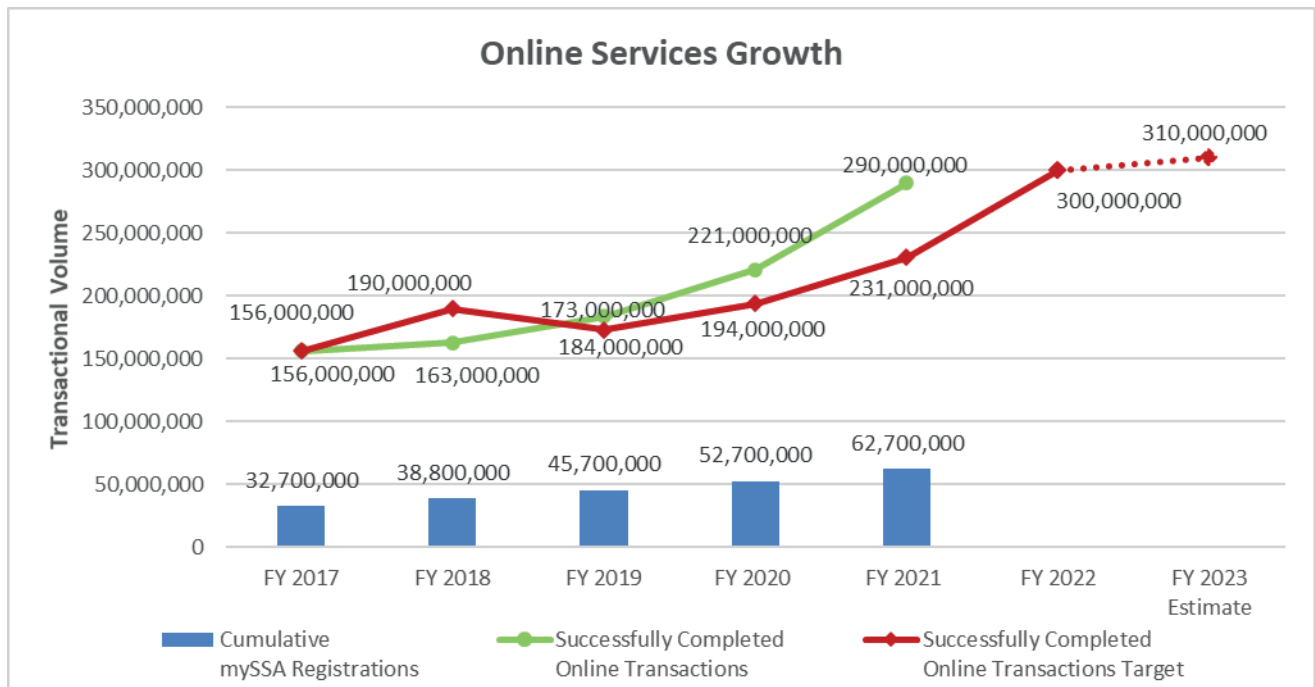


Figure 1. The cumulative number of *my Social Security* (mySSA) registrations, successfully completed online transactions, and successfully completed online transactions target from FYs 2017 to 2023.

² Our *beta* site is a part of ssa.gov and allows the public to use the *beta* site as an alternative to, and in parallel with, the production website. The public can distinguish between the *beta* and production sites.

Enhance *my* Social Security

my Social Security is our online portal that provides registered users with a convenient, secure option to conduct business with us or view their Social Security records. *my* Social Security offers a broad range of services, including changing an address or direct deposit information, getting personal retirement benefit estimates, and requesting a replacement Social Security number (SSN) card. *my* Social Security allows access from various devices.

- In FY 2021, we expanded user features for individual representative payees by adding a standardized benefit verification letter and a Medicare Replacement card request option. We also enhanced claim status tracking.
- In FY 2022, we plan to enhance user experience, streamline the online claims process for our customers, and reduce the amount of contact with a claims representative needed to complete an application. We also plan to improve the claims status tracker and the online portal design.
- In FY 2023, we plan to enhance the online portal design and engage in discovery activities to explore and prioritize expanding the ability for customers to apply for benefits online.

Enhance Online Appeals

We are improving the iAppeals online application process for people who appeal an agency decision for non-medical issues such as overpayments or Medicare premium rates. Our enhancements will integrate the Medical and Non-Medical iAppeals via an authenticated claimant and appointed representative portal.

- In FY 2021, we began preparing a single Online Appeals application that will route beneficiaries and appointed representatives to the appropriate medical or non-medical appeal; and allow beneficiaries and appointed representatives to view previously submitted information.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we will work with stakeholders to develop a single Online Appeals application that will route beneficiaries and appointed representatives to the appropriate medical or non-medical appeal and allow beneficiaries and appointed representatives to view previously submitted information.

Enhance Online Service Options for Appointed Representatives

We are exploring ways to improve the experience for claimants, their representatives, and our technicians by developing the Appeals and Appointed Representative Processing Services (AARPS). AARPS will be an online portal with self-service options for customers and appointed representatives to complete electronically the appointment of representative process, fee agreements, appeals, registration, and other related workloads. AARPS will also reduce

paper workloads for our technicians and ensure accurate, consistent, and transparent communications with our customers.

- In FY 2021, we worked with stakeholders on the development of the AARPS.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we plan to develop and implement AARPS, incorporating stakeholder input.

Online Options for New Social Security Numbers and Replacement Cards

We are expanding online service options for replacing SSN cards, so members of the public do not need to visit an office. For example, adult U.S. citizens who meet certain criteria may apply for a replacement card using our internet Social Security Number Replacement Card (iSSNRC) online application, which can be accessed with a *my Social Security* account. We have an agreement with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators under which we verify an iSSNRC applicant's identity by matching State driver's license data. (see Figure 2.)

- In FY 2021 we awarded a contract for verifying State marriage data, allowing customers with a name change due to marriage, who meet certain criteria and reside in a participating State, to request a replacement SSN card through the iSSNRC. Additionally, we began building the iSSNRC prototype to include marriage data questions and elements. We enhanced the security of iSSNRC and expanded the availability of iSSNRC to Nevada.
- In FY 2022, we will expand iSSNRC to non-participating States. We will continue incorporating the name change due to marriage initiative in iSSNRC, allowing eligible customers to request a replacement SSN card.
- In FY 2023, we will expand the marriage data exchange; integrate the Electronic Verification of Vital Events data exchange into iSSNRC to verify birth information; and explore additional avenues to increase access and enhance security.

iSSNRC

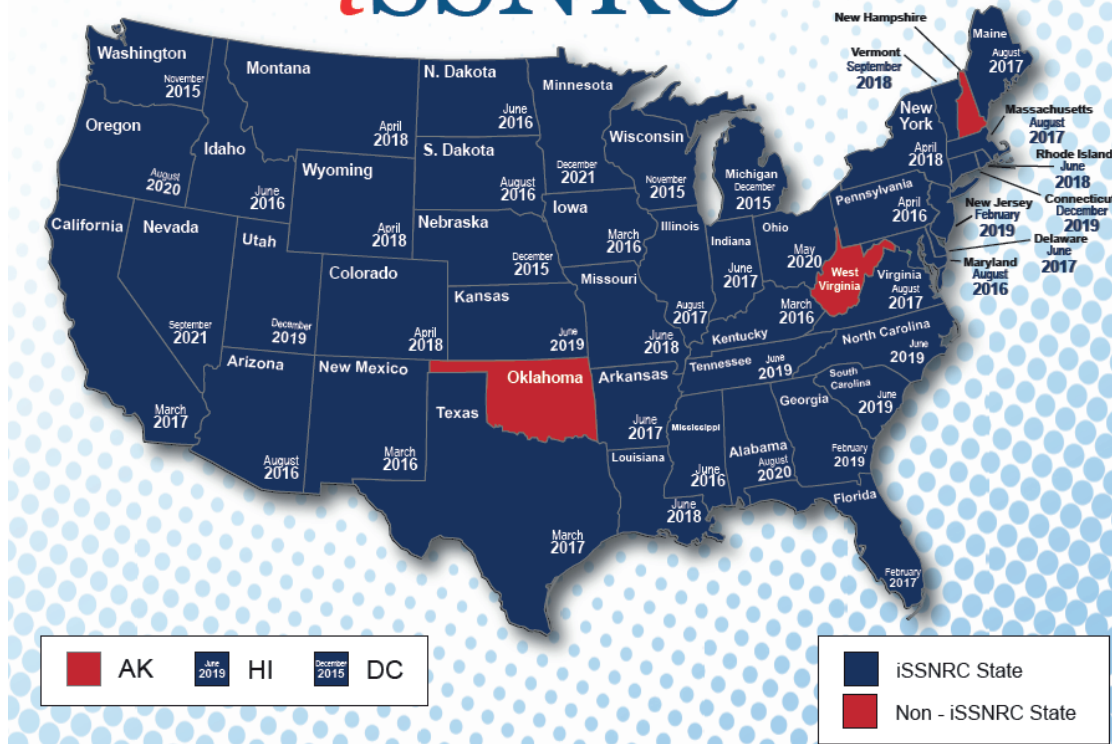


Figure 2. Forty-six States and the District of Columbia have the iSSNRC option available. Alaska, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and West Virginia do not have the iSSNRC option.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 1.2a: Redesign SSA’s website to enhance the user’s online experience

Fiscal Year	2020	2021	2022
Target	Implement a redesigned ssa.gov web template and home page	Implement a <i>beta</i> site for ssa.gov with updated content and a redesigned template and home page. Achieve a two-point increase in customer satisfaction with the redesigned home page of the <i>beta</i> site.	Implement final redesigned website and establish baseline customer experience scores using our new customer feedback platform.
Target Met	Not Met	Met	TBD
Performance	We completed the content audit for the full informational site, completed the new information architecture and design, and completed the retirement path updates.	We implemented a beta site for ssa.gov. We achieved a two-point increase in customer satisfaction with the redesigned home page of the beta site.	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We successfully implemented an ssa.gov beta site with updated content and a redesigned home page. We achieved a two-point increase in customer satisfaction with the redesigned home page of the beta site.		

Data Definition: The target represents implementation of a redesigned ssa.gov web template and home page and establishing baseline satisfaction scores using our new customer feedback platform.

Performance Measure 1.2b: Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	156 million	Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions by 35 million over the prior year (~190 million)	Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions by 10 million over the prior year (~173 million)	Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions by 10 million over the prior year (~194 million)	Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions by 10 million over the prior year (~231 million)	Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions by 10 million over the prior year (~300 million)	Increase the number of successfully completed online transactions by 10 million over the prior year (~310 million)
Target Met	Met	Not Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	156 million	163 million	184 million	221 million	290 million	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in FY 2021, more people visited ssa.gov and used our online services, which resulted in nearly 290 million transactions.						

Data Definition: The target represents the total the number of online transactions successfully completed. Note, this is the fiscal year total of transactions completed on ssa.gov (e.g., address changes, claims filed, replacement SSN cards).

Strategic Objective 1.3: Build a Customer-Focused Organization

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Operations, Deputy Commissioner for Hearings Operations, and Deputy Commissioner for Systems

Strategies

Continue modernizing our information technology

We will provide employees with effective, easy-to-use tools that help them serve our customers more efficiently. We will continue to improve self-service support tools and video options, allowing our customers to choose how and when to conduct transactions and receive immediate access to available online records, support, and service. Improvements in our IT will, for example, improve the accuracy and timeliness of our decisions and enable the public to provide medical evidence and schedule appointments online.

Improve timeliness and eliminate and prevent backlogs

Disruptions created by the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to backlogs in several parts of our organization. For example, the number of initial disability claims pending and the average processing time for these claims has increased. We must work down the backlog of cases while also handling a projected increase in disability applications, and we are prioritizing actions to reduce the time it takes for individuals to receive initial disability decisions. We acknowledge that it is challenging for individuals to wait five and a half months on average to receive a disability decision. We have made it a priority to improve the average processing time for initial claims generally and work down older cases, even as our initial claims receipts are projected to increase. We are increasing capacity to process these initial claims and prioritizing those who have waited the longest. Our new APG on initial disability claims reflects this commitment.

We will identify opportunities in policies, workloads, and processes for improving and enabling efficient and effective operations. We will improve claims systems, such as the disability claims processing system, by increasing our access to electronic medical information to make timely and policy-compliant disability determinations and improve our customers' disability application experience.

While we are striving to eliminate the hearings backlog in FY 2023, we are exploring technology enhancements, including greater automation and policy and process efficiencies to eliminate and prevent hearings delays and backlogs. We will explore automation options for other backlogs, such as initial disability claims and our processing center workloads and improve National 800 Number service performance.

Key Initiatives

Information Technology Modernization

Four years ago, we began a multi-year *IT Modernization Plan* (www.ssa.gov/open/materials/IT-Modernization-Plan.pdf), supported by \$415 million in dedicated appropriations from Congress. We review our modernization plan to ensure it is flexible to keep up with rapid technology changes and future customer needs. In 2020, we updated our plan, building on our progress in addressing foundational modernization needs and incorporating input from public and private technology experts, our frontline employees, and the public we serve.

Our *IT Modernization Plan, 2020 Update* (www.ssa.gov/open/materials/IT-Modernization-Plan-2020-Update.pdf) emphasizes service modernization, which includes building additional digital services; improving and expanding automated services available through our National 800 Number; and providing additional self-service and expedited services in our field offices.

- In FY 2021, we:
 - Provided DDS employees with a tool that uses artificial intelligence and predictive analytics to automatically analyze and process medical evidence.
 - Enhanced our Claims Status process with the release of our Claim Status Tracker (CST). CST provides real-time information and sets expectations throughout the application process for all initial claims and appeals.
 - We piloted our internet Employer Wage Reporting Journey (EWRJ), simplifying the process for employers to submit annual wage data. The EWRJ encourages electronic online filing, reduces paper wage processing, and reduce data errors. EWRJ provides guided instructions and displays the wage file progress and results in real time. We piloted wage file uploads with over 20 employers and submitters that processed 19 million wage reports and improved customer experience as reflected in a 96 percent usability score.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we will:
 - Enable the public to schedule appointments online for select services;
 - Introduce an online service for adult disability beneficiaries to complete the SSA-454 (Continuing Disability Report) without needing to visit a field office;
 - Expand mobile check-in services available to field office visitors;
 - Expand the number of forms users can complete online;
 - Implement electronic calendaring for all hearing participants, allowing our staff to schedule hearings; and
 - Increase the ability to obtain a replacement Social Security card without needing to visit a field office.

Improve 800 Number Services

Millions of our customers count on our National 800 Number technicians to answer important questions; therefore, we are focused on improving the timeliness of our National 800 Number average speed of answer (ASA)³ and agent busy rate (ABR).⁴ We will improve service and reduce wait times through targeted hiring, improved training methods, and additional automated services through our Next Generation Telephony Project (NGTP).

- In FY 2021, our agents handled more than 31 million calls. We hired and trained additional agents to improve our ability to address 800 Number callers efficiently. We also focused on new training and oversight methods to enhance the quality of our responses and resolve callers' questions during their first contact.
- In FY 2022, we plan to end the year with an ASA of 19 minutes and reach an ABR of 7 percent.
- In FY 2023, we plan to implement tools within NGTP that will better direct calls between the 800 Number and field offices, including expanded self-help service for the 800 Number. By the end of FY 2023, we expect to reduce the ASA to less than 12 minutes and maintain an ABR of 1 percent.

