

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

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[For the Social Security Administration statement of organization, see the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 20, Part 422]

The Social Security Administration manages the Nation's social insurance program, consisting of retirement, survivors, and disability insurance programs, commonly known as Social Security. It also administers the Supplemental Security Income program for the aged, blind, and disabled. The Administration is responsible for studying the problems of poverty and economic insecurity among Americans and making recommendations on effective methods for solving these problems through social insurance. The Administration also assigns Social Security numbers to U.S.

citizens and maintains earnings records for workers under their Social Security numbers.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) was established by Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1946 (5 U.S.C. app.), effective July 16, 1946. It became an independent agency in the executive branch by the Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 901), effective March 31, 1995.

The Administration is headed by a Commissioner, appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

In administering the programs necessary to carry out the agency's mission, by law the Commissioner is assisted by a Deputy Commissioner, who performs duties assigned or delegated by the Commissioner; a Chief Financial Officer; a General Counsel; a Chief Actuary; and an Inspector General.

Programs and Activities

Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance The agency administers these social insurance programs, which provide monthly benefits to retired and disabled workers, their spouses and children, and to survivors of insured workers. Financing is under a system of contributory social insurance, whereby employees, employers, and the self-employed pay contributions that are pooled in special trust funds. When earnings stop or are reduced because the worker retires, dies, or becomes disabled, monthly cash benefits are paid to partially replace the earnings the family has lost.

Supplemental Security Income The agency administers this needs-based program for the aged, blind, and disabled. A basic Federal monthly payment is financed out of general revenue, rather than a special trust fund. Some States, choosing to provide payments to supplement the benefits, have agreements with the Administration under which it administers the supplemental payments for those States.

Medicare While the administration of Medicare is the responsibility of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services, the Social Security Administration provides Medicare assistance to the public through SSA field offices and processing centers, and adjudicates requests for hearings and appeals of Medicare claims.

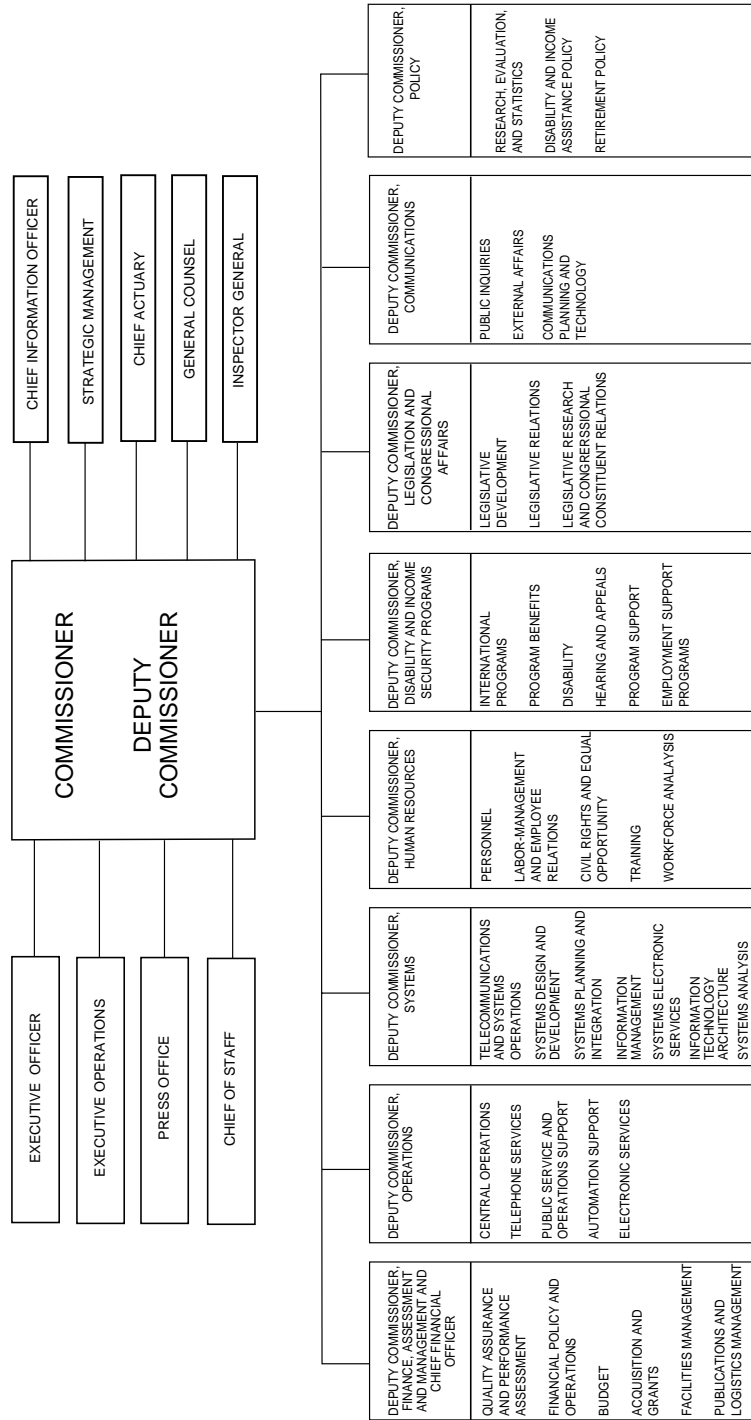
Black Lung By agreement with the Department of Labor, SSA is involved in certain aspects of the administration of the black lung benefits provisions of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, as amended (30 U.S.C. 901).

