

Social Security Administration (SSA): Announced Restructuring and Other Changes

March 17, 2025

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is an independent agency in the executive branch headed by the [commissioner of Social Security](#) (COSS). It is [responsible](#) for administering Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and for supporting Medicare. In FY2024, SSA [paid](#) over \$1.5 trillion in combined Social Security and SSI benefits to approximately 72 million unique beneficiaries. That same year, it [employed](#) over 58,000 federal workers across more than 1,500 offices and funded about 14,000 [state disability determination services](#) employees. SSA's [discretionary appropriation](#) for staff, offices, and other administrative expenses was \$14.2 billion in FY2024.

The second Trump Administration [announced](#) several initiatives to reform the [federal workforce](#) and improve [cost efficiency](#) through the [Department of Government Efficiency \(DOGE\)](#). In support of these efforts, SSA [announced](#) a number of organizational and other changes. This Insight documents some of the changes announced by SSA since January 20, 2025, and links to additional information and resources.

Announced Changes

Leadership

On January 20, President Donald Trump [nominated](#) Frank Bisignano to be COSS and [appointed](#) a career SSA official, Michelle King, as the acting commissioner of Social Security (ACOSS). SSA's website [indicates](#) King's appointment ended on February 16 and another SSA official, Leland Dudek, was appointed as ACOSS on February 17.

On February 19, SSA issued a [statement](#) from Dudek explaining the role of DOGE personnel at SSA. Bisignano's [nomination](#) is pending before the Senate.

Contracts and Grants

On February 21, SSA [announced](#) it was terminating its Retirement and Disability Research Consortium (RDRC) cooperative agreements. The RDRC consisted of multiple SSA-funded centers that [facilitated](#)

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research and evaluation of numerous SSA program topics and disseminated their findings to policymakers.

On March 3, SSA [announced](#) \$30 million in combined savings from terminating certain “Contracts and Grants.” DOGE’s “[Savings](#)” page shows SSA entries under its terminated contracts table. Lawmakers should [contact SSA directly](#) for information on the status of SSA contracts or grants.

Organizational Structure

On February 21, SSA [announced](#) it was transferring the Office of Analytics, Review, and Oversight’s (OARO’s) functions to other agency components. OARO was [responsible](#) for “reviewing program quality and effectiveness” and recommending program improvements.

On February 24, SSA [announced](#) the closing of the Office of Transformation, which was [responsible](#) for incorporating customer experience into its “oversight of enterprise-wide initiatives, addressing policies, business processes, and systems.”

On February 25, SSA [announced](#) it was closing the Office of Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity (OCREO) and transferring its functions to other agency components. OCREO was [responsible](#) for directing SSA’s equal employment opportunity and civil rights programs.

On February 28, SSA [announced](#) it was reducing its regional offices from [10](#) to four and the number of deputy-commissioner-level components to [seven](#). (SSA had about [12](#) such components in January.)

Staffing

On February 27, SSA [announced](#) it would soon implement “significant workforce reductions” in offices that “perform functions not mandated by statute.” SSA said it may reassign certain employees to mission-critical positions (e.g., field offices) and would offer [voluntary separation incentives](#).

On February 28, SSA [announced](#) a “staffing target of 50,000, down from the current level of approximately [57,000](#) employees.” This target is approximately the same level of full-time permanent staff SSA had in [1970](#). SSA said additional reductions “will come from [reduction-in-force](#) (RIF) actions.”

On March 3, SSA [announced](#) \$550 million in savings from freezing hiring and reducing overtime.

Offices

On March 3, SSA [announced](#) over 60 lease terminations for \$4 million in annual rent savings, stating “Most sites are co-located; others are non-public facing, consolidations, or preplanned closings.”

On March 7, SSA [posted](#) a spreadsheet of 64 leases it is working to terminate, most of which appear to be for [hearing permanent remote sites](#) (PRSs) co-located with other SSA offices.

DOGE’s “[Savings](#)” page lists certain SSA offices but does not specify the address, [office type](#) (e.g., field office, PRS) or, for [co-located offices](#), whether the listing applies to some or all SSA offices at the site. Lawmakers should [contact SSA directly](#) for information on the type and status of SSA offices in their districts or states (see also SSA’s [address lists](#), [geospatial map](#), [Office Locator](#), and [Hearing Office Locator](#)).

Similar Restructuring Efforts During the 1980s

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan [established](#) the President’s Private Sector Survey on Cost Control, also called the [Grace Commission](#). In 1984, the commission made various [recommendations](#) concerning SSA,

including certain productivity improvements equal to 17,791 full-time equivalents (FTEs) and a reduction in the number of field offices from 1,343 to about 500.

In 1985, SSA announced a [plan](#) to reduce its workforce by about 17,000 FTEs over six years. (This figure was [negotiated](#) down from the Reagan Administration's [directive](#) of nearly 19,000 FTEs over three years.) SSA also announced a [project](#) to review its need for offices and later offered headquarters staff the [opportunity](#) to work in field offices. In response, lawmakers had SSA submit periodic [reports](#) on its service delivery and tasked the General Accounting Office (GAO; now the Government Accountability Office) with reporting on SSA's plan. GAO [found](#) that SSA reduced its workforce by 21% (or about 17,000 FTEs) and saved about \$1.9 billion in personnel expenses between FY1985 and FY1990. It also found the number of field offices changed "very little" during this period and SSA's key performance indicators showed "mixed results."

Considerations for Congress

Congress may wish to consider obtaining more information on the nature, scope, or status of SSA's announced changes. For example, lawmakers [could](#) hold hearings, submit letters seeking clarifying information, or require SSA to provide reports. Congress could also request that GAO study the implementation of the changes in the context of SSA's cost efficiency or service delivery. Moreover, lawmakers could enact notification, reporting, or other requirements concerning SSA [office closures](#), reorganizations, or other internal-agency actions. Lastly, lawmakers could enact legislation to codify, modify, or undo the changes.

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