Modernize the *Social Security Statement*

To improve customer service and the public's understanding of our programs, we are modernizing the *Social Security Statement*. The modernized *Statement* provides users with their earnings records, Social Security and Medicare taxes paid, and future benefit estimates, as well as access and links to retirement planning tools, calculators, supplemental fact sheets, and other applicable information.

- In FY 2021, we launched nine supplemental fact sheets, to accompany the *Statement* and present information based on the user's age and earnings history.
- In FY 2022, we provided the redesigned *Statement* and fact sheets to all users in the [my Social Security](#) portal. We also began mailing the redesigned *Statement* and supplemental fact sheets in black and white print. We plan to continue our *Statement* modernization efforts and solicit, receive, and assess feedback from the public, stakeholders, and advocates to incorporate in the documents. We are developing an additional supplemental fact sheet.

³ The Average Speed of Answer is the average amount of time callers wait in queue to be answered by an agent. Wait time begins when the call is placed in queue and ends when the agent answers.

⁴ The Agent Busy Rate is the percentage of calls routed for live agent service that encounter a busy call back message.

- In FY 2023, we plan to begin the contract negotiation for color printing the mailed *Statements*.

Expand Video Service Delivery

Video service delivery (VSD) allows us to provide a video face-to-face service option, which helps us balance our workloads and reduce wait times. We offer VSD in over 900 convenient locations across the country such as our field offices, hospitals, libraries, community centers, American Indian tribal centers, homeless shelters, and other government agencies. VSD offers high-resolution magnification and black light capability, allowing for in-depth review of the security features and authenticity of the evidence presented. However, the COVID-19 pandemic reduced customers' ability to access these VSD locations.

While VSD requires individuals to go into specific locations that offer VSD service, our videoconferencing platform allows the public to obtain online face-to-face service from our employees from any location, using their personal devices.

- FY 2021, we deployed videoconferencing to our frontline employees. We tested videoconferencing for several workloads, including contractors conducting representative payee reviews. In December 2020, we implemented online video hearings with ALJs. We also implemented several videoconferencing features, including desktop sharing, channels, and conference call capabilities.
- In FY 2022, we plan to expand VSD services to 60 additional field offices and third-party sites throughout the nation. We will also deploy videoconferencing to all remaining SSA and DDS employees.
- In FY 2023, we plan to expand VSD services to 60 additional field offices and third-party sites across the nation. We also plan to explore other video alternatives to support new and ongoing agency initiatives and roll out the videoconferencing recording feature.

Expand Access to Electronic Medical Evidence

We depend on healthcare providers to send us the medical records we need to determine whether a claimant is disabled. We offer multiple electronic delivery formats to make it easier for medical providers to submit evidence, allow disability adjudicators to efficiently identify pertinent information, and improve the disability determination process through use of data analytics.

- In FY 2021, we onboarded 14 partners to exchange medical records electronically. We received over 53 percent of our medical evidence electronically.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we plan to continue our work to onboard new and larger partners to increase the volume of evidence we receive electronically. We expect to increase the percentage of medical evidence we receive electronically to 55 percent in FY 2022 and to 57 percent in FY 2023.

Modernize Disability Case Processing

We are bringing decision support tools using artificial intelligence technologies, machine learning, and predictive analytics to many aspects of the disability determination process to improve decisional accuracy and policy compliance. We are improving disability case processing through our enterprise-wide efforts to develop and implement modern, national claims processing systems that will seamlessly interact with each other from initial claim filing through a final appeal decision. We are replacing aging systems to provide more efficient and consistent case processing, improve our customer's experience, and reduce administrative costs. We are integrating the Disability Case Processing System (DCPS2), Hearings and Appeals Case Processing System (HACPS), and the Quality Review Case Processing System (QRCPS) across our offices and DDSs.

- In FY 2021, we increased DCPS2 functionality and deployed DCPS2 to 4 additional DDSs, bringing the total to 49 of the 52 DDSs supported in production. Also, 37 DDSs completed the transition from legacy systems and are fully utilizing DCPS2 to process disability claims. We completed the nationwide rollout of HACPS to all 189 sites and about 8,000 employees. We also completed a QRCPS release that allowed for the processing of additional case types.
- In FY 2022, we plan to complete our DCPS2 deployment and transition from legacy systems for all DDSs.
- In FY 2023, we plan to support DCPS2 in Operations and Maintenance through the DDS Community of Practice. We also plan to continue adding functionality to QRCPS.

Reduce the Hearings Backlog

Eliminating the hearings backlog and reducing the time it takes to receive a hearing decision are among our most critical priorities. Our Compassionate And REsponsive Service (CARES) plan is a multi-pronged approach to eliminate the hearings backlog through increased decisional capacity, business process efficiencies, and IT innovations. With our CARES plan, the special hearings backlog funding we received, and our dedicated employees, we are significantly reducing the average wait for a hearing decision. The average wait time in FY 2021 was at the lowest level since FY 2001. We expect to eliminate the hearings backlog in FY 2023. (see Figures 3 and 4.)

- In FY 2021, we reduced the hearings pending to about 350,000. The annual average processing time was 326 days and the monthly average wait time for September 2021 was 362 days.
- In FY 2022, we plan to end the year with an annual average processing time of 375 days. We are preparing for a downstream increase in hearings requests in anticipation of the DDSs processing increased volumes of initial disability claims and reconsiderations, and we will work down this projected workload increase in 2023. We will closely monitor

the impact of additional disability applications on our appeals process to avoid creating new backlogs.

- In FY 2023, we estimate the annual average processing time will be 335 days, and the monthly average processing time will be 270 days by September 30, 2023. We will monitor our incoming workloads and our capacity to complete work. This will help us manage the resources needed to prevent the recurrence of the backlog.

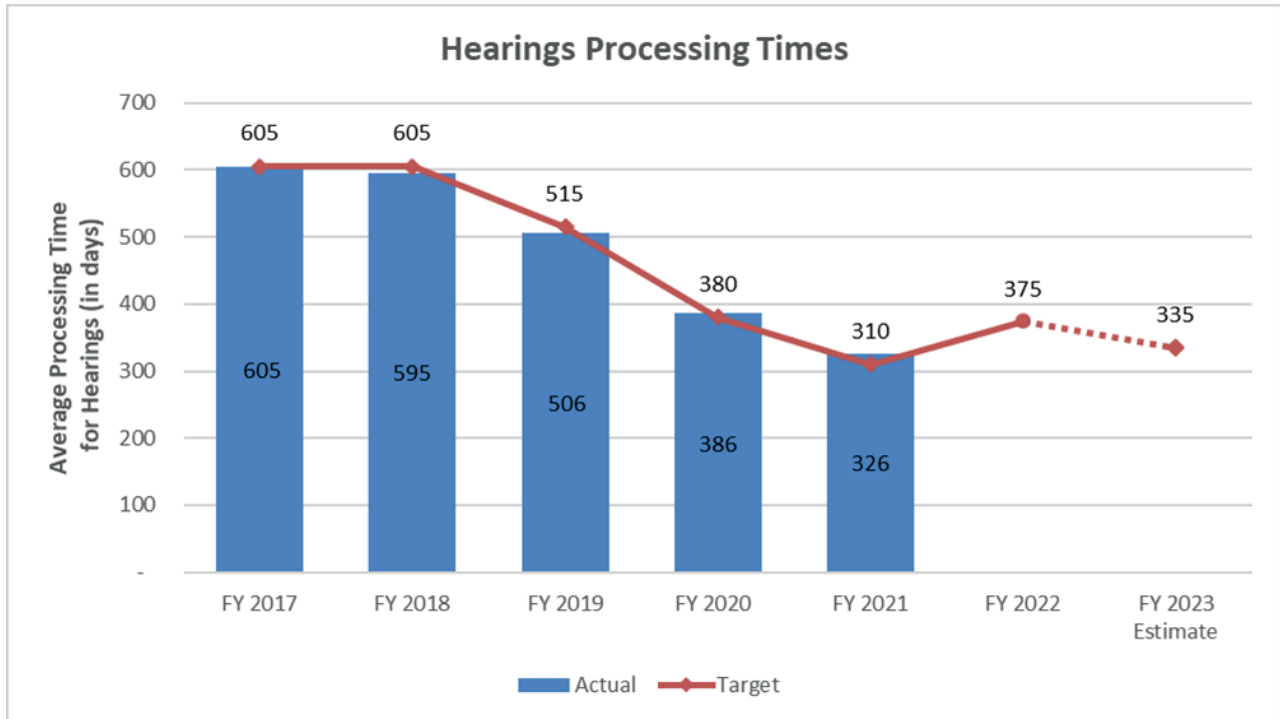


Figure 3. The average number of days a person waits for a decision by an ALJ for cases closed in each fiscal year from 2017 to 2023.

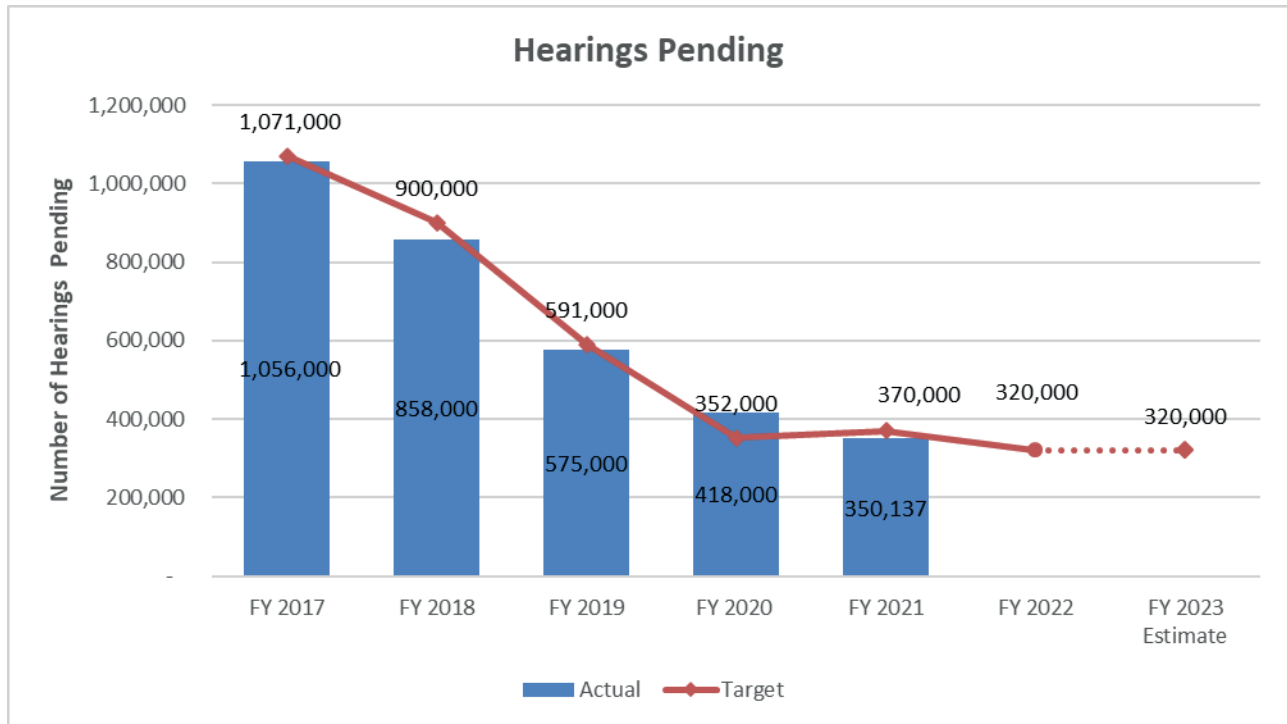


Figure 4. The number of hearings pending in the Office of Hearings Operations at the end of each fiscal year from 2017 to 2023.

Reduce the Processing Center Backlog

Our PCs handle complex Social Security retirement, survivors, and disability benefit payment decisions. The PC are focused on reducing the backlog of pending actions. In FY 2021, we reduced the average age of pending actions in the PCs by around 78 days.

In FY 2021, we completed a multi-phase programmatic debt write-off project to analyze and identify debt determined to be delinquent and uncollectible. By terminating collection activity on uncollectible debts, we will better reflect current receivables on our financial statements and permanently removed over 430,000 actions from the pending backlog. While we are terminating active collection efforts, the debt will remain on the individual’s agency record for future collection, where appropriate and applicable. If eligible, we will refer these delinquent debts to the Treasury Offset Program for external collection action.

- In FY 2021, we:
 - Reduced the incoming actions for the PCs by automating garnishment notices and enhancing OASDI beneficiary manual notices;
 - Reduced the amount of manual benefit resumption actions due to representative payee changes by automating a single update to one record resulting in updates to all other records when an individual receives multiple benefits;
 - Gained processing efficiencies by automating technician alerts when there is a change in the amount of Federal workers' compensation payments received;

- Updated our processes to automate the handling of returned checks; and
- Maintained staffing for the PCs, instituted workflow enhancements and quality initiatives to improve overall performance and focused on reducing aged and pending PC workloads.
- In FY 2022, we will focus on reducing the time it takes for our PC technicians to process incoming actions and improve payment timeliness. We will also look for opportunities to address simple tasks more quickly and implement automation to eliminate duplicate work.
- In FY 2023, we plan to identify and implement workload strategies that will reduce the PC pending and improve processing quality.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 1.3a: Improve the customer experience by reducing the Average Speed of Answer on the National 800 Number (also a two-year APG)

Fiscal Year	2023	
Target	Achieve an average speed of answer of less than 12 minutes	Implement Estimated Wait Time and Call Back options

Data Definition: The target represents the average amount of time it takes to answer a call once it routes to an agent for service and implementing Estimated Wait Time and Call Back options.

Performance Measure 1.3b: Improve the customer experience by reducing the average processing time for initial disability claims and by prioritizing those individuals who have waited the longest for an initial disability determination (also a two-year APG)

Fiscal Year	2023	
Target	Achieve an average processing time for initial disability claims of 164 days	Decide 85 percent of pending initial disability claims that begin the fiscal year 180 days old or older

Data Definition: Average processing time represents the amount of time it takes for an initial disability claim to be processed nation-wide. The aged case target represents the percentage of aged cases completed by the end of the fiscal year that started the year 180 days old or older.

Performance Measure 1.3c: Expand video service delivery

Fiscal Year	2021	2022	2023
Target	Implement MS Teams to 100% of frontline employees	Implement videoconferencing to 100% of SSA and DDS employees	Implement additional videoconferencing features
Target Met	Met		
Performance	MS Teams was successfully deployed to 100 percent of SSA frontline employees.	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We added videoconferencing capabilities and additional features to all of our frontline staff and began the rollout to the remaining SSA and DDS staff.		

Data Definition: The target represents the implementation of a unified communication and collaboration platform that includes workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration.

Performance Measure 1.3d: Provide uninterrupted access to our systems during scheduled times of operations

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	99.90% availability	99.90% availability	99.90% availability	99.90% availability	99.90% availability	99.90% availability	99.90% availability
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	Not Met	Not Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	99.96% availability	99.95% availability	99.95% availability	99.84% availability	99.89% availability	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We experienced business continuity challenges resulting in system availability percentages slightly under our target goal of 99.90 percent. We responded to the challenges by adding new online services for our customers and employees. We remotely managed end-user devices, upgraded hardware and security, added video services, and implemented innovative solutions to help address our personnel and public service needs.						

Data Definition: The target represents the average percentage of availability of our systems infrastructure.

