



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 6, 2017

IG Report on Social Security: Dead People Still Reporting Wages

The [latest report](#) from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) overseeing operations at the Social Security Administration has “identified 1,074 individuals who were at least age 85 in 2009, [who had] about \$145 million in wages posted to their earnings record” over the next five years.

In addition inspectors identified another 7,949 people who had \$57 million in wages posted to their Social Security accounts whom the agency knew were dead.



It’s remarkable enough that oldsters 85 and over were still working and having their wages credited to their accounts. Thirty-three of them were over 100 years old and yet they had \$7.3 million in wages credited to their accounts. What’s even more remarkable is that those known to be dead are still earning wages.

The report’s objectives were to determine 1) whether the identities of elderly individuals were being misused, and 2) whether the Social Security Administration had controls in place to prevent and detect the misuse of their Social Security numbers.

In two words: 1) yes; 2) no.

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Said the OIG: “While SSA had controls in place to prevent and detect SSN abuse, we found individuals were using elderly individuals’ identities for work purposes.”

Some of the numbers were being used to generate records for illegal aliens seeking work in the United States, while other numbers were used to claim benefits from other federal and state agencies.

A previous OIG report issued last October uncovered at least \$165 million in federal benefits that were paid to dead people, quite a few of whom had died many years ago. They had been dead an average of five years, but the agency found one woman who has been dead for 27 years still being sent (and someone cashing) her Social Security check.

Still another OIG report issued in March 2015 reported that, according to the Social Security Administration, there were 6.5 million people born at least 112 years earlier who still had active Social Security numbers and accounts. It’s one thing to live to 112. It’s another thing entirely for such oldsters to still be working at that age and filing their earnings with the agency.

That report uncovered this: Nearly 67,000 of those 6.5 million who were at least 112 years old reported \$3.1 billion in wages over the previous five years. And this: one Social Security number had filed 613 different wage reports with the agency. That’s “part-time work” with a vengeance!

At the time, a spokesman for Citizens Against Government Waste, Leslie Paige, said that the agency’s



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“master death file is highly vulnerable to fraud. It’s incomplete. It’s not accurate. [And] it leaves the federal government [i.e., the U.S. taxpayer] open to losing a lot of money.”

It’s obvious what’s happening, said Paige: Those numbers are being sold to illegals and others seeking benefits to which they aren’t entitled: “There’s a whole cadre of people who are making a living peddling these numbers to multiple people.”

Senator Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) said at the time: “It’s incredible that the Social Security Administration in 2015 does not have the technical sophistication to ensure that people they know to be deceased are actually noted as dead.”

What the latest report from the OIG shows is that they still don’t.

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.



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