



Consumer Protection, Outreach and Enforcement Program

NOSSCR 2024 Conference

Office of the Counsel to the Inspector General

May 9, 2024

Section 1140 Outreach

SSA Disability-Related Representation Community



➤ Goals

- ❑ ***Educate to Eliminate*** 1140 violations.
 - ❑ Protect SSA disability applicants from being coerced into divulging PII when believing they are dealing with SSA.
 - ❑ Help SSA disability representatives avoid Section 1140 liability.



Section 1140 of the *Social Security Act*

➤ **Violations:**

- ❖ **Misrepresenting a connection with SSA**
 - ❖ **Use of SSA logos, symbols, words**
 - ❖ **In marketing, advertising, social media**
- ❖ **Selling SSA forms/publications without authorization**
- ❖ **Charging a fee for SSA-related free services without proper notification**

➤ **Civil Penalties:**

- ❖ **Up to \$12,799 for each violation**
- ❖ **Up to \$63,991 for a telecast/broadcast**
- ✓ **Note – Each viewing of internet website, piece of prohibited mail, unauthorized sale of SSA forms subject to separate violation**
- ✓ **Note- Adj annually for inflation**



Section 1140 Outreach SSA Disability-Related Representation Community



Examples of disability-related Section 1140 Violations



Appearing to be associated with an SSA Field Office



Appearing to be associated with an SSA Field Office

**WORKERS'
COMP
SIGN-UP
OFFICE**

>>>>>

APPOINTMENT NOT NEEDED

LAW FIRM
Welcome
Non-Smoking Facility
No Soliciting

**SOCIAL
Security
SIGN-UP
OFFICE**

<<<<<

APPOINTMENT NOT NEEDED

Appearing to have a special relationship with SSA



THE INSIDERS
Attorneys of the [redacted] Law Firm

SOCIAL SECURITY
Call [redacted]

www.AskTheInsiders [redacted] 1-800- [redacted]

Results vary and depend on the facts of each case.

[redacted]

Placement of Social Security and/or SSA Emblem at the top of a document/form or on business cards and envelopes conveys the item is an official SSA item or that its presenter is otherwise affiliated/authorized by SSA



Letter Head / Business Cards / Etc.

Social Security
Authorization to Release Medical Records

PATIENT INFORMATION:

Name (Print) _____ DOB: _____ SSN: _____

RECORDS TO BE RELEASED FROM:

Name of Facility or Provider: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

RECORDS TO BE RELEASED TO:



Deceptive SSA Disability Lead Generation

➤ Examples of Section 1140 violations:

- ✓ **Phone Solicitations** that misrepresent or even merely infer or cause confusion to a reasonable person, that the call is an official SSA communication or is otherwise authorized by the SSA.
- ✓ **Websites** that offer disability screening and appear to be an official or authorized SSA website.
- ✓ **Direct Mail Solicitations** that offer an invitation to what appears to be an official SSA or SSA authorized seminar and/or free SSA publication.



Deceptive SSA Disability Lead Generation

- **Who's liable for the Section 1140 violation?**
 - ❑ **Lead Generation / Marketing Company generating the solicitations.**
 - ❑ **Potentially** the Law Firm, claimant representative that commissioned the solicitations – depending on their involvement (e.g., developed/approved the misleading phone solicitation transcripts, mailers, etc.)



Disability Lead Phone Solicitations

Transcript: Hello, this is Susan from [Company Name]. I'm calling you about your interest in getting Social Security disability benefits. Did you know you may be entitled to \$3,345.00 per month plus free health insurance from the government? To qualify in minutes for Social Security disability benefits worth up to \$3,345.00, press one now. If you are not interested and would like to be removed from our contact list, press two. Or to repeat this message, press three. Optionally, you can call us back at 888-XXX-XXXX. To qualify now for Social Security benefits, you may deserve -- again, that's 888-XXX-XXXX.



Disability Lead Phone Solicitations

Called individuals often do not catch the calling entity name and assume SSA or an authorized SSA representative is calling.

Transcript: Hello, this is Susan from [**Company Name**]. I'm calling you
Only SSA can qualify an applicant for Social Security Disability – and it doesn't take minutes! Social Security disability benefits. Did you
\$3,345.00 per month plus free health insurance from the government? **To qualify in minutes for Social Security disability benefits** worth up to \$3,345.00, press one now. If you are not interested and would like to be removed from our contact list, press two. Or to repeat this message, press three. Optionally, you can call us back at 888-XXX-XXXX. **To qualify now for Social Security benefits**, you may deserve -- again, that's 888-XXX-XXXX.



Disability Lead Websites

**Do You Believe You Are
Owed Social Security
Disability?
You Are Not Alone,
Let ADA Fight For You!**



**Find out in 10 minutes if
you
qualify for disability
benefits**

Submit form & we will call back in a few
minutes

ALL FIELDS REQUIRED



submit

"I really needed help. I had nothing left and
was going to lose my house. My lawyer filed
my claim quickly and then I got a letter that
said I won. Things have gotten better since
then."



Only SSA can qualify an applicant for Social Security Disability – and it takes more than 10 minutes!

Disability Lead Websites

Do You Believe You Are Owed Social Security Disability? You Are Not Alone, Let [Redacted] Fight For You!

Find out in 10 minutes if you qualify for disability benefits

Submit form & we will call back in a few minutes

ALL FIELDS REQUIRED

first name

last name

email

phone

are you 40 years or older? ▾

is disability stopping you from working? ▾

worked fulltime 5 of the last 10 years? ▾

do you get consistent treatment? ▾

submit



...really needed help. I had nothing left and was going to lose my house. My lawyer filed my claim quickly and then I got a letter that said I won. Things have gotten better since then."



We're here to help!

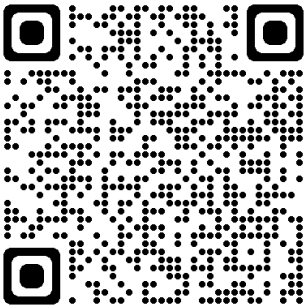
<https://oig.ssa.gov/>

Contact us @

OIG.1140@ssa.gov



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