Performance Measure 1.3e: Implement a New Framework for the Acquisition of Electronic Medical Evidence

Fiscal Year	2021	2022	2023
Target	Implement Phase I of the Electronic Evidence Acquisition (EEA) Framework	Implement an exchange with a large Medical Evidence network	Implement Phase II of the Electronic Evidence Acquisition Framework. Onboard a large Medical Evidence network.
Target Met	Met	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We released Unified Systems for Evidence for Experts Release 1.0 to improve the user experience of the medical and vocational experts who support the hearings and appeals levels in the disability determination process. We also released the Systems for Evidence Acquisition MI portal to provide users with an enhanced visualization into Health IT medical evidence of record analysis by using a new metric (i.e., medical evidence documents per case) to better assess evidence acquisition volume year-over-year and between offices and regions. In addition, we onboarded 14 partners.		

Data Definition: The target represents the implementation of the EEA program and includes establishing an MI framework; implementing a Structured Data store; and establishing connections with Electronic Health Records vendors and Health Information Exchanges.

Performance Measure 1.3f: Improve customer service by reducing the number of actions pending at the processing centers

Fiscal Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	3.3 million	2.9 million	5.5 million	4.2 million	3.7 million	4.4 million
Target Met	Met	Not Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	3.2 million	4.5 million	3.75 million	3.86 million	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	Focusing on high priority workloads, along with increased staffing, training, automated enhancements, and other factors, we ended the year with 3.86 million actions pending and exceeded our target.					

Data Definition: The target represents the total number of pending actions in all of the PCs at the end of the fiscal year.

Strategic Goal 2: Build an Inclusive, Engaged, and Empowered Workforce

Through their compassion and dedication, our talented employees are the heart of the agency. A trained, inclusive, engaged, and empowered workforce, with the proper tools to do their jobs, is critical to our success. However, we are currently challenged by an increasing number of retirements and staff attrition that is causing a loss of institutional knowledge and complicating knowledge transfer. Based on staff feedback from employee surveys and exit interviews, we have learned about potential causes of attrition, which we are working to address. These efforts include hiring and retaining exceptional people, supporting their chosen career paths, continually offering them tools to do their jobs, and investing in our employee development and training programs.

To improve organizational performance and effectiveness, we are aligning our human capital policies to support in-person and remote customer service delivery. We will use these policies, as well as existing and emerging technologies, to attract, train, develop, and retain our workforce.

We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. We are promoting equity by developing and implementing diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness training for all employees. We will ensure our hiring and promotion practices promote equity as we continue to build a workforce that reflects and delivers customer-focused service to diverse populations.

Strategic Objective 2.1: Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Hiring and Advancement

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources and Office of Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity

Strategies

Conduct analyses to identify and address systemic barriers present in hiring and advancement

To ensure a workforce that reflects the diversity of our customers at all levels of the organization, we will conduct analyses to determine if systemic barriers exist and work to remove any barriers we find. We will implement changes in hiring and career advancement, particularly around training. We will rethink our workplace culture, as necessary, to further these commitments.

Broaden reach for hiring and promote retention

Increased workplace flexibility and the increasing use of online services allows us to broaden our geographic reach for hiring and retention in a way that complements our efforts to promote diversity and equity in hiring and advancement, where flexibilities are compatible with how we deliver our mission. We are exploring workplace flexibilities, such as remote work when it fits within mission requirements; creating greater interest in Federal employment with us; providing the opportunity for stability, attractive pay, and benefits packages; and offering opportunities for the best qualified job candidates regardless of their physical location.

Key Initiatives

Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

We are committed to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) across the employee experience, including hiring, promotion, accommodation, and long-term retention. Our goal is to improve policies and practices to build a representative workforce that includes: appropriately identifying talent; using multiple means to announce vacancies; supporting a pipeline of new members of the workforce; mitigating bias in the promotion process; and addressing any potential barriers in accessing job opportunities.

We will conduct barrier analyses to achieve systematic improvement of our processes and procedures. We will build our agency DEIA strategic plan to address potential barriers in accessing job opportunities and foster a workplace environment that accommodates, embraces, and assures the safety of our employees.

- In FY 2021, we conducted a national training to increase the awareness of potential areas of systemic and institutional bias against underserved communities. The training centered on promoting respectful and inclusive workplaces, agency accessibility practices, and the understanding of implicit and unconscious bias.
- In FY 2022, we will review policies and procedures (e.g., assessment tests, vacancy announcements, eligibility criteria, suitability requirements, accommodations requests etc.) to identify and create an agency DEIA strategy to address potential barriers to full participation in the workplace.
- In FY 2023, we will start implementing internal and external DEIA strategies policies, practices, and processes. We will assess results and focus on achieving systematic improvement of processes and outcomes.

Enhancing Strategic Workforce Planning

To serve the American public efficiently and effectively, we must align our workforce requirements with the strategic direction for our organization. We will employ strategic workforce planning (SWP) to ensure the effective acquisition, development, and retention of a

talented and diverse workforce. SWP analyzes the current and future needs of our workforce, identifies gaps in skills and competencies, and implements strategies to address them. We will update our Human Capital Operating Plan (HCOP), which serves as the roadmap to our future workforce, using SWP data analysis and assessment of key competencies for our mission-critical occupations.

- In FY 2021, we conducted research for the best industry practices and benchmarking with SWP programs across multiple Federal agencies.
- In FY 2022, we will develop a comprehensive SWP framework and business process.
- In FY 2023, we will assess the SWP framework for expanded implementation at the component level and to support development of future human capital efforts.

Execute Talent Management and Succession Planning

Our goal is to continue to increase the strength and diversity of our leadership cadre and pipeline to enhance our readiness to fill potential gaps in leadership and critical positions. We are developing an enterprise-wide approach to succession planning, using a module within our talent management system to automate our business process and improve efficiency. In FY 2020, we announced selectees for the National Leadership Development Program (NLDP) and identified selectees' competency baselines with a goal of reducing leadership competency gaps among at least 90 percent of program participants.

- In FY 2021, we began assignments for our inaugural NLDP Track 1 (GS 15) and Track 2 (GS 12–14) selectees. We announced selections, completed competency baselines, and began assignments for Track 3 (GS 8–11) selectees. Additionally, we finalized configuration of our succession planning tool.
- In FY 2022, with the completion of the NLDP, we will reduce the identified leadership competency gaps among at least 90 percent of NLDP participants. We will also launch the prototype of the succession planning module and then test and validate the tool in preparation for national roll out.
- In FY 2023, we will conduct an evaluation of the NLDP. We will also begin a phased roll out of our succession planning tool.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 2.1a: Enhance the leadership pipeline through a modernized national leadership development program

Fiscal Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Review readiness of at least 95% of career executives	Launch a redesigned national leadership development program	Identify competency baselines in national leadership development program participants	Begin assignments for NLDP Tracks 1, 2 and 3	Reduce leadership competency gaps of at least 90% of NLDP participants	Conduct an evaluation of the NLDP
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	99%	Launch Complete	Competencies Identified	Assignments Initiated	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We started the assignments for NLDP Track 1, 2 and 3, with expected completion in early FY 2022.					

Data Definition: The target represents the release of an NLDP, which includes developing program graduates by increasing their baseline competency and reducing competency gaps. The FY 2022 target compares NLDP participant outcomes on pre and post program 360-degree assessments. The FY 2023 target includes an evaluation of the program based on participant and supervisor feedback, program outcomes such as participant placement rates, and return on expectations.

Strategic Objective 2.2: Support Employees' Chosen Career Paths

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources

Strategies

Invest in our employees

We will provide agency managers with the tools and resources to enhance their skills and competencies, optimize organizational performance, address current and future workforce needs, and attract the talent we need to achieve our business goals. We will modernize our talent management systems to support interactive and job-specific activities across the employee lifecycle, further supporting management accountability for improved employee performance and engagement. We will create opportunities for our employees to design, develop, and implement strategies to improve service to our customers and performance across the agency. These measures should boost employee engagement and employee empowerment, which will improve the employee experience, and lead to improvements in our customer experience.

Ensure inclusive leadership development

One of our greatest challenges is transferring operational knowledge when experienced employees leave the agency. For example, as of October 1, 2021, approximately 25 percent of our employees were eligible to retire. To ensure continuity in our public service, we will invest in our future leaders by developing job-enrichment opportunities to facilitate the transfer of job knowledge from employees eligible for retirement to retained employees. Employees will have opportunities to participate in development programs that will broaden their skills and prepare them for leadership positions.

Key Initiatives

Improving Employee Engagement

We are focusing on strategies that highlight best practices in employee engagement, diversity, equity, inclusion, and retention. We are also employing tools that support executive and management accountability, such as: workforce statistics that convey the impact of engagement on attrition and retention, employee feedback through surveys or focus groups to obtain insight on employee needs and experiences, targeted and required action planning to document and track our strategies, training on soft skills and engagement-related topics, and other resources to enhance employees' levels of engagement and inclusion.

- In FY 2021, we developed an agency-wide Improving Workplace Morale (IWM) Plan. This plan includes initiatives (e.g., effective leadership, employee and management development, and effective communication) developed to improve employee engagement. Components also developed specific IWM plans.
- In FY 2022, we plan to implement agency and component-level IWM plans and offer training, resources, and support for managers.
- In FY 2023, we will enhance our agency and component plans based on benchmarking and research of current trends and best practices in employee engagement.

Invest in Training and Support for Managers

Effectively trained managers and supervisors with the foundational tools to execute their responsibilities are better positioned to train and manage the performance of their own staff, enhance employee engagement, increase productivity, and improve retention.

In FY 2019, we launched and updated our Leadership Essentials for New Supervisors (LENS) curriculum to train new managers and supervisors on management laws and responsibilities, in conjunction with the Office of Personnel Management's policies and procedures. New supervisors are enrolled in training within 90 days of their appointment. We expect them to complete LENS training within one year of their supervisory appointment.

In FY 2020, we began developing Leadership Fundamentals, a new multi-year online and self-paced curriculum that provides sequential training for managers within the first three years of their supervisory roles. The first year of Leadership Fundamentals includes lessons in personnel management, labor and employee relations, managing a diverse workplace, managing performance, and health and safety.

- In FY 2021, we developed online lessons that encompass the first full year of the Leadership Fundamentals curriculum.
- In FY 2022, we will begin implementation of the first-year curriculum and develop the training that will encompass years two and three of Leadership Fundamentals.
- In FY 2023, we plan to develop continuing education resources to maintain skills for managers who are beyond their third year in a supervisory position.

Strengthen the Performance Management Process

In 2020, we established the Reaching Every Supervisor or Leader Very Early (RESOLVE) program to provide supervisors with the tools to address employee underperformance. The RESOLVE program consists of manager and employee relations specialists working together to equip managers to address potential and current performance and conduct matters.

Our RESOLVE program is highly interactive, includes case scenarios to identify solutions, and covers the full scope of performance and conduct issues. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the program via multiple assessment tools, including a pre-and post-test questionnaire. The questionnaire assesses the knowledge gained from specific sessions and solicits feedback regarding the effectiveness of the training. Additionally, we will utilize a six-month post-RESOLVE session survey to assess how participants applied the training in their regular supervisory duties.

We developed additional LENS training for supervisors and managers to reinforce our performance management policies and procedures. We released a new video on implementing objective employee-level performance measures in performance plans to support our FY 2022 plans. We are seeking contractual support to develop additional numeric performance measures for selected positions in our FY 2023 plans. We also plan to implement a Performance Oversight Team with a dual focus on compliance and narrative feedback. We will conduct robust reviews of required performance documents agency wide, increasing our annual performance management auditing to approximately 10 percent of performance plans.

We utilize the electronic 7B (e7B) application to complete and track employee performance management documents and required acknowledgement statements (e.g., systems access, and handling of personally identifiable information), which were previously maintained in paper form. The application allows employees and management to electronically deliver and sign these documents, enhancing management and employee accountability.

- In FY 2021, we maintained 98 percent of all required, signed employee acknowledgement statements in our e7B system.
- In FY 2022, we plan to have 95 percent of Initial Discussions, Mid-year Performance Discussions, and Appraisal performance documents tracked electronically through our e7B application.
- In FY 2023, we plan to have 96 percent of Initial Discussions, Mid-year Performance Discussions, and Appraisal performance documents tracked electronically through our e7B application.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we plan to assess participant feedback and continue utilizing the RESOLVE program to provide supervisors with tools to address employee performance.

Ensure Equity in Leadership Development

We promote a workplace that recognizes and celebrates our diverse employees' abilities and encourages the full contributions of all. We continually strive to expand and diversify applicant pools through targeted recruitment of underrepresented groups. We engage our Advisory Council Chairs within the Diversity and Inclusion Council, as the Advisory Councils have connections with the communities they serve and can play a key role in our efforts to broaden interest among underrepresented groups in national leadership development programs. We participate in diversity recruitment events through our established relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and minority serving institutions (MSIs) and universities and organizations that serve veterans, military spouses, and individuals with disabilities.

- In FY 2021, we conducted an internal equity assessment through meetings with a volunteer group of our employees from across the agency and identified potential challenges in the application process for our national leadership development programs.
- In FY 2022, based on the identified potential challenges, we will analyze of our national leadership development program's application process. Following the analysis, we will identify promising practices and areas for improvement to promote equity.
- In FY 2023, we plan to use our analysis, promising practices, and identified areas for improvement to enhance our national leadership development programs and policies to promote equity in all agency development programs.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 2.2a: Ensure new supervisors receive timely training to improve their leadership skills and competencies

Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	At least 90% of new supervisors enroll in supervisor training within 90 days and complete training within one year of the effective date of their supervisory appointment	At least 95% of new supervisors enroll in supervisor training within 90 days and complete training within one year of the effective date of their supervisory appointment	At least 95% of new supervisors enroll in supervisor training within 90 days and complete training within one year of the effective date of their supervisory appointment	At least 95% of new supervisors complete training within one year of the effective date of their supervisory appointment	At least 95% of new supervisors complete training within one year of the effective date of their supervisory appointment
Target Met	Not Met	Met	Not Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	84% of supervisors enrolled within 90 days.	100% of supervisors enrolled within 90 days and 98% completed training within one year.	100% of supervisors enrolled within 90 days and 54% completed training within one year.	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We enrolled 100 percent of supervisors in training within 90 days of their appointment date. However, 54 percent of new supervisors completed training within one year of their appointment date. (Low completion rate due to unavailability of training lessons while we made critical updates to certain related courses in LENS.)				

Data Definition: The target represents the percentage of new supervisors that complete training within one year of the effective date of their supervisory appointment.

Performance Measure 2.2b: Strengthen manager accountability for effective performance management

Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	93% of performance-related documents completed and tracked electronically through our e7B system	95% of required signed employee acknowledgements maintained in our e7B system	97% of required signed employee acknowledgements maintained in our e7B system	95% of Initial Discussions, Performance Discussions, and Appraisal performance documents tracked electronically through our e7B application	96% of Initial Discussions, Performance Discussions, and Appraisal performance documents tracked electronically through our e7B application
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	94%	96.5%	98%	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We exceeded our target by maintaining 98 percent of required signed employee acknowledgements in our e7B system.				

Data Definition: The target represents the percentage of required employee acknowledgements that are completed and tracked electronically through our e7B system.