Regional Offices Social Security Administration operations are decentralized to provide services at the local level. Each of the SSA 10 regions, under the overall direction of its Regional Commissioner, contains a network of field offices and teleservice centers, which serve as the contact between SSA and the public. The Administration operates 1,292 field offices, 38 teleservice centers, and 6 program service centers. These installations are responsible for:

- informing the public of the purposes and provisions of Social Security programs and their rights and responsibilities;
- assisting with claims filed for retirement, survivors, disability, or health insurance benefits, black lung benefits, or Supplemental Security Income;
- developing and adjudicating claims;
- assisting certain beneficiaries in claiming reimbursement for medical expenses;
- developing cases involving earnings records, coverage, and fraud-related questions;
- making rehabilitation service referrals; and
- assisting claimants in filing appeals on SSA determinations of benefit entitlement or amount.

For further information, contact the Social Security Administration. Phone, 800-772-1213 (toll free).

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION



Sources of Information

Inquiries on the following subjects may be directed to the appropriate office, Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235.

Contracts and Small Business Activities Contact the Office of Acquisitions and Grants. Phone, 410-965-9457 or 410-965-7467.

Electronic Access Information regarding the Social Security Administration may be obtained through the Internet, at www.ssa.gov.

Employment A variety of civil service registers and examinations are used in hiring new employees. Specific employment information may be obtained from the Office of Personnel. Phone, 410-965-4506.

General Information The Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Operations manages SSA's toll-free public service telephone. Phone, 800-772-1213 (toll free).

Inspector General The Office of the Inspector General maintains a 24-hour toll-free hotline to receive allegations and complaints relative to SSA operations nationwide. Phone, 800-269-0271 (toll free). Fax, 410-966-9201.

Publications The Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Communications publishes numerous pamphlets concerning SSA programs. Single copies

may be obtained at any local office or by calling 800-772-1213. The Administration also collects a substantial volume of economic, demographic, and other data in furtherance of its program mission. Basic data on employment and earnings, beneficiaries and benefit payments, and other items of program interest are published regularly in the *Social Security Bulletin*, its *Annual Statistical Supplement*, and in special releases and reports that appear periodically on selected topics of interest to the public. Additional information may be obtained from the Division of Information Resources, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics, 500 E Street SW., Washington, DC 20254. Phone, 202-358-6405.

Reading Rooms Requests for information, for copies of records, or to inspect records may be made at any local office or the Headquarters Contact Unit, Room G-44, Altmeyer Building. Phone, 800-772-1213 (toll free).

Speakers and Films The Administration makes speakers, films, and exhibits available to public or private organizations, community groups, schools, etc., throughout the Nation. Requests for this service should be directed to the local Social Security Office.

For further information, contact the Office of Public Inquiries, Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235. Phone, 410-965-7700. Internet, www.ssa.gov.

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