



## FACT CHECK: Social Security War Room Debunks Trump Admin's Latest Social Security [Lies and Misleading Statements](#)

Since President Trump took office, his administration has undermined the Social Security Administration (SSA), sought out “[backdoor\[s\] for privatizing Social Security](#),” and threatened Americans’ ability to obtain the benefits they have earned. The administration has [fired thousands of SSA employees](#), disrupting customer service and creating unreliable [phone wait times](#). In response, SSA has [removed key wait time data](#) and [misled the public](#) regarding the Trump Administration’s actions. On August 14, 2025, the White House issued a [press release](#) that appeared to be an effort to defend President Trump’s record on Social Security. But this and other information about Social Security released by the Trump Administration contain at least five false or misleading claims—underscoring how the Trump Administration has weakened Social Security and threatened Americans’ Social Security benefits.

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**TRUMP CLAIM #1:** “Thanks to the [One Big Beautiful Bill](#)—now the law of the land—the vast majority of seniors receiving Social Security will [no longer pay taxes](#) on that income.”

**FACT:** The One Big Beautiful Bill “does not [amend, reduce, or eliminate](#) the federal taxation of Social Security benefits.” The bill does provide a temporary income tax deduction for some seniors – but even this temporary deduction benefits less than half of older Americans—decidedly not a “vast majority.”

*Background:* The administration’s claim is based on a misleading and inaccurate White House Council of Economic Advisors [report](#) stating that “under the One Big Beautiful Bill, 51.4 million seniors – 88% of all seniors receiving Social Security income – will pay no tax on their Social Security.” The *One Big Beautiful Bill Act* makes no specific changes to the taxation of Social Security benefits, and in reality, “about [half of recipients](#) will owe some amount of income tax on their benefits.” While the bill “does provide a [temporary income tax deduction](#) for some older Americans,” “[fewer than half of older adults](#)” would benefit from this deduction.”

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**TRUMP CLAIM #2:** “The [Social Security Administration] is handling 70% more calls than last year, while lowering the average speed of answer by 80%, from 30 minutes to just six minutes.”

**FACT:** The Trump Administration has a record of misleading the public when it comes to SSA's performance metrics. [Recent reporting](#) revealed SSA's misleading metrics on its 1-800 number wait times. While the agency claimed the average wait time for its 1-800 number was [12 minutes](#), an [investigation](#) from Senator Warren's office revealed customers were on hold for an average of 102 minutes, or nearly one hour and 45 minutes—[8.5 times higher than the agency's claims](#)—with wait times often [exceeding 3 hours](#).

The Trump Administration's estimates on providing services to Social Security recipients are false based on even its own questionable SSA public data. SSA's data shows that the agency is expected to handle just 25% more calls than last year.

*Background:*

- “70% more calls than last year”: This claim is misleading. According to the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) [performance dashboard](#), the agency handled 79 million calls on its 1-800 number and 57 million on its field office numbers in Fiscal Year 2024. In total, SSA handled approximately 136 million calls in FY 2024. So far, SSA has handled 80 million calls on its 1-800 hotline and 60 million calls on field office numbers from the start of FY 2025 through July—which is only a 2.94% increase over FY 2024 totals. By the end of FY 2025, SSA estimates it will have handled 97 million calls on the 1-800 number and 73 million on field office numbers—or 170 million—total. This represents a projected 25% increase in calls for FY 2025, not a 70% increase. The “70% more calls” refers to a stat from an SSA [press release](#) that shares a specific week in July 2025 experienced a 70% increase in call volume compared the same week last fiscal year.
- “Lowering the average speed of answer by 80%”: SSA's answering time in 2024 was [impacted by a system change](#) that drastically lowered the agency's 1-800 number's average speed of answer (ASA). In the first quarter of FY 2024, the ASA for SSA's 1-800 number was [around 40 minutes](#). In Summer 2024, SSA switched to a new technology system that significantly reduced the agency's ASA for phone calls. With this new system, SSA lowered its 1-800 number's ASA to [13 minutes](#). According to SSA's [performance dashboard](#), the 1-800 number's ASA even hit a low of 12 minutes in September 2024. The Trump Administration is misleadingly using older data from early 2024 to calculate its “80%” metric, purposefully excluding months of data that tell a different story. Further, these ASAs do not take into account or contextualize the fact that [historically](#), SSA receives its highest call volumes during the winter months, which correspond with the first quarter of the fiscal year—when the ASA for phone calls was at its highest. The point of comparison chosen by the Trump Administration for 2024 data coincides with that annual high point in call volume.

