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# DOGE officials face Hatch Act referrals for work with org aiming to 'overturn election results'



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By **NATALIE ALMS** // JANUARY 20, 2026

DOGE employees also shared Social Security data using the third-party server Cloudflare, and according to new court documents, SSA still doesn't know what data was shared and if its still on Cloudflare.

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The Social Security Administration made two Hatch Act violation referrals last month after a Department of Government Efficiency employee signed an agreement to share SSA data with a political advocacy group, according to a new court filing.

That advocacy organization isn't named in the document, but its "stated aim was to find evidence of voter fraud and to overturn election results in certain States."

Last March, the advocacy group contacted two DOGE associates at SSA "with a request to analyze state voter rolls that the advocacy group had acquired," the court filing says.

One of the DOGE employees — neither of whom are identified in the court filing, which is dated Jan. 16 — signed a "voter data agreement" with the group on March 24, 2025, potentially to use SSA data to match against voter rolls.

It's not clear if that advocacy group ever got the data, the court papers note, saying "SSA has not yet seen evidence that SSA data were shared with the advocacy group."

The DOGE employee-signed agreement wasn't approved through the agency's typical data exchange procedures. SSA only learned about it during an unrelated review last fall. It made two referrals to the Office of Special Counsel in December for potential violations of the Hatch Act, which limits certain political activities of federal employees.



The revelation is tucked within a Justice Department "corrective action" testimony from SSA officials during ongoing legal battles over DOGE access to SSA data. The court filing is signed by longtime DOJ employee Elizabeth Shapiro, deputy director in the agency's Civil Division.

The White House and SSA didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. An OSC spokesperson said that they could "neither confirm nor deny" the complaint and directed Nextgov/FCW to SSA.

The Trump administration is already ramping up the use of SSA data to comb through voter rolls using a searchable, national citizenship database as it pushes states to share their voter rolls with the Justice Department. That's caused alarm among experts, who say that the effort could lead to eligible voters being disenfranchised.

True the Vote, which has repeatedly made false claims about voter fraud in elections, publicly asked DOGE to audit voter rolls last March, as Democracy Docket has reported.

Shapiro also wrote that the former operational head of DOGE — Elon Musk associate Steve Davis — was emailed an encrypted, password-protected file of SSA data in early March of last year.

The SSA DOGE team copied Davis on an email to the Department of Homeland Security with this file — the contents of which SSA still doesn't exactly understand, since it hasn't been able to access it. A Labor Department DOGE associate was also copied on the email.

SSA doesn't know if Davis or the Labor employee had the file's password or accessed the file, which SSA believes contains personal information on 1,000 people, including their names and addresses.

The agency still maintains that DOGE didn't have access to SSA systems of record, but Shapiro wrote that SSA believes the encrypted attachment was "derived from SSA systems of record."

Two DOGE associates were also granted access to sensitive data after a court issued a temporary restraining order last March blocking DOGE's access to SSA data, according to the new court document, although Shapiro writes that "it is unknown at this time whether any [personally identifiable information] was accessed."

The Supreme Court overruled the block on DOGE access to data in June, although the case is ongoing back down in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The new court papers also list additional databases that SSA DOGE employees had access to last spring, including a system containing SSA employee records, and say that DOGE employees were using links to share data through third-party server Cloudflare.

The agency hadn't approved Cloudflare for data storage, and "when used in this manner is outside SSA's security protocols." As with other revelations in the court document, SSA didn't know about this until more recent reviews.

SSA also doesn't know what data was shared to the third-party server or if it's still there.

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, told *Nextgov/FCW*.

"Nearly a year after DOGE staff shared sensitive data with a group hoping to overturn election results, SSA acknowledges that they still don't know what data they shared or whether it is still on an insecure server," she said.

The revelations follow other allegations about data sharing from SSA's former chief data officer Chuck Borges, who resigned after filing a whistleblower complaint last summer alleging that DOGE employees created a live copy of sensitive SSA data on a vulnerable cloud server.

That cloud environment lacked security controls like independent tracking of who has access to the data, which included personal information for each person issued a Social Security number, like names, birthdays and more. Its creation "potentially violated multiple federal statutes," Borges alleged.

"The federal government has conceded that many of Mr. Borges' allegations are accurate," Debra Katz, one of Borges' attorneys, said in a statement.

SSA Commissioner Frank Bisignano has since told concerned lawmakers that SSA hasn't shared or leaked any of its Numident database, its master record of all assigned Social Security numbers, in any unauthorized fashion.

That may be true, but the latest court documents show that SSA doesn't know exactly what data has and hasn't shared, said Romig.

Borges also alleged in his whistleblower complaint that DOJ attorneys "circumvented" court orders prohibiting them from accessing SSA data last spring.



While that temporary restraining order was still in effect, one SSA executive, Greg Pearre, refused to give DOGE access to an SSA database that they wanted to share with the DHS, Borges wrote in a complaint filed against SSA with the Office of Special Counsel in November, alleging that he was retaliated against for his whistleblowing.

"A DOGE affiliate responded by having Mr. Pearre physically removed from the SSA's premises," that complaint reads.

Government Executive reporter Sean Newhouse contributed to this story.

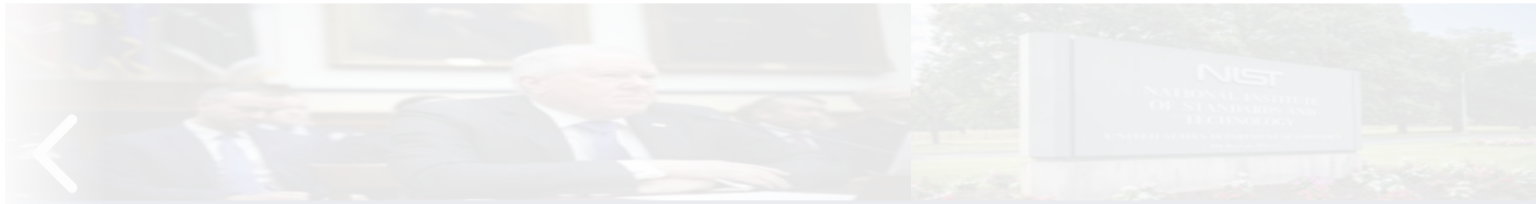
Editor's note: This article has been updated to include a comment from one of Chuck Borges' attorneys.

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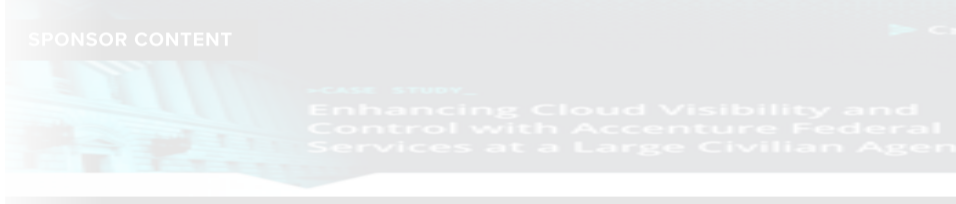
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