Strategic Goal 3: Ensure Stewardship of SSA Programs

One out of five Americans receives Social Security benefits at any given time and counts on us to provide accurate information and payments. As good stewards, we continue to look for ways to do business better, by addressing the root causes of improper payments, improving payment accuracy (including overpayments and underpayments), bolstering full and open competition in the acquisition and grants process, and applying sound management principles to everyday work. We are committed to continually improve the administration of our programs and work to identify and address potential inequities.

Strategic Objective 3.1: Improve the Accuracy and Administration of Our Programs

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Analytics, Review, and Oversight and Deputy Commissioner for Systems

Strategies

[Support our cost-effective program integrity work to safeguard benefit programs to better serve our recipients](#)

Dedicated program integrity funding helps ensure individuals receive the benefits to which they are entitled, and it safeguards the integrity of benefit programs to better serve recipients by confirming eligibility, improving payment accuracy for both overpayments and underpayments, and preventing fraud. In addition, program integrity funding allows us to conduct SSI redeterminations, conduct the anti-fraud cooperative disability investigations program, and support special attorneys for fraud prosecutions. We will continue these efforts to ensure public confidence in our programs and operations and to ensure we are providing beneficiaries the correct benefits to which they are entitled.

[Enhance our payment accuracy efforts, including overpayments and underpayments](#)

We are committed to mitigating and preventing improper payments by leveraging audit recommendations, implementing automation and business process improvements, and enhancing data analytics. We continue to pursue workflow adjustments, policy and notice changes, training and reminders for technicians, and automation solutions to improve post-entitlement accuracy. We will increase our outreach to underserved populations, simplify our policies and procedures to ensure eligible individuals receive the benefits for which they are entitled, automate tools to alert beneficiaries of overpayments and underpayments, and continue to allow electronic payments.

Expand the use of data analytics and predictive modeling

We will continue to strengthen and expand the use of large-scale data analytics, complex data modeling, and related technologies to detect, deter, and prevent fraud, as well as identify potential cross-benefit eligibility. We plan to enhance our enterprise fraud risk management program by introducing more risk assessment activities.

Strengthen our cybersecurity program

We strive to maintain a highly effective cybersecurity program, to protect against security threats and comply with Federal policies and regulations. The continued strength and resilience of our cybersecurity program is critical to protecting the personally identifiable information we store, and enabling uninterrupted availability of our network, systems, and IT resources.

Key Initiatives

Modernize our Debt Management System

Currently, we use numerous systems to record, track, and manage our OASDI and SSI overpayments. We started a multi-year initiative to develop a streamlined, modernized enterprise Debt Management System (DMS) to enable us to more effectively and efficiently post, track, collect, and report on overpayments. Our new process allows individuals to repay their debt electronically via their bank's online bill pay service.

- In FY 2021, we released an online remittance option for repaying OASDI and SSI overpayments, implemented a lockbox service with the Department of the Treasury,⁵ and released an automated process for writing-off delinquent and unproductive debts, which advances the debts to the next stage of the collection process.
- In FY 2022, we plan to deploy new automated remittance processing capabilities.
- In FY 2023, we plan to deploy new automated debt processing and accounting capabilities.

⁵ Through the lockbox program, the Department of the Treasury agrees to let certain financial institutions process individual payments for program overpayments.

Promote Timely Wage Reporting

Focus Area for Improvement

We are highlighting Promote Timely Wage Reporting as a focus area for improvement.

Changes in a person's work and wages are a leading cause of improper payments in the DI and SSI programs. We use several sources to verify wage amounts, including pay stubs submitted by beneficiaries and recipients, annual earnings data from the Internal Revenue Service, and payroll information from The Work Number.⁶ However, verifying wages is a manual process, which depends on beneficiaries and recipients timely self-reporting of wages to make correct DI and SSI payments.

Over the years, we developed channels to make it easier for DI beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and representative payees to report wages. We are prioritizing efforts to improve the process, as we know a number of our recipients have depended on in-person field office visits to complete reporting requirements. We developed the online wage reporting application, myWage Report (myWR), for DI beneficiaries to report earnings electronically via *my Social Security*. We later expanded myWR to allow SSI recipients, their representative payees, or their deemors (i.e., an ineligible spouse or parent living with the recipient) to report earnings electronically. In addition to the myWR online application, SSI recipients can use our telephone wage reporting system and our mobile wage reporting application to report their wages.

- In FY 2021, we created a training video that we shared with the public via digital and social media outlets (e.g., YouTube) to promote the use of telephone wage reporting, mobile wage reporting, and myWR.
- In FY 2022, we are expanding the reach of the training video by adding it to our Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook social media accounts. We also plan to enhance automation of wages received from the Payroll Information Exchange by refining the usability of third-party data, reducing manual workloads, and revising the business process to account for improvements.
- In FYs 2022–2023, we plan to enhance the mobile wage reporting application, including allowing DI beneficiaries to use the application and adding features to improve customer experience.

⁶ The Work Number is an online wage verification company we approved to provide primary evidence of wages when pay slips are unavailable. Wage and employment information are provided in real time.

Enhanced Fraud Prevention and Detection Activities

We are taking a holistic, analytical approach to our fraud risk management and prioritizing our anti-fraud efforts consistent with the *Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019* and the Government Accountability Office Framework for Managing Fraud Risks in Federal Programs. We are improving our use of data analytics and predictive modeling to better identify suspicious and evolving patterns of concerning activities in our workloads, allowing us to proactively detect and prevent fraud before issuing payments.

Between FYs 2018 and 2020, we completed fraud risk assessments in key areas including disability, electronic services, and the representative payee program. These assessments were consistent with our Enterprise Fraud Risk Management (EFRM) strategy,⁷ established in FY 2019. We also developed strategies to mitigate specific risks identified in those assessments.

- In FY 2021, we initiated additional risk assessment activities in areas such as occupational (employee) fraud and the Title II program,⁸ consistent with our EFRM strategy. We will continue our 5-year project to enhance our fraud allegation referral process, providing additional user functionality and enhancing management information.
- In FY 2022, we plan to initiate fraud risk assessments for debt management process.
- In FY 2023, we plan to reassess fraud risk in the disability workload.

Expand Our Cooperative Disability Investigations Program

We partner with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), State DDSs and State and local law enforcement divisions to operate cooperative disability investigations (CDI) units. Generally, these units investigate suspected fraud before we award benefits and during the CDR process. We currently have 49 CDI units covering 47 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. territories of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands. (see Figure 5.)

- In FY 2021, we added CDI coverage to 3 States (Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont), bringing CDI coverage to 47 total States.
- In FY 2022, we plan to provide CDI coverage to the 3 remaining States (Alaska, Delaware, and Pennsylvania) achieving our statutory goal of covering all 50 States and U.S. territories by October 2022.

⁷ EFRM is a systematic process to identify possible fraud risks, determine what controls are in place to reduce the likelihood or impact of those risks, and then determine the significance of the residual (remaining risks).

⁸ The Title II program is also referred to as the Federal OASDI benefits program. While the Title II program includes benefits administered for disability insurance, the Title II fraud risk assessment does not cover disability. We completed the DI risk assessment separately in December 2017.

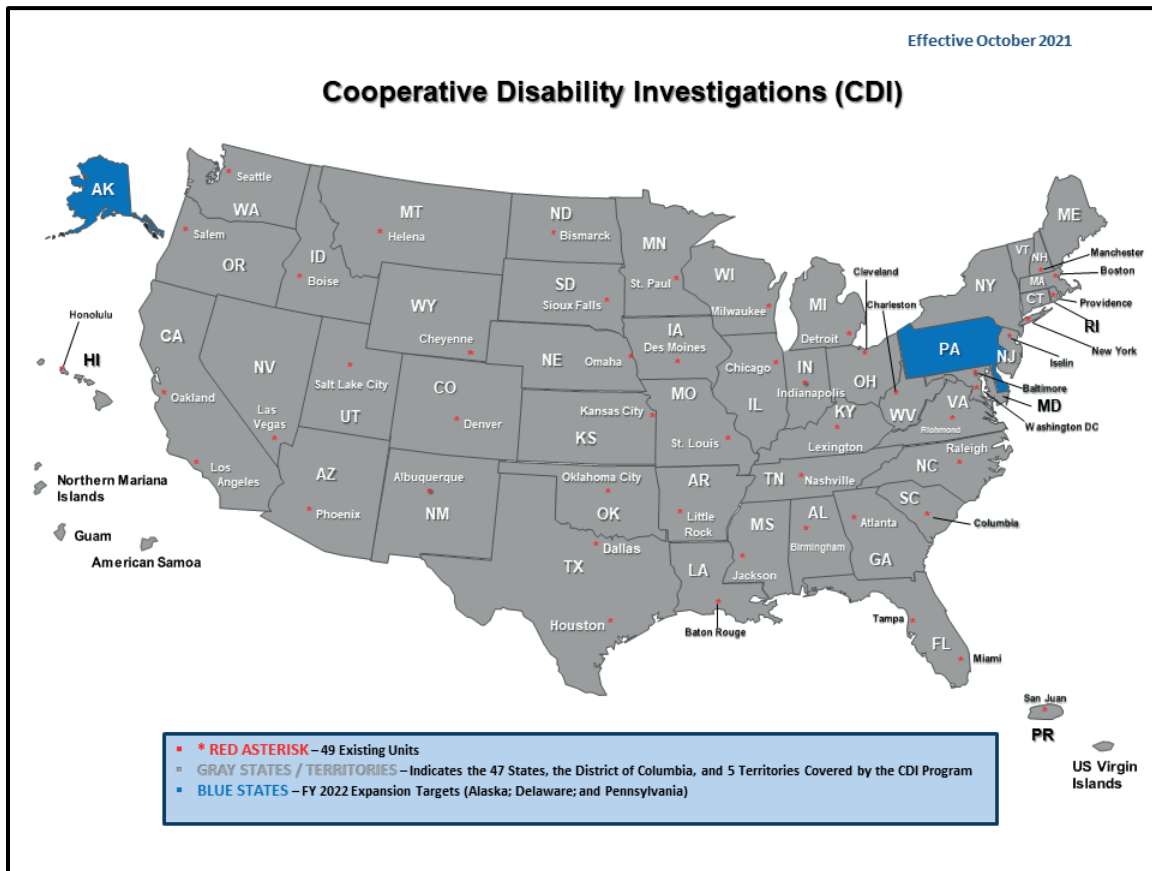


Figure 5. The CDI unit coverage through October 2021.

Strengthen Our Information Security Program and Privacy Programs and Modernize Our Cybersecurity and Privacy-enhanced Risk Management Infrastructure

Maintaining the public’s trust in our ability to protect sensitive data requires continuous monitoring of threats and continual improvement and strengthening of our cybersecurity program. We protect against cybersecurity incidents and risks through constant assessment of the threat landscape and use of advanced cybersecurity controls.

- In FY 2021, we continued to:
 - Align our practices with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework and other Federal initiatives including the Executive Order 14028 on Improving the Nation’s Cybersecurity;
 - Develop and begin implementing plans to provide a Zero Trust security architecture;
 - Increase our cybersecurity threat identification and remediation collaboration with our Federal partners and coordinate with our Office of Acquisition and Grants to implement the required supply chain safeguards;

- Enhance our Cybersecurity Risk Management Strategy and agency Risk Register, to make data driven decisions when addressing risks and allocating resources;
 - Enhance our Supply Chain Risk Program to ensure that IT products or services are monitored and assessed for security risks and vulnerabilities during all stages of their procurement and IT lifecycle;
 - Align our cybersecurity and privacy programs and practices with Federal guidelines, establishing the flexibility to adjust to various forms of cybersecurity threats and privacy risks in alignment with our ERM strategy; and
 - Collaborate with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to expand and mature our defensive cybersecurity capabilities under the Continuous Diagnostic and Mitigation program.
- In FY 2022, we will mature cyber risk management, governance, and integration with our ERM program. We will implement cloud-based security services to augment our strong network security with flexible and cost-effective solutions in alignment with Zero Trust principles. We will assess our network resiliency and collaborate with our Federal partners on effective contingency planning options.
 - In FY 2023, we plan to expand role-based employee training for privacy protection best practices and compliance policies. We will also leverage privacy risk assessments to increase our privacy program’s footprint, which includes planning, reviewing, and approving privacy protections for new and existing agency programs, systems, and applications.

Ensure Timely and Accurate Payments to Claimants and their Appointed Representatives

There are times when a claimant files for benefits and requests an appointed representative. A fee agreement may be in place between claimants and their representatives and both parties expect timely and accurate payments following a favorable decision.

- In FY 2021, our PCs processed 99 percent of ALJ reversals within 60 days. We also updated our fee agreement (form SSA-1696) and improved our internal business process to approve fee agreement forms faster.
- In FY 2022, our PCs will pay monthly benefits for at least 95 percent of ALJ reversals within 60 days. We will continue to develop the Appeals and Appointed Representative Processing Service Portal (AARPS). AARPS will help provide accurate, consistent, and effective communication with our new and existing customers.
- In FY 2023, we will further prioritize representative fee actions and retroactive claimant benefits in our PCs. We will establish a new performance indicator that measures if we release retroactive benefits and representative fees within 120 days of an ALJ reversal.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 3.1a: Improve the integrity of the Supplemental Security Income program by focusing our efforts on reducing overpayments (APG)⁹ (see Figure 6.)

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	94.00% (O/P)	94.00% (O/P)	94.00% (O/P)	94.00% (O/P)	94.00% (O/P)	94.00% (O/P)	94.00% (O/P)
Target Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	TBD	TBD	TBD
Performance	92.71% (O/P)	91.77% (O/P)	91.87% (O/P)	91.25% (O/P)	TBD	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	FY 2021 data will be available in summer 2022.						

Data Definition: The target represents our annual overpayment accuracy rate findings from our stewardship review of non-medical aspects of the SSI program. (The overpayment [O/P] accuracy rate is the percentage of all dollars paid that are free of O/P errors.)¹⁰

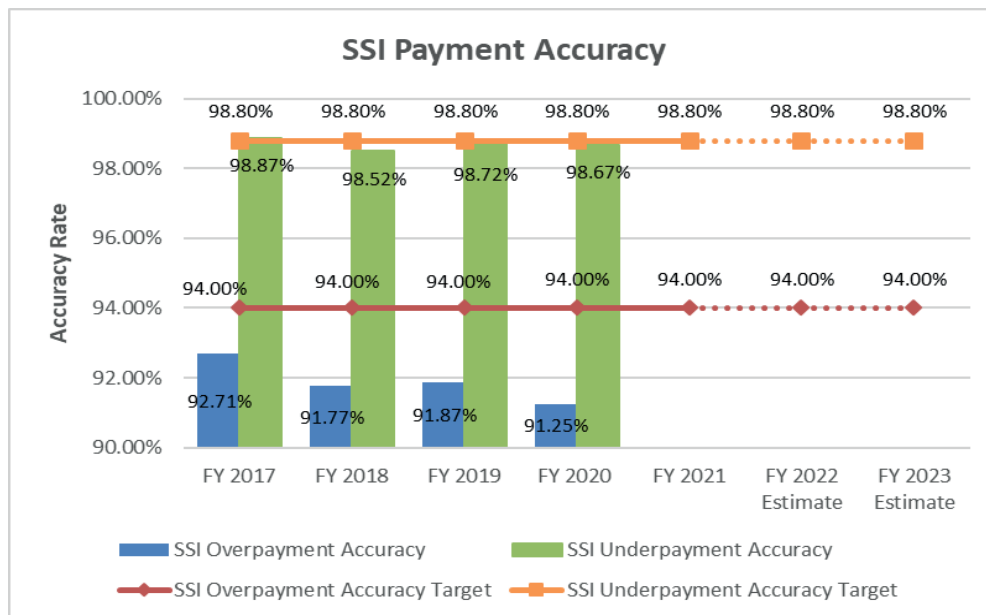


Figure 6. The SSI overpayment and underpayment accuracy rates and targets from FYs 2017 to 2023.

