



## Setting the record straight on Social Security

Social Security is one of America's most successful and widely supported programs, trusted for 90 years across all parties and generations.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) enforces strict identity verification, ensuring only eligible U.S. citizens and some lawfully present non-citizens receive benefits. Each person gets a unique Social Security number, and payment accuracy exceeds 99%, with safeguards preventing improper payments, including to the deceased.

But misinformation from the White House and the Department of Government Efficiency's (DOGE) billionaire- Elon Musk is sowing doubt about an invaluable program that 69 million people depend on and nearly everyone will rely on in the future.

**Here are the facts.\***

### ***SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: WHAT IS IT AND WHO IS ELIGIBLE?***

The Social Security Administration (SSA) issues new or replacement Social Security cards only to those who meet strict authentication requirements. Applicants must submit an application for a Social Security number and original documents proving age, identity, and U.S. citizenship or lawful immigration status. Most U.S. citizens receive a Social Security number at birth through SSA's numbering system.

Each Social Security number is unique, assigned to one individual for life, ensuring accurate tracking of earnings and Social Security benefits.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS: WHO GETS THEM AND HOW ARE THEY CALCULATED?**

Elon Musk is lying—Social Security does not pay benefits to people who are deceased.

With a 99% payment accuracy rate, SSA has strict safeguards to prevent improper payments. Only 0.3% of Social Security benefits are improper, mostly due to mistakes or delays — not fraud. SSA receives nearly 3 million death reports each year, preventing over \$50 million in improper payments every month. State agencies, funeral homes, and banks report deaths, and SSA cross-checks Medicare use to verify beneficiaries are alive. By age 115, payments automatically stop.

Musk’s so-called “proof” has been debunked time and time again. He’s misreading SSA’s database, which includes old records that don’t reflect actual payments. A 2023 Office of Inspector General report confirmed that “almost none” of the people in Musk’s dataset receive benefits. SSA could update these records, but it would be costly and pointless — because these people aren’t getting checks.

Musk is pushing falsehoods to undermine a program that 69 million Americans rely on—don’t fall for it.

**Elon Musk — an *out-of-touch* billionaire who recently called Social Security a “Ponzi scheme,” is already making deep cuts to the agency, slashing at least 7,000 jobs from an already understaffed workforce at a 50-year low. While Musk and the White House claim they’re rooting out fraud, they’ve produced zero evidence. Instead, they’ve only produced lies designed to undermine a program 69 million Americans rely on. Instead of strengthening Social Security, they’re gutting the very agency that keeps it running. We cannot let billionaires like Musk spread misinformation about this sacred promise and put the futures of millions of retirees, seniors and people with disabilities at risk.**