



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

815 16th Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.637.5399

www.retiredamericans.org

Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

March 21, 2025

Judge Issues Temporary Restraining Order in Social Security Administration Lawsuit

Judge **Ellen Lipton Hollander**, the judge presiding over the Alliance's lawsuit against the Social Security Administration (SSA), [issued a temporary restraining order](#) Thursday restricting **Elon Musk** and the Department of Government Efficiency's (DOGE) access to Americans' personal SSA data.



Judge **Hollander** said DOGE operatives were engaging in a “fishing expedition” for supposed fraud at the SSA that gave them an unusual and unnecessarily high level of access to beneficiaries' records: “The defense does not appear to share a privacy concern for the millions of Americans whose SSA records were made available to the DOGE affiliates, without their consent, and which contain sensitive, confidential, and personally identifiable information.”

In addition to blocking DOGE's access to data, the ruling also specified that the group uninstall any new software they had installed as part of their efforts and that any data accessed outside of SSA be destroyed immediately.

Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans, [praised](#) the judge's decision saying “we are grateful that the court took strong action to protect every American's personal data. Seniors must be able to trust the Social Security Administration will protect their personal information and keep it from falling into the wrong hands.”

Social Security Administration Set to End Telephone Services for Claims, Forcing Millions to Process Claims in Person

The Social Security Administration is [moving forward](#) with [a plan](#) to terminate telephone services for all benefit claims. The change – [set to take effect](#) on March 31 – will require millions of

beneficiaries a year to either navigate an online-only system or go to field offices in person to complete the identity verification process for new claims.

[In a memo](#) sent last week, Acting SSA Deputy Commissioner **Doris Diaz** said the plan will result in longer wait and processing times and put an even bigger strain on the agency, which is already understaffed because of proposals from the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) and the administration to reduce staff by 12 percent and shutter several field offices.

“Research consistently shows that many seniors and people with disabilities lack reliable internet access,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “This policy is unnecessarily cruel and will make it harder for seniors to receive the Social Security benefits they’ve earned over a lifetime of hard work.”

Take Action: Join Our “Save Social Security” Virtual Phone Bank Next Week



Concerned about attacks on Social Security and want to fight back? Next week, you will have the chance to do that from the comfort of your own home.

Join the Alliance for a virtual senior-to-senior phone bank on Thursday, March 27. Volunteers will call other seniors and share information about the so-called Department of Government Efficiency’s efforts to dismantle the Social Security Administration and urge them to call their members of Congress.

“Don’t worry if you haven’t phone banked before, we’ll have you covered with instructions on how to make your calls, and staff on hand to answer any questions and guide you through the process,” said **Maureen Dunn**, Field Manager of the Alliance. “It’s fun and easy and one of the most effective ways to make a difference.”

Please [click here](#) to register for the phone bank.

Congress Extends Medicare Telehealth Services That Were Set to Expire

Congress recently [extended](#) Medicare telehealth services through September 30.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth services were generally [restricted](#) to patients with certain types of diagnoses and providers. During the pandemic telehealth was [made](#) available to all beneficiaries. Additionally, the American Relief Act of 2025, which Congress and President Biden signed into law in December 2024, [expanded](#) the types of practitioners that could provide telehealth services.

If telehealth benefits had ended this month, care would have become less accessible for millions of Medicare enrollees, especially people who live in rural areas or are disabled.

“It’s good that Congress extended access to telehealth,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “We urge Congress to make Medicare telehealth access permanent so older Americans can get the care they need quickly.”

The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national grassroots advocacy organization with 4.4 million members fighting for retirement security for all Americans. www.retiredamericans.org @activeretirees