⁹ FY 2021 is the last year that “Improve the Integrity of the Supplemental Security Income Program by focusing our efforts on Reducing Overpayments” is an APG. However, we will continue to track and report this measure in the Annual Performance Report and on paymentaccuracy.gov.

¹⁰ “Ensure Stewardship of Our Programs” is a Strategic Goal in our [Agency Strategic Plan \(www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/asp\)](https://www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/asp). Each year, we report improper payment findings, both overpayments and underpayments, from our stewardship reviews of the non-medical aspects of the OASDI and SSI programs.

Performance Measure 3.1b: Maintain a high payment accuracy rate by reducing overpayments, in the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance program (see Figure 7.)

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	99.80% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)
Target Met	Not Met	Not Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD	TBD
Performance	99.36% (O/P)	99.77% (O/P)	99.80% (O/P)	99.83% (O/P)	TBD	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	FY 2021 data will be available in summer 2022.						

Data Definition: The target represents the annual overpayment (O/P) accuracy rate findings from our stewardship reviews of the non-medical aspects of the OASDI program. ¹¹

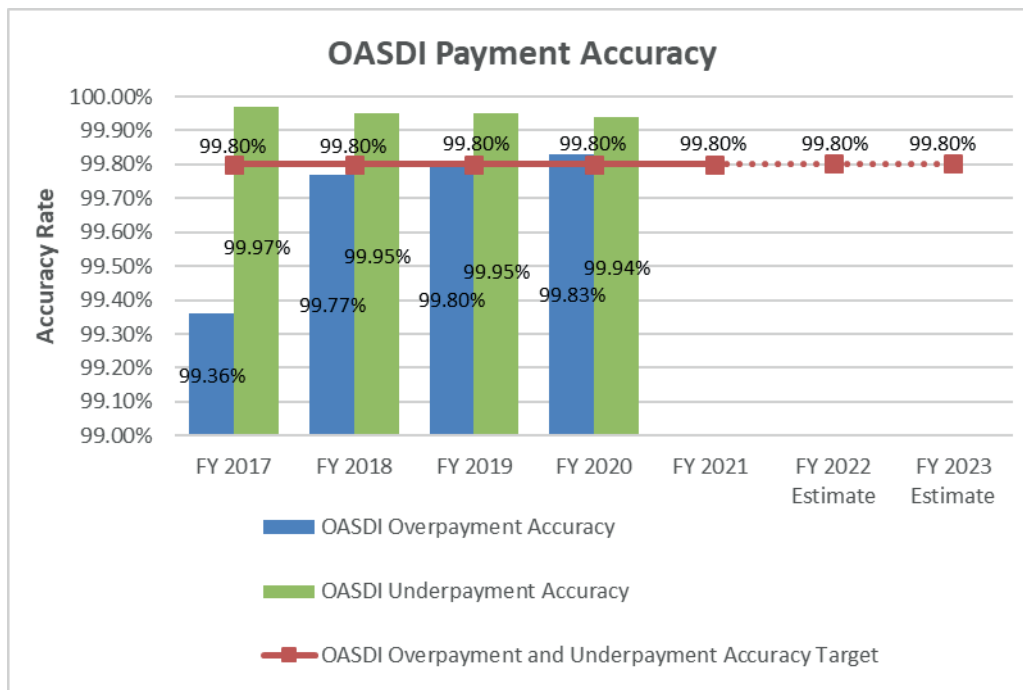


Figure 7. The OASDI overpayment and underpayment accuracy rates and targets from FYs 2017 to 2023.

¹¹ “Ensure Stewardship” is a Strategic Goal in our [Agency Strategic Plan \(www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/asp\)](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/asp). Each year, we report improper payment findings, both overpayments and underpayments, from our stewardship reviews of the non-medical aspects of the OASDI and SSI programs.

Performance Measure 3.1c: Modernize our Debt Management System

Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Implement online debt collection for benefit overpayments	Develop functionality to send an email confirmation as part of SSA’s online remittance application	Deploy a new online payment process.	Deploy automated remittance processing capabilities	Deploy automated debt processing and accounting capabilities
Target Met	Not Met	Not Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	Developed the initial release of an online remittance application, which provides individuals with the ability to access a payment portal and make payments via the Department of the Treasury’s Pay.gov website	We delayed the implementation of the online remittance (iPaySSA) application while we reassessed potential risks	New online payment process successfully deployed	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We released our new billing notices with the Pay.gov URL, a new remittance identifier, and online bill pay via financial institutions, providing customers with service enhancements. We collected 323,585 transactions via Pay.gov totaling \$79.4 million. Additionally, we deployed a second online payment process, Online Bill Pay via financial institutions.				

Data Definition: The target represents our strategies to post, track, collect, and report our overpayment activity.

Performance Measure 3.1d: Ensure the quality of our decisions by achieving the State disability determination services net and decisional accuracy¹² rate for initial disability decisions

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	97% net accuracy	97% net accuracy	97% decisional accuracy	97% decisional accuracy	97% decisional accuracy	97% decisional accuracy	97% decisional accuracy
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	Not Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	97% net accuracy	98% net accuracy	97% decisional accuracy	96% decisional accuracy	97% decisional accuracy	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	The public expects us to make timely and accurate decisions. We met our goal in FY 2021, by achieving a 97 percent DDS decisional accuracy for initial disability decisions						

Data Definition: The target represents the percentage of correctly decided cases compared to all sampled cases.

¹² Decisional Accuracy reflects all DDS medical determinations in which the determination was policy compliant at the time of the quality review and the initial determination did not change after a quality review obtained additional documentation. Net Accuracy reflects the percentage of correct initial State disability determinations and is based on the net error rate (i.e., the number of corrected deficient cases with changed disability decisions), plus the number of deficient cases not corrected within 90 days from the end of the period covered by the report, divided by the number of cases reviewed.

Performance Measure 3.1e: Mature the Enterprise Fraud Risk Management Program

Fiscal Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Operationalize AFES and implement eServices analytics	Complete eServices risk assessment, develop disability fraud risk profile, implement anti-fraud disability analytics	Complete the eServices fraud risk profile, the administrative issues fraud risk profile, and the representative payee fraud risk assessments	Complete the representative payee fraud risk profile, the SSI fraud risk assessment, and the occupational (employee) fraud risk assessment	Complete the SSI fraud risk profile, the occupational (employee) fraud risk profile, and the Title II fraud risk assessment	Complete the Title II fraud risk profile, the enumeration fraud risk assessment, and the debt management fraud risk assessment
Target Met	Not Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	We have not fully implemented the Anti-Fraud Enterprise Solution (AFES) but we deployed our first disability fraud analytic model and improved our eServices analytics and fraud detection	We completed the eServices risk assessment, developed the disability fraud risk profile, and implemented disability analytics	We completed the eServices fraud risk profile, the administrative issues fraud risk profile, and the representative payee fraud risk assessment	We completed the representative payee fraud risk mitigation strategy, and the draft SSI and occupational (employee) drafts for SSI fraud risk assessment	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We finalized the draft SSI fraud risk assessment and the occupational (employee) FRA, pending risk response mitigation planning. We finalized the Representative Payee Fraud Risk Mitigation Strategy.					

Data Definition: The target represents our EFRM strategy to systematically assess fraud risks and determine whether any specific risks require actions to reduce the likelihood or impact of that risk.

Performance Measure 3.1f: Expand our CDI coverage

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Target	Not Applicable	Add three CDI units	Add three CDI units	Add two to four CDI units	Add two to four CDI units	Add CDI coverage to the three remaining States
Target Met	Not Applicable	Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD
Performance	Added one CDI unit	Added three CDI units	Added three CDI units	Added four CDI units	Added CDI coverage for three States	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We provided CDI coverage to Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont. This year we used a hub concept to expand CDI units, which leverages existing CDI units to organize investigations and provide CDI coverage to neighboring States. The existing Providence CDI unit began organizing CDI investigations for Connecticut, and the existing Manchester CDI unit began organizing CDI investigations for Maine and Vermont.					

Data Definition: The target represents the number of additional CDI units needed to cover the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands

Performance Measure 3.1g: Maintain effective cybersecurity and privacy programs

Fiscal Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Achieve an overall score of “managing risk” on the Federal Cybersecurity risk Management Assessment ¹³	Achieve an overall score of “managing risk” on the Federal Cybersecurity Risk Management Assessment	Achieve an overall score of “managing risk” on the Federal Cybersecurity Risk Management Assessment	Achieve an overall score of “managing risk” on the Federal Cybersecurity Risk Management Assessment	Achieve an overall score of “managing risk” on the Federal Cybersecurity Risk Management Assessment	Achieve an overall score of “managing risk” on the Federal Cybersecurity Risk Management Assessment
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	Managing Risk score achieved	Managing Risk score achieved	Managing Risk score achieved	Managing Risk score achieved	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	Department of Homeland Security (DHS) assesses each agency’s risk across several NIST aligned security domains and capabilities. After reviewing our cybersecurity program, DHS rated us as “managing risk” across all five NIST functions of Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover.					

Data Definition: The target represents our annual overall risk score from the Federal Cybersecurity Risk Assessment.

Strategic Objective 3.2: Identify and Eliminate Potential Barriers to Access Contracts and Grants

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance, and Management

Strategies

Identify and work to address potential barriers and bolster open competition in the acquisition and grants process

We will conduct market research in accordance with regulations to bolster full and open competition in the acquisition and grants process to the maximum extent practicable. We will devise best practices to encourage participation by institutions serving students of color, including direct communications with professional associations. We will also develop best

¹³ Presidential Executive Order 13800, *Strengthening the Cybersecurity of Federal Networks and Critical Infrastructure*, and OMB Memorandum M-17-25 require Federal agencies to implement risk management measures and require OMB to assess how Federal agencies are managing their cybersecurity risk. Risk ratings are based on capabilities defined in the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. Potential risk ratings range from (1) High Risk, (2) At Risk, or (3) Managing Risk.

practices to secure contracts with qualified HUBZone, Woman-Owned, Veteran-Owned, and Small Disadvantaged Businesses.

Disseminate acquisition and grant proposal requests widely to ensure responses from a broad range of organizations

We will meet with HBCUs and MSIs to learn more about their experience with our grantmaking process, potential barriers the process presented, and suggestions for eliminating barriers. We will meet with bidders and recipients of our contracts for HUBZone, Woman-Owned, Veteran-Owned, and Small Disadvantaged Businesses to learn about their experiences with our procurement process, barriers they encountered, and recommended solutions to eliminate these barriers.

Key Initiative

Advancing Equity in Procurement

We are striving to increase access to our research contract and grant opportunities for research institutions serving people of color and underrepresented groups. We are monitoring increases in the number of acquisitions and grants to research institutions serving people of color (e.g., HBCUs and MSIs) and underrepresented groups (e.g., Historically Underutilized Business [HUB] Zone, Woman-Owned, Veteran-Owned, and Small-Disadvantaged Businesses). In addition, we attend monthly interagency workgroup meetings to share best practices and information about Federal opportunities for HBCUs relating to grants and contracts.

- In FY 2021 we:
 - Conducted market research on equity and support for underserved communities through Federal government-based guidelines for research grants and contracts to broaden the range of bidders;
 - Prioritized HUBZone small businesses when we search for supply items on our Amazon Business account;
 - Enhanced the content of our acquisition forecast to provide more planning information to the small business community;
 - Updated a request for applications for the Analyzing Relationships between Disability, Rehabilitation, and Work Small Grant Program to include language specifically mentioning that we would like to see research that engages researchers of color and employs community engaged research methods; and
 - Encouraged all potential partners to collaborate with institutions serving people of color, scholars of color, and underserved communities.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we will:
 - Develop equity-based guidelines to increase access to and encourage participation in grant opportunities by HBCUs and MSIs;

- Implement leading practices to increase access to and encourage participation in procurement by small and disadvantaged businesses;
- Establish a framework and process to ensure grant recipients of Federal funds are complying with anti-discrimination civil rights provisions and all procurement solicitations and awards include the appropriate terms and conditions required to implement applicable laws or executive orders (e.g., Equal Opportunity clause[s]);
- Track the percentage of research grants and procurement opportunities that are awarded to HBCUs, MSIs, and small and disadvantaged businesses to evaluate and improve our outreach and engagement efforts and increase equitable access to our research grants and procurement opportunities; and
- Track the number of published research studies that apply new approaches (e.g., community-based methodologies) to improve our understanding of the diverse communities and their needs and revise our programs and policies in an equitable manner.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 3.2a: Small Business Administration annual scorecard success in contracting with HUBZone, Woman-Owned, Veteran-Owned, and Small Disadvantaged Businesses

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Achieve an overall grade of “A” on the SBA scorecard	Achieve an overall grade of “A” on the SBA scorecard	Achieve an overall grade of “A” on the SBA scorecard	Achieve an overall grade of “A” on the SBA scorecard	Achieve an overall grade of “A” on the SBA scorecard	Achieve an overall grade of “A” on the SBA scorecard	Achieve an overall score of “A” on the SBA scorecard
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD	TBD
Performance	Graded A	Graded A	Graded A	Graded A	TBD	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	FY 2021 data will be available in May 2022.						

Data Definition: This target represents our overall grade from the Small Business Association (SBA) for awarding contracts to small businesses. Each Federal agency may receive an overall grade of an A+ for those that meet or exceed 120 percent of their goals, an A for those between 100 percent and 119 percent, a B for 90 to 99 percent, a C for 80 to 89 percent, a D for 70 to 79 percent, and an F for less than 70 percent.

Strategic Objective 3.3: Improve Organizational Performance and Policy Implementation

Lead: Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy and Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance, and Management

Strategies

Simplify our policies and modernize our processes

We will clarify our program rules for both customers and employees. Simplifying our program rules and policies will help us process benefits for our customers more quickly and make it easier for customers to complete business with us. We will remove or update outdated provisions and regularly engage internal and external stakeholders to assess and update policies. For example, we will continue to make significant progress in updating medical listings to reflect advancements in the medical industry and emerging research and consider stakeholder input.

Strengthen program and resource management

We will use proven program and project management techniques to protect taxpayer dollars and better serve our customers. We will leverage data, analyses, and program expertise to drive quicker and more accurate business decisions. We will utilize ERM best practices to manage our organizational challenges and ensure an enterprise approach in managing risks to deliver our mission.

Expand strategic partnerships with external partners

We will continue partnering with other Federal agencies to promote our services and **my Social Security** through their websites and customer interactions. By taking advantage of more data exchanges with other Federal and State agencies, we will increase the accuracy of our records, improve the customer experience, and increase organizational effectiveness.

Key Initiatives

Develop an Occupational Information System

We often need information about occupational requirements to make a disability determination, but job requirements and the types of jobs in the workforce change over time. Since 2015, we have been working with the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to develop the Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS) to collect occupational information. We will use the ORS data, along with information from other occupational sources, to create a new Occupational Information System (OIS). After an initial three years of data collection (Wave 1), BLS began collecting occupational data on a five-year cycle. Wave 2 collection began in 2018, and Wave 3 collection will begin in late FY 2023.