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**TRUMP CLAIM #3:** “All field offices are fully staffed, with employees returning to the office five days a week for the first time in years to better serve the American people.”

**FACT:** The Trump Administration has made unprecedented cuts to the SSA workforce, resulting in Social Security offices losing an estimated 20% of staff and causing serious service delays.

*Background:* [Reporting](#) reveals that field office employees are “buckling under the strain of understaffing—accelerated by recent Trump Administration initiatives.” Due to the Trump Administration’s cuts, Social Security offices have lost an [estimated 20% of staff](#), which, according to field office workers, is causing [service delays](#) and [low staff morale](#). This follows additional Trump Administration action to [reassign thousands](#) of customer service field representatives, threatening to further drain field offices and create even longer wait times for Americans.

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**TRUMP CLAIM #4:** “Social Security has made vast technology improvements.”

**FACT:** The Trump Administration’s so-called technology improvements at SSA have been haphazard and rolled out with limited testing, and there is no indication that they have been effective.

*Background:* This past Spring, Trump’s SSA unveiled a so-called anti-fraud algorithm that slowed claims processing by 25% and was based on lies—proven by SSA’s own internal documents showing that it identified only “[two claims out of over 110,000 as potentially fraudulent](#).” After backlash, SSA scrapped this program.

Later, SSA introduced an AI-based chatbot feature on its 1-800 number phone system, also rolled out with [limited testing and input](#). [Reporting](#) has revealed that this chatbot has imposed significant technological challenges upon callers, with some callers repeatedly asking to speak with a live agent to no avail and others being wrongly disconnected before receiving help. Other callers and stakeholders [reported](#) that the chatbot responded to questions they did not ask. Overall, SSA has failed to “[adhere to basic IT modernization guidelines](#)” and properly inform Congress of its implementation plans for its AI programs.

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**TRUMP CLAIM #5:** “The agency has identified more than \$1 billion in cost avoidance and efficiencies this fiscal year...The agency has [addressed](#) billions of dollars in improper payments.”

**FACT:** President Trump’s and administration officials’ false claims about Social Security fraud have been widely debunked—including by SSA’s own internal documents, leading the agency to reverse a bogus policy.

*Background:* The Trump Administration’s claim is based on a [video](#) of Social Security Commissioner Frank Bisignano discussing the agency’s supposed action to end “improper payments,” saying SSA has “addressed half of” the so-called improper payments. In the video, Bisignano provides no evidence or detail as to how the agency has apparently achieved this beyond vaguely stating, “it’s about delivering a great control environment.”

More generally, the Trump Administration has consistently peddled lies about Social Security fraud. In March, President Trump and his then-ally Elon Musk falsely claimed that “more than [15 million people over age 110](#), including nearly 9 million over 130,” were improperly receiving Social Security. In reality, Social Security has “[a payment accuracy rate of over 99 percent](#),” with only [0.3%](#) of Social Security benefits being improper payments. Rare errors are “caused by [mistakes or delays](#),” not beneficiaries trying to defraud the agency.

SSA’s attempt at installing “[anti-fraud checks](#)” for benefit claims was [unsuccessful in finding](#) fraudulent claims. Less than “[1% of claims](#) were flagged as even potentially fraudulent at all.” Instead, these anti-fraud algorithms caused [delays in processing benefits](#).