- In FY 2021, BLS published ORS estimates from the second year of Wave 2 and completed collecting data for the third year.
- In FY 2022, BLS will collect data for the fourth year of Wave 2 and publish estimates from the third year.
- In FY 2023, BLS will collect data for the fifth, and final year of Wave 2 and publish estimates from the fourth year.

Update the Listing of Impairments

The Listing of Impairments describes disabling impairments for each of the major body systems. We review these listings on a three-to-five-year cycle and update as necessary to reflect advances in medical knowledge, emerging research, and stakeholder input.

- In FY 2021, we published and implemented the musculoskeletal disorders final rule.
- In FY 2022, we plan to publish a proposed rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system and publish a final rule for digestive disorders and skin disorders body systems.
- In FY 2023, we plan to prepare a final rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system.

Expand Strategic Partnerships with External Partners

We provide SSN verifications and exchange birth, death, prisoner, and benefit payment information, as permitted under law, with Federal, State, and private partners. Our data exchanges improve organizational effectiveness and reduce costs by providing reliable data to determine benefits and improve administrative processes, which in turn saves costs and reduces improper payments.

- In FY 2021, we identified technical solutions for transferring data to support a computer-matching agreement to process U.S. citizen and non-citizen foreign travel data. We analyzed the technical solutions for implementing systems functionality to exchange computer-matching data.
- In FYs 2022 and 2023, we will pursue new data exchange partners from government and private sectors. We plan to expand our outreach efforts with the Data Exchange Community of Practice and the States Data Exchange Community of Interest, to engage more agencies and broaden the expansion of best practices toward streamlining the exchange of data.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 3.3a: Update the Listing of Impairments

Fiscal Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Publish a proposed rule to revise three body systems in the Listing of Impairments	Publish a final rule to revise the Musculoskeletal disorders system, and a proposed rule for the Cardiovascular, Digestive, and Skin body systems	Publish a final rule for the Musculoskeletal body system and a proposed rule for the Cardiovascular disorders body system	Prepare a proposed rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system and prepare a final rule for the digestive disorders and skin disorders body systems	Publish a proposed rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system. Publish a final rule for digestive disorders and skin disorders body systems.	Prepare a final rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system
Target Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	The proposed rule is in process, with a publication goal of early to mid FY 2019	We published the proposed rule for the Digestive and Skin disorders body systems in the Federal Register on 7/25/2019	We published the final rule for the musculoskeletal body system in the Federal Register on 12/03/2020	Prepared a proposed rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system and a final rule for the digestive disorders and skin disorders body systems	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We met our target by preparing a proposed rule for the cardiovascular disorders body system and a final rule for the digestive disorders and skin disorders body systems.					

Data Definition: The target represents the number of proposed and final rules we will submit to OMB for review and approval to publish in the Federal Register.

Performance Measure 3.3b: Reduce our Real Property Footprint

Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Achieve a 25,000 USF reduction	Achieve a 19,500 USF reduction	Achieve a 87,000 USF reduction	Achieve a 39,000 USF reduction	Achieve a 10,000 USF reduction
Target Met	Met	Met	Met	TBD	TBD
Performance	Achieved a 39,205 USF reduction	Achieved a 89,406 USF reduction	Achieved a 159,000 USF reduction	TBD	TBD
FY 2021 Performance Results	We achieved this reduction through relocation and additional projects in St. Louis, MO, Dallas, TX, Crystal City, VA, and San Francisco, CA, which enabled us to return space to the General Services Administration.				

Data Definition: The target represents the actual space occupied. Usable square feet (USF) does not include common areas of a building such as lobbies, restrooms, stairwells, storage rooms, and shared hallways.

Budgeted Workload Measure Results

In addition to the performance measures and targets we develop to demonstrate our incremental efforts to achieve our strategic goals, we have a number of budgeted workload performance measures that represent how much of our core workloads we will complete each year and how efficiently and effectively we complete this work. While budgeted workload measures support our strategic goals and objectives, the targets and outcomes are directly affected by our funding level each year. Thus, we present our budgeted workload measures separately in the following tables.

Retirement and survivor claims completed¹⁴

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	5,782,000 (4,196,566 received)	-5,801,000	6,009,000	6,222,000	6,243,000	6,615,000	6,534,000
Performance	5,619,831	5,862,065	6,020,702	6,120,255	6,081,969	TBD	TBD

Initial disability claims receipts¹⁵

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	2,499,000	2,476,000	2,295,000	2,399,000	2,491,000	2,231,000	2,570,000
Performance	2,442,592	2,353,970	2,345,615	2,212,858	2,009,254	TBD	TBD

Initial disability claims completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	2,455,000	2,300,000	2,295,000	2,289,000	2,333,000	1,986,000	2,350,000
Performance	2,485,000	2,306,570	2,310,057	2,037,356	2,011,298	TBD	TBD

¹⁴ Includes Medicare claims.

¹⁵ The estimates for disability claims receipts and claims pending are highly variable due to COVID-19 and our evolving operational status.

Initial disability claims pending

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	612,000	699,000	565,000	704,000	921,000	939,000	1,159,000
Performance	522,869	565,013	593,944	763,747	739,745	TBD	TBD

Average processing time for initial disability claims¹⁶

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	113 days	111 days	113 days	125 days	171 days	185 days	164 days
Performance	111 days	111 days	120 days	131 days	165 days	TBD	TBD

Disability reconsiderations receipts

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	Not Applicable	540,000	635,000	664,000	685,000	576,000	682,000
Performance	582,935	552,755	566,462	567,800	571,291	TBD	TBD

Disability reconsiderations completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	581,000	518,000	597,000	554,000	601,000	526,000	617,000
Performance	595,588	541,806	544,148	552,601	515,698	TBD	TBD

Disability reconsiderations pending

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	130,000	129,000	153,000	244,000	228,000	228,000	293,000
Performance	105,022	115,028	133,503	143,781	192,892	TBD	TBD

¹⁶ Average processing times for our initial disability claims and appeals workloads will depend on the ability to obtain timely medical evidence and effectively schedule consultative exams.

Average processing time for disability reconsiderations

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	105 days	105 days	102 days	105 days	152 days	187 days	168 days
Performance	101 days	103 days	109 days	122 days	147 days	TBD	TBD

Hearings receipts

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	632,000	582,000	511,000	464,000	417,000	376,000	472,000
Performance	620,164	567,911	510,901	428,810	382,870	TBD	TBD

Hearings completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	683,000	738,000	779,000	688,000	465,000	406,000	472,000
Performance	685,657	765,554	793,863	585,918	451,046	TBD	TBD

Hearings pending¹⁷

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	1,071,000	900,000	591,000	352,000	370,000	320,000	320,000
Performance	1,056,026	858,383	575,421	418,313	350,137	TBD	TBD

Annual average processing time for hearings decisions¹⁸

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	605 days	605 days	515 days	380 days	310 days	375 days	335 days
Performance	605 days	595 days	506 days	386 days	326 days	TBD	TBD

¹⁷ We assume the hearings backlog will be eliminated when we achieve a monthly average processing time of 270 days or less, which we expect to occur in September of FY 2023.

¹⁸ Average processing time for hearings is an annual figure. Projections for end of year (September) processing time for hearings are 570 days and 270 days for FYs 2022 and 2023, respectively.

National 800 Number calls handled¹⁹

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	35,000,000	33,000,000	36,000,000	36,000,000	36,000,000	33,000,000	36,000,000
Performance	36,053,988	31,910,965	33,496,515	34,480,132	31,246,009	TBD	TBD

National 800 Number average speed of answer²⁰

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	16 minutes	25 minutes	13 minutes	17 minutes	15 minutes	19 minutes	12 minutes
Performance	13 minutes	24 minutes	20 minutes	16 minutes	14 minutes	TBD	TBD

National 800 Number agent busy rate

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	12.0%	16%	9%	12%	2%	7%	1%
Performance	10.2%	14.7%	14.1%	7.4%	0.2%	TBD	TBD

Periodic continuing disability reviews completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	1,970,000	1,990,000	1,803,000	1,803,000	1,595,000	1,721,000	1,800,000
Performance	2,257,140	2,286,326	1,939,167	1,492,926	1,615,561	TBD	TBD

¹⁹ National 800 Number Calls Handled data for FY 2021 does not include automated calls handled. Due to technical issues resulting from transitioning to a new telephone system, the total number of automated calls handled is not yet available for FY 2021. There were approximately 2.7 million automated calls handled through May 21, 2021 (not reflected in this table); data on automated calls handled from May 22nd to date is still pending.

²⁰ The Agency Priority Goal target to improve the National 800 Number service achieves an Average Speed of Answer of less than 12 minutes, including implementation of estimated wait time and call back options, by September 30, 2023.

Full medical continuing disability reviews

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	850,000	890,000	703,000	703,000	495,000	621,000	700,000
Performance	874,411	896,508	713,156	463,264	510,510	TBD	TBD

Supplemental Security Income non-medical redeterminations completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	2,562,000	2,900,000	2,822,000	2,150,000	2,360,000	1,928,000	2,166,000
Performance	2,589,638	2,913,443	2,666,287	2,153,109	2,367,391	TBD	TBD

Social Security numbers completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	16,000,000	17,000,000	17,000,000	18,000,000	13,000,000	15,000,000	18,000,000
Performance	17,400,585	17,082,844	17,646,561	12,906,716	11,576,821	TBD	TBD

Annual earnings items completed

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	273,000,000	281,000,000	285,000,000	288,000,000	284,000,000	284,000,000	288,000,000
Performance	279,381,782	284,306,239	288,089,658	288,748,604	277,359,601	TBD	TBD

Social Security Statements issued²¹

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	10,000,000	14,000,000	15,000,000	14,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000
Performance	13,724,897	14,971,689	11,347,689	19,285,438	11,977,451	TBD	TBD

²¹ The *Social Security Statements Issued* measure includes paper statements only. It does not include electronic statements issued. In FY 2021, [my Social Security](#) users accessed their *Social Security Statements* 64 million times.

Disability determination services production per workyear

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	301	302	302	304	264	247	275
Performance	306	310	303	255	238.6	TBD	TBD

Office of Hearings Operations production per workyear

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Target	94	103	105	106	80	74	86
Performance	96	98	111	93	78	TBD	TBD

Major Management and Performance Challenges

Each year, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) identifies our top management and performance challenges. In addition, our leadership also identifies challenges, which often overlap with the OIG report. A listing of acronyms for the responsible officials is in Appendix D, Summary of Key Management Officials' Responsibilities.

Challenges Identified by the Office of the Inspector General

In FY 2021, OIG identified six top management issues for our agency.

1) The Social Security Administration's Response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Pandemic

Components: DCARO, DCBFM, DCHO, DCO, DCRDP, DCS, DCHR, and OIG

Challenge: SSA continues to provide its customers with limited service in its field offices as most employees telework, a major challenge for an agency that, before the pandemic, served over 40 million customers a year in its field offices.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Expand Equity and Outreach;
- Establish Enterprise Voice of Customer (VoC) Feedback Collection;
- Enhance the Digital Experience;
- Enhance *my Social Security*;
- Enhance Online Appeals;
- Enhance Online Service Options for Appointed Representatives;
- Increase Online Options for New Social Security Numbers (SSN) and Replacement Cards;
- Modernize Information Technology;
- Improve 800 Number Services;
- Modernize the *Social Security Statement*;
- Expand Video Service Delivery;
- Improve Employee Engagement;
- Enhance Fraud Prevention and Detection Activities; and
- Strengthen Our Information Security and Privacy Programs and Modernize Our Cybersecurity and Privacy-Enhanced Risk Management Infrastructure.

2) Improve Administration of the Disability Programs

Components: DCBFM, DCHO, DCO, DCARO, DCRDP, DCHR, and DCS

Challenge: SSA continues to face challenges with pending disability hearings and related processing times, and the COVID-19 pandemic renewed challenges with pending disability claims and continuing disability reviews. Continued focus is necessary to simplify work incentive regulations and create new opportunities for returning disabled beneficiaries to work.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Expand Equity and Outreach;
- Enhance Online Service Options for Appointed Representatives;
- Expand Video Service Delivery;
- Expand Access to Electronic Medical Evidence;
- Modernize Disability Case Processing:
- Reduce the Hearings Backlog;
- Develop an Occupational Information System; and
- Update the Listing of Impairments.

3) Improve the Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments

Components: DCARO, DCBFM, DCO, DCRDP and OIG

Challenge: SSA must be a responsible steward of the funds entrusted to its care by minimizing the risk of making improper payments and recovering overpayments when they occur.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Reduce the Processing Center Backlog;
- Modernize our Debt Management System;
- Promote Timely Wage Reporting;
- Enhance Fraud Prevention and Detection Activities;
- Expand our Cooperative Disability Investigations Program; and
- Expand Strategic Partnerships with External Partners.

4) Improve Service Delivery

Components: DCARO, DCHO, DCHR, DCO, DCS, and OIG

Challenge: SSA faces growing workloads and the expected retirement of experienced employees as it pursues its mission to deliver quality service to the public.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Enhance the Digital Experience;
- Enhance *my Social Security*;
- Enhance Online Appeals;
- Enhance Online Service Options for Appointed Representatives;
- Increase Online Options for New Social Security Numbers (SSN) and Replacement Cards;
- Modernize Information Technology;
- Improve 800 Number Services;
- Modernize the *Social Security Statement*;
- Expand Video Service Delivery;
- Reduce the Hearings Backlog;
- Reduce the Processing Center Backlog;
- Enhancing Strategic Workforce Planning;
- Execute Talent Management and Succession Planning;
- Ensure Timely and Accurate Payments to Claimants and their Appointed Representatives;
- Enhance Fraud Prevention and Detection Activities; and
- Strengthen Our Information Security and Privacy Programs and Modernize Our Cybersecurity and Privacy-Enhanced Risk Management Infrastructure.

5) Protect the Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability of SSA’s Information Systems and Data

Component: DCARO, DCBFM, DCO, DCS, and OIG

Challenge: SSA must ensure its information systems are secure and sensitive data are protected.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Modernize our Debt Management System;
- Promote Timely Wage Reporting;
- Enhance Fraud Prevention and Detection Activities;
- Expand our Cooperative Disability Investigations Program;
- Strengthen Our Information Security and Privacy Programs and Modernize Our Cybersecurity and Privacy-Enhanced Risk Management Infrastructure; and
- Expand Strategic Partnerships with External Partners.

6) Modernize Information Technology

Component: DCARO, DCO, DCS, and OIG

Challenge: SSA must continue modernizing its information technology to accomplish its mission despite budget and resource constraints.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Enhance the Digital Experience;
- Enhance *my Social Security*;
- Enhance Online Appeals;
- Enhance Online Service Options for Appointed Representatives;
- Modernize Information Technology;
- Expand Video Service Delivery;
- Increase Online Options for New Social Security Numbers and Replacement Cards;
- Expand Access to Electronic Medical Evidence;
- Modernize Disability Case Processing; and
- Strengthen Our Information Security and Privacy Programs and Modernize Our Cybersecurity and Privacy-Enhanced Risk Management Infrastructure.

Additional Challenges Identified by Our Leadership

Meet Service Delivery Needs

Components: DCHO, DCO, DCRDP, and DCS

Everyone who is eligible for benefits under the programs we administer should receive them. We must identify and resolve any root causes of inequity in accessing our programs.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Expand Equity and Outreach;
- Establish Enterprise Voice of Customer (VoC) Feedback Collection;
- Enhance the Digital Experience;
- Enhance *my Social Security*;
- Enhance Online Appeals;
- Enhance Online Service Options for Appointed Representatives;
- Modernize Information Technology;
- Improve 800 Number Services;
- Expand Video Service Delivery;
- Modernize Disability Case Processing; and
- Update the Listing of Impairments.

Strengthen and Empower Our Workforce

Component: DCHR

We must treat our employees fairly and equitably. That means supporting our employees in their chosen career paths and recognizing that their success is critical to the success of our organization.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility;
- Enhance Strategic Workforce Planning;
- Execute Talent Management and Succession Planning;
- Improve Employee Engagement;
- Invest in Training and Support for Managers;
- Strengthen the Performance Management Process; and
- Ensure Equity in Leadership Development.

Prevent Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

Components: DCARO, DCO, DCRDP, and OIG

Fraud, waste, and abuse erode the public's trust in our ability to efficiently provide vital services. Fraud prevention is critical to conserving valuable resources and meeting our mission to meet the changing needs of the public.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Enhance Fraud Prevention and Detection Activities;
- Expand Our Cooperative Disability Investigations Programs; and
- Expand Strategic Partnerships with External Partners.

Keep Pace in the Disability Program with Medicine, Technology, and the World of Work

Components: DCHO, DCO, DCRDP, and DCS

Medicine, technology, and the nature of work are constantly evolving. We must create an agile and responsive organization committed to keeping pace with those changes and maximizing efficiencies throughout the disability program.

Actions we are undertaking to address this challenge include:

- Expand Access to Electronic Medical Evidence;
- Modernize Disability Case Processing;
- Develop an Occupational Information System; and
- Update the Listing of Impairments.

Appendix A: Program Assessments

We routinely conduct studies and surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs. Continuous evaluation of program data, research, and analysis assist us in identifying strengths and weaknesses in our programs. Program evaluation results assist us in developing strategies to address the major challenges we face and improve how we administer our programs. We complete many of our evaluations annually, while others may be quarterly, biennial, triennially, or one-time efforts. We have included a summary of findings for the most current reports available.

Annual Evaluation Plan (Annually)

As required by the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, we developed an *FY 2022 Evaluation Plan* that describes our program evaluations to support our *FYs 2022–2026 Agency Strategic Plan* and to lay the foundation for our *FYs 2022–2026 Learning Agenda*. Our plan describes the most significant program evaluations that we will complete during the year. The plan is available on our website at www.ssa.gov/data.

Strategic Goal 1 – Optimize the Experience of SSA Customers

ForeSee Experience Index E-Government Report (Quarterly)

The ForeSee Experience Index E-Government report measures customer satisfaction with government websites. The FY 2020 second half report noted that five of our websites, “Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs,” “*my Social Security*” “iClaims - Disability,” “Retirement Estimator,” and “Business Services Online” topped the E-Government Satisfaction Index.

Prospective Client Survey (Biennially)

The Prospective Client Survey queries people between ages 50 and 64 to identify service expectations and preferences of the upcoming wave of retirees. The most recent survey was in FY 2021. Key 2021 showed respondents expect to:

- Wait no more than 5 minutes to speak with an employee when they call the agency (80 percent);
- Receive a return call by the next day or sooner (96 percent);
- Obtain in-office appointments within 3 days (67 percent);
- Wait no more than 30 minutes to speak with an employee in the office (100 percent with appointments and 60 percent without); and
- Receive a response to an electronic inquiry no later than the next day (93 percent).

Retirement Application Survey (Biennially)

The Retirement Application Survey measures customer satisfaction with the retirement application process and identifies service expectations and preferences for future service among recent retirees. In FY 2020, we found an exceptionally high level of satisfaction with the retirement application process, with respondents rating their overall experience at 95 percent excellent, very good, and good. This rating reflects a slight increase from the FY 2018 satisfaction rating of 94 percent.

In FY 2020, almost half of the respondents—46 percent—noted they filed their applications for retirement benefits online, almost identical to the 45 percent in FY 2018. In-person filing dropped by one percentage point from 40 percent in FY 2018 to 39 percent in FY 2020. Telephone filing held steady at 15 percent in both years. Most respondents indicated they use the Internet, and 84 percent of those Internet users said they had already created *my Social Security* accounts. Among the remaining Internet users who had not yet created an account, half said they would be likely to create one. To identify perceived drawbacks of creating a *my Social Security* account, the survey asked Internet users who had not yet created accounts for the main reason why they might not be likely to do so. Almost half of the responders indicated they simply preferred to speak to a person when conducting Social Security business. We expect to complete the next survey in FY 2022.

National 800-Number Caller Survey

Because of increased use of the National 800-Number as a primary service delivery, we are conducting this one-time survey from March 2021 through January 2022 to examine caller satisfaction with service they receive. The survey measures three aspects of customer satisfaction: overall service, access to service, and agent courtesy. Access refers to callers' perceptions of their ability to obtain the service they requested via the 800-Number. Cumulative survey results from the period of March 2021 through August 2021 show:

- 71 percent of callers were satisfied with overall service;
- 66 percent of callers were satisfied with access to service; and
- 89 percent of callers were satisfied with agent courtesy.

Evaluation of the Ticket to Work and Other Employment Support Programs (Continuously)

The Ticket to Work and Other Employment Support Programs evaluation examines employment patterns and outcomes of disabled beneficiaries, including those beneficiaries who use employment services such as the Ticket to Work, Partnership Plus, and Work Incentives Planning and Assistance programs. We completed an independent 10-year evaluation of the Ticket to Work (TTW) program in 2013, which produced seven reports. All reports are publicly available at www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/research.htm#Ticket.

Overall, the TTW evaluation found that beneficiaries who use the program generally like it, and the program has increased the use of return-to-work services. In addition, those beneficiaries who participate in TTW have better outcomes than those who return to work without the help of SSA-financed employment services. However, we also found that the increase in service use and better outcomes by participants has not translated into net increases in the rate of benefit suspension or termination due to work wages or an increase in the average number of months spent in suspension or termination due to work wages. This finding suggests that TTW has primarily extended the types of services that were available under the previous program where services were offered only through State vocational rehabilitation agencies. To summarize, more beneficiaries are getting these services now, but the success rate has not measurably changed.

We completed contracts analyzing possible changes to how we implement the Ticket to Work program. The “WIPA Service Model Analysis Report,” completed in 2020, developed 16 evidence-based recommendations for potential changes that we might consider for the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program service model. The “Employment Network (EN) Payment Structure Evaluation Report,” completed in 2021, analyzes how EN payments could be structured if we replaced the current SSDI work incentive structure with one that would reduce SSDI benefits in a series of four steps based on earnings of 50, 100, 150, and 200 percent of the substantial gainful activity level.

We are planning a formal evaluation of the Ticket to Work program to begin in FY 2023. The evaluation will consist of surveys, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, an analysis of program data, or other data collection and analyses as appropriate. Expected topics will include, for example: program effectiveness and opportunities for improvement; consumer characteristics; service provision; and service equity. We expect the final evaluation report to be completed in FY 2027.

Strategic Goal 2 – Build an Inclusive, Engaged, and Empowered Workforce

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (Annually)

We assess employee perspectives of organizational performance across several major human capital areas: recruitment, development, performance culture, leadership, job satisfaction, and personal work experiences. The 2020 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results indicate both strengths and opportunities for improvement. The most positive employee perceptions center on knowledge of how jobs support agency goals and priorities, understanding of job expectations, respectfulness of supervisors, mission accomplishment, and work unit competence. Opportunities for improvement include questions that reference managing poor performers, workload reasonability, senior leaders, performance-based recognition, and involvement in decisions that affect work. Due to an Office of Personnel Management delay, the 2021 FEVS was administered in late Fall of 2021.

Human Capital Evaluations (Annually)

We monitor and assess how well human capital policies and programs support our mission accomplishments. These evaluations are critical for assessing organizational performance and determining how to improve processes. Our Human Capital Evaluation System (HCES) also helps leadership assess the impact of human capital strategies designed to achieve agency goals.

The HCES is a mechanism to monitor and assess outcomes related to human capital management strategies, policies, programs, and activities. We leverage business intelligence, analytics, and data-based decision-making structures to support our evaluation strategy by tracking agency progress on all milestones and performance measures through our Human Capital Operating Plan (HCOP), HRStat reviews, and Independent Audit Program, as well as an annual Human Capital Review with the Office of Personnel Management.

Our HCOP describes plans for executing the human capital elements stated within our Agency Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Report and supports OMB's Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce, as described in Memorandum M-17-22. To ensure our sustained success at both the agency and component levels, we developed mature structures and processes to support executive oversight and accountability and detailed plans for implementation of our key focus areas and corresponding initiatives. We also established an ongoing evaluation process to identify challenges and make course corrections to achieve our target outcomes.

HRStat is a metric-based, analytical monitoring process that tracks human capital priorities and supports leadership data-driven decision making, as related to agency goals and performance outcome improvement strategies.

Independent Audit Program – We conduct a comprehensive Human Capital Framework (HCF) audit of all Servicing Personnel Offices (SPO) (i.e., currently 10 regions [including consolidated/closed SPOs], Office of Central Operations, and headquarters) on a cyclical basis so that each site is reviewed at least every 5 years. We conduct audits virtually or onsite, if necessary. Every audit includes a review of more than 50 agency- and OPM-defined outcomes across the following human resources functions: training, performance management, labor-management/employee relations, civil rights and equal opportunity, staffing (including delegated examining unit hiring and merit promotion), workers' compensation, security and suitability, work-life, and classification. We conducted two audits in FY 2021. We found no significant issues while conducting one audit. In the other audit, the overall number of required corrective actions was in alignment with other regions' HCF audits. We consider the types of required corrective action, such as merit system violations, illegal appointments, and pay-setting errors, to be of greater concern than the number of errors, documentation errors, or processing timeliness.

Management Directive 715 Report (Annually)

We provide the status of our efforts to establish and maintain effective equal employment affirmation actions programs under Section 717 of Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* and effective affirmation action programs under Section 501 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*.

In 2021, the Office of Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity (OCREO) improved or continued efforts toward achieving the status as a Model Equal Employment Opportunity agency, as established in criteria by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). These initiatives include:

- 1) Identifying and eliminating barriers to equal employment opportunity (EEO) by completing an analysis of detected triggers that indicate potential barriers. OCREO also worked with stakeholders in the various components to assess potential barriers and provided updates to the Barrier Analysis Action Plan devised to identify and mitigate barriers.
- 2) Providing the agency head with a State of the Agency Briefing that describes our efforts to attain model EEO agency status and component briefings to senior executives with a comprehensive analysis of their components' workforce demographics via "State of the Component Briefings" issued in the second quarter of FY 2021. The analysis included workforce trends and identified areas in need of improvement based on low representational rates, as compared to the civilian labor force.
- 3) Revising Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) policy to increase management participation in ADR by requiring managers to get Deputy Commissioner-level concurrence to decline ADR. The ADR process is a tool to promote voluntary settlements early and throughout the EEO process, and to resolve workplace disputes in a positive and constructive manner at the lowest level. The ADR policy has ensured accountability of managers in the ADR process. As a result, we have yielded positive results with participation rates of managers increasing from 87.9 percent in FY 2020 to 91.2 percent in FY 2021.
- 4) Collaborating with the Office of Labor-Management and Employee Relations (OLMER) on implementing the *Notification and Federal Employee Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Act* policy, under which OLMER conducts an independent review of complaints in any discrimination finding. The purpose of the independent reviews is to determine whether to recommend disciplinary action against management officials named in an EEO complaint. Under the No FEAR policy, OLMER may also review significant settlements. OLMER conducts these reviews on an *ad hoc* basis when OCREO receives either a finding from the EEOC or a settlement agreement that raises questions about the need for corrective action. OCREO submits findings and settlement agreements to OLMER for review, along with the Report of Investigation for the case. OLMER then analyzes whether to recommend disciplinary action and returns its recommendation to the component to consider taking action, if applicable.

- 5) Using eFile, which allows employees to initiate EEO complaints and to view the status of their cases electronically. This automated tool also allows OCREO to monitor and track the usage of EEO representative time for complainants and union representatives.

Strategic Goal 3 – Ensure Stewardship of SSA Programs

Federal Information Security Modernization Act Report (Annually)

The *Federal Information Security Modernization Act* Report tells Congress whether our overall information technology security and privacy programs and practices comply with the *Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014*. In FY 2021, we made substantial improvements in our cybersecurity program by increasing emphasis on enterprise cyber governance and oversight by creating greater awareness of overarching issues and the related risk mitigation activities and establishing more accountability for completion of program objectives and milestones. Additionally, we continued expanding our executive compliance dashboard to reinforce and monitor our performance in meeting key security controls. We are pleased that Grant Thornton assesses that we have an effective Incident Response program for the second year in a row. In addition, we achieved higher maturity scores in the functions of Protect and Recover as compared to the prior year as well as higher scores across several individual metrics.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Risk Management Assessment (Quarterly)

OMB and DHS generate the DHS Risk Management Assessment as required by Executive Order 13800 and outlined in OMB Memoranda M-17-25 to provide an assessment of risk for each agency based on information submitted by agencies for the *Federal Information Security Management Act* CIO metrics, which leverage the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. The report is sorted into Security Domains, and organized by the NIST Framework functions of Identify, Protect and Detect, Respond, and Recover with a risk rating of High Risk, At Risk, or Managing Risk. The risk levels per Security Domain are then used to calculate the overall risk level for the NIST function area. We have improved several areas from “At Risk” to “Managing Risk,” and we maintain an assessment of “Managing Risk” overall on the report.

Pre-Effectuation Review of Disability Determinations (Annually)

The Pre-Effectuation Review of Disability Determinations assesses the accuracy of DDS initial and reconsideration adult disability allowances as required in the Social Security Act. The results of the FY 2020 report are pending publication.

Safeguard Security Report (Annually)

We provide examples of our policies and procedures to demonstrate how we safeguard personally identifiable information and Federal tax information. We submit this report to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on an annual basis.

Safeguard Review (Triennially)

The Safeguard Review assesses the use of Federal tax information and the measures we employ to protect this information. This review is an onsite evaluation completed in collaboration with the IRS.

The IRS completed its full Safeguard Review of our agency in the summer of 2016. The review concluded with a closing conference in September 2016 and produced findings pertaining to both physical and IT security. We received one critical finding from the review and addressed it in June 2017. We report the findings from this review on a semi-annual basis through submission of a corrective action plan to the IRS. The IRS postponed the June 2020 Safeguard Review (Triennial), due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are working with our IRS stakeholders to develop an approach for reviewing and testing the agency systems.

Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Funds (Annually)

The Board of Trustees reports annually to Congress on the financial and actuarial status of the two Social Security trust funds. The 2021 report was signed on August 31, 2021. At the end of 2020, the OASDI program was providing benefit payments to about 65 million people: 49 million retired workers and dependents of retired workers, 6 million survivors of deceased workers, and 10 million disabled workers and dependents of disabled workers. During the year, an estimated 175 million people had earnings covered by Social Security and paid payroll taxes on those earnings. The total cost of the program in 2020 was \$1,107 billion, while total income was \$1,118 billion. The combined OASI and DI Trust Fund reserves are projected to become depleted in 2034, at which time continuing income to the trust funds would be sufficient to pay 78 percent of scheduled benefits. For the 75-year projection period, the OASDI actuarial deficit is 3.54 percent of taxable payroll.

Annual Report to Congress on Medical Continuing Disability Reviews (Annually)

A legislatively mandated report provides summary information on medical CDRs conducted for a completed fiscal year. The most recent report includes FY 2016 data.

Report on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Non-medical Redeterminations (Annually)

This report provides summary information on non-medical redeterminations of SSI recipients conducted for a completed fiscal year. The report includes actuarial estimates of the net Federal lifetime reductions in SSI and Medicaid benefits resulting from the reviews conducted during that fiscal year. Our most recent report includes FY 2014 data.

Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 Section 845(b) Report (Annually)

A legislatively mandated report provides summary information on work-related CDRs conducted for a completed calendar year. The report includes actuarial estimates of the net lifetime reduction in OASDI benefits resulting from the CDRs conducted in that calendar year (CY). The CY 2020 report is pending publication.

Annual Report of the Supplemental Security Income Program (Annually)

We report annually to the President and Congress on the status of the SSI program and provide 25-year projections of program participation and costs. In January 2021, 7.88 million individuals received monthly Federal SSI payments averaging \$570, a decrease of 106,000 recipients from the 7.99 million recipients with an average payment of \$559 in January 2020. By 2045, the end of the 25-year projection period, we estimate that the SSI recipient population will reach 8.55 million. The projected growth in the SSI program over the 25-year period is largely due to the overall growth in the U.S. population, though the growth in the SSI recipient population is projected to be somewhat slower than the growth in the U.S. population.

Enumeration Accuracy Report (Triennially)

We report the accuracy of original Social Security numbers (SSN) assigned during the fiscal year. In FYs 2015 and 2018, the enumeration accuracy rates were 100 percent. The next review is tentatively scheduled for late FY 2022.

Evaluation of the Continuing Disability Review Enforcement Operation Predictive Model (Annually)

We assess the results of a predictive model used to score work issue CDR cases to ensure that we prioritize cases most likely to result in determinations of medical improvement. Our tracking and assessment each year indicate the need for improved coordination with the processing

centers in reviewing cases based on the scores' priority order. While our Enforcement Operation issues various types of alerts, we showed progress on the challenging task of separating enforcement alert events that do not result in work reviews. Our prime objective for the future is aligning the Continuing Disability Review Enforcement Operation predictive model with the quarterly and monthly earning work review process.

Targeted Denial Review (Annually)

We assess the accuracy of initial and reconsideration disability denials made by the DDS. In FY 2021, we analyzed 25,816 cases and cited 663 decisional errors and 1,863 documentation errors. We returned 2,526 cases to the adjudicating components for correction—a return rate of 9.8 percent.

Retirement, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Stewardship Review (Annually)

Our Stewardship Review measures the accuracy of payments to persons receiving Social Security retirement, survivors, or disability benefits. FY 2021 results are expected in summer of 2022. Information about the improper payments, root causes, and corrective actions in our programs for FY 2021 (and previous years) can be found on www.paymentaccuracy.gov.

Supplemental Security Income Stewardship Review (Annually)

The SSI Stewardship Review measures the accuracy of payments to persons receiving SSI benefits by reviewing all non-medical factors of eligibility and payment. FY 2021 results are expected in summer of 2022. Information about the improper payments, root causes, and corrective actions in our programs for FY 2021 (and previous years) can be found on www.paymentaccuracy.gov.

Supplemental Security Income Transaction Accuracy Review (Annually)

The SSI Transaction Accuracy Review (STAR) examines non-medical aspects of eligibility, such as income, resources, and living arrangement, to assess the adjudicative accuracy of SSI initial claims, redeterminations, and limited issues to ensure they are policy compliant. In FY 2020, the sample of 4,352 cases provided meaningful information about the quality of the non-medical aspects of these SSI transactions. The national case accuracy rates for FY 2020, defined as the percentage of cases free of either an O/P or a U/P, were 92.1 percent for O/P and 94.8 percent for U/P. In FY 2019, these rates were 90.4 percent and 94.0 percent, respectively. The change in the FY 2020 O/P and U/P case accuracy rates from those of FY 2019 was not statistically significant.

In addition to case accuracy, STAR measures the accuracy of payments authorized, or dollar accuracy. The national dollar accuracy rates for FY 2020 were 98.8 percent for O/P and 99.5 percent for U/P. In FY 2019, these rates were 98.5 percent and 99.5 percent, respectively.

The change in the FY 2020 O/P dollar accuracy rate from the FY 2019 rate is not statistically significant. FY 2021 results are expected in summer of 2022.

Retirement, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Transaction Accuracy Review (Triennially)

We review non-medical factors of eligibility to assess recently processed retirement, survivors, and disability insurance claims to ensure compliance with operational policy. For FY 2020, the overall OASDI O/P case accuracy was 99.3 percent, and the overall OASDI U/P case accuracy was 98.3 percent. The case accuracy rates indicate that approximately 2-out-of-every 100 claims were incorrectly paid—about 0.7 out of 100 cases had O/Ps, and about 1.7 out of 100 cases had U/Ps.

The OASDI national dollar accuracy rates for FY 2020 were 99.4 percent for OPs and 98.5 percent for UPs.

Appendix B:

How We Ensure Our Data Integrity

We are committed to providing consistent, reliable, and valid data. We have internal controls to ensure that our data are quantifiable, verifiable, and secure. Our internal controls include:

- Audit trails;
- Integrity reviews;
- Separation of duties;
- Restricted access to sensitive data;
- Reviews at all levels of management; and
- Validation and verification in our System Development Life Cycles.

These same controls support the *Commissioner's Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act* Assurance Statement.

Data Integrity Systems and Controls

We gather performance data using automated management information and other workload measurement systems. We assess the data in terms of four quality dimensions:

- Accuracy – Measures how well data adheres to specification (e.g., definitions, rules, and policies);
- Consistency – Measures consistency in internal and external reporting of data;
- Completeness – Measures missing occurrences or attributions of the data; and
- Timeliness – Measures the currency of the data (i.e., data are up-to-date and reporting occurs on time).

We conduct quality evaluations based on established internal methodologies. As we introduce new performance measures, we perform a comprehensive data assessment using the four quality dimensions. From the assessment results, we establish a baseline. After establishing the baseline, we automate continuous monitoring to sustain high-quality data. Continuous monitoring allows us to follow data trends and proactively remediate potential issues.

In our data quality program, we derive several accuracy and public satisfaction measures from surveys and work samples. These measures provide confidence levels of 95 percent or higher.

As part of our fiduciary responsibility to the public, we use an audit trail system (ATS) to protect our records and taxpayer funds from improper use. The ATS collects and maintains detailed information about our internal and public transactions. We store the data from programmatic and select Internet applications, so we can review transactions for fraud and abuse.

Audit of Our FY 2021 Financial Statements

The *Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990* requires the OIG or an independent external auditor that it selects to audit our financial statements. OIG selected Grant Thornton LLP (Grant Thornton) to conduct the FY 2021 financial statement audit.

The auditor found we fairly presented the basic financial statements, in all material respects, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America for Federal entities. Grant Thornton's FY 2021 audit report marked the 28th consecutive year that we received an unmodified audit opinion on our financial statements. The auditor also found that our agency maintained, in all material respects, effective internal control over our financial reporting.

The audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The audit did not find instances of noncompliance with laws, regulations, or other materials tested.

Appendix C: Changes to Performance Measures

Results for Discontinued Fiscal Year 2021 Performance Measures

Improve customer service in the hearings process by prioritizing those individuals who have waited the longest for a hearing decision (FYs 2020 – 2021 APG)

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Target	Decide 97% of the cases that begin the fiscal year 430 days old or older	Complete 97% of cases that begin the fiscal year 430 days old or older (~374,000 cases)	Complete 95% of cases that begin the fiscal year 350 days old or older (~355,000 cases)	Decide 98% of cases that begin the fiscal year 270 days old or older (~235,000 cases)	Decide 98% of cases that begin the fiscal year 190 days old or older (~235,000 cases)
Target Met	Not Met	Met	Met	Not Met	Not Met
Performance	96%	98%	98%	92%	71%
FY 2021 Performance Results	While impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from meeting our aged case goal, we made significant progress in reducing our hearings backlog. We reduced our hearings pending to 350,137 and we reduced our annual average processing to 326 days.				

Data Definition: The target represents the percentage of aged cases completed. Note that prior year targets vary, and we report our hearings performance through other channels in greater detail.

Implement the Electronic Consent-Based Social Security Number Verification Service

Fiscal Year	2020	2021
Target	Implement eCBSV services for 10 permitted entities selected and enrolled during the initial enrollment period	Implement a second release of eCBSV services for additional permitted entities that applied during the July 2019 initial enrollment period
Target Met	Not Met	Met
Performance	Implemented eCBSV services for 8 available permitted entities	We successfully implemented the expanded rollout of the eCBSV to 100 percent of the permitted entities ready to begin using the eCBSV service.
FY 2021 Performance Results	We expanded the number of permitted entities and completed all remaining service development activities.	

Data Definition: The target represents the enrollment of a permitted entity (i.e., financial institution or service provider, subsidiary, affiliate, agent, subcontractor, or assignee) as defined by section 509 of the Gramm Leach Bliley Act, governing the treatment of nonpublic personal information about consumers by financial institutions, which applied in the July 2019 initial enrollment period.

Expand Self-Service for Claims Status Inquiries

Fiscal Year	2020	2021
Target	Implement event-based emails to SSA customers	Develop Claim Status enterprise service and update myAPS online service with new features
Target Met	Met	Met
Performance	Implemented event-based emails	Completed
FY 2021 Performance Results	We released the myAPS - Claims Status Tracker, providing <i>my Social Security</i> users with detailed information about the status of their pending RSDI, SSI, and Medicare Initial Claims and Appeals. We also connected myAPS-CST to Plan and Prepare workspace.	

Data Definition: The target represents our goal to implement new functionality that allows our customers to receive proactive, consistent, and informative claims status updates.

Increase the percentage of beneficiaries whose successful work outcomes within three years of assignment resulted in a payment to an Employment Network (EN) or State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency

Fiscal Year	2020	2021
Target	7.1%	7.2%
Target Met	Met	Met
Performance	8.8%	9.4%
FY 2021 Performance Results	We ended the year with 9.4 percent of all beneficiaries who assigned their Ticket to an EN or State VR agency in the last three years. We also generated a payment to an EN or State VR agency, which exceeded our target.	

Data Definition: The target represents the percentage of beneficiaries assigned a Ticket to Work to an EN or State VR agency within the last three years and who also generated a payment by the end of the current fiscal year.

Maintain customer satisfaction with our online services above Verint ForeSee’s Threshold of Excellence (80)

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Target	Satisfaction rating of 85.0 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 85.0 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 85.0 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 85.0 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 85.0 for online services
Target Met	Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met
Performance	Satisfaction rating of 85.5 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 83.5 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 83.1 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 84.5 for online services	Satisfaction rating of 83.0 for online services
FY 2021 Performance Results	While our overall satisfaction rating for FY 2021 (83) did not meet our target, we continue to exceed the ForeSee Threshold of Excellence (80). We are implementing an enterprise strategy to standardize customer feedback collection across all service channels.				

Data Definition: The target represents the combined fiscal year average customer satisfaction rating for the following eight online services: Business Services Online, iClaim Disability, Medicare Extra Help, iClaim RIB, iAppeals, *my Social Security*, Retirement Estimator, and SSA Main Page.

Appendix D:

Summary of Key Management Officials' Responsibilities

Commissioner of Social Security (COSS) manages all agency programs and staff and serves as the Chief Operating Officer, responsible for improving agency management and performance

Deputy Commissioner of Social Security (DCOSS) an appointed position, authorized to act on behalf of the COSS.

Chief Actuary (OCACT) plans and directs program actuarial estimates and analyses for our programs and for any proposed changes in programs and trust funds. OCACT provides technical and consultative services to the COSS, the Board of Trustees of the Social Security Trust Funds, Congress, and their respective staffs.

General Counsel (GC) advises the COSS, DCOSS, and all subordinate organizational components (except the Inspector General) on legal matters. GC also oversees the implementation of privacy protections and ensures that all privacy requirements are met, serving as the Senior Agency Official for Privacy.

Inspector General (IG) is a Senate-confirmed position that promotes economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in administering our programs and operations, and prevents and detects fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

Director for Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity (OCREO) ensures compliance with the laws and regulations that govern Federal-sector Equal Employment Opportunity, promotes an equitable and inclusive work environment, and serves as the agency lead for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.

Deputy Commissioner for Analytics, Review, and Oversight (DCARO) oversees the review of program quality and effectiveness and makes recommendations for program improvement utilizing feedback from the adjudication of cases, predictive modeling, and other advanced data analysis techniques. DCARO also serves as the Chief Data Officer; coordinates the agency's anti-fraud initiatives; responds to the recommendations of external monitoring authorities; and serves as the accountable official for improper payments.

Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance, and Management (DCBFM) directs our comprehensive management programs including budget, financial policy, acquisition, grants, facilities and logistics management, and security and emergency preparedness. DCBFM also serves as the Chief Financial Officer, Performance Improvement Officer, the Program Management Improvement Officer, and the responsible official for Enterprise Risk Management and the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act.

Deputy Commissioner for Communications (DCCOMM) conducts our national public information and outreach programs and fosters the transparency of our operations.

Deputy Commissioner for Hearings Operations (DCHO) administers our nationwide hearings program in accordance with relevant Federal laws.

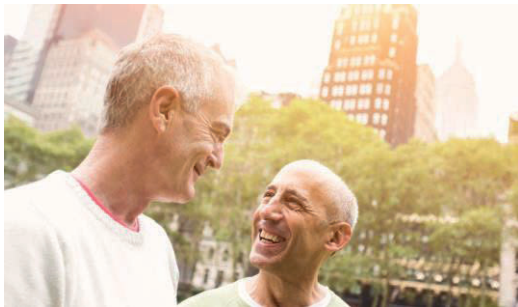
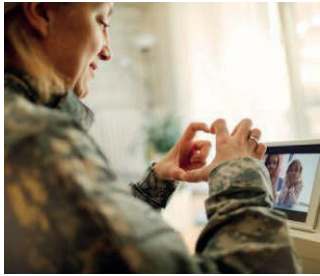
Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources (DCHR) administers our human resources programs, including training, human capital initiatives, personnel and employee relations, and labor management. DCHR also serves as the Chief Human Capital Officer and the senior accountable official on employee engagement initiatives.

Deputy Commissioner for Legislation and Congressional Affairs (DCLCA) develops and conducts our legislative program, serves as our liaison to Congress, and analyzes legislative and regulatory initiatives.

Deputy Commissioner for Operations (DCO) directs our network of field offices, National 800 Number teleservice centers, and processing centers. DCO also oversees the Chief Business Office and the State disability determination services.

Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy (DCRDP) advises the COSS on major policy issues and is responsible for all activities in the areas of program policy planning, policy research and evaluation, statistical programs, and overall policy development, analysis, and implementation. DCRDP serves as liaison with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and leads our efforts to improve the clarity, tone, and readability of our notices. DCRDP also leads our efforts in implementing the *Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*.

Deputy Commissioner for Systems (DCS) directs the strategic management of our systems and databases, which includes the development, validation, and implementation of new systems. DCS directs operational integration, strategic planning processes, and implementation of a systems configuration program. DCS is responsible for implementing the agency's IT Modernization Plan. DCS also serves as the Chief Information Officer.



Securing today
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