The Administration for Community Living Failed To Conduct Any of the Required Onsite Compliance Reviews of Independent Living Programs

What OIG Found
ACL did not appropriately oversee the activities of the two independent living programs. Specifically, ACL has not conducted any onsite compliance reviews of either the Centers for Independent Living program or Independent Living Services program since beginning its oversight of the programs in July 2014.

Although ACL conducted some monitoring activities as part of the Compliance and Outcome Monitoring Protocol (COMP) program, ACL’s comprehensive and targeted desk reviews did not include any onsite compliance reviews of the programs as of December 31, 2018. ACL was appropriated $156.6 million for independent living program services during the audit period. Of this amount, ACL awarded $151.4 million to grantees for independent living program services. However, ACL did not allocate sufficient funds to support onsite compliance reviews.

ACL officials said that they were unable to conduct onsite compliance reviews because of limited travel funding. Without the required onsite compliance reviews, there is no assurance that independent living programs are effectively working to maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities, and the families and caregivers of both.

What OIG Recommends and ACL Comments
We recommend that ACL determine whether it can allocate its funds differently to enable onsite compliance reviews, seek additional department funding or resources to conduct the onsite compliance reviews, and perform required onsite compliance reviews of independent living programs.

In written comments on our draft report, ACL generally did not state whether it concurred with our recommendations but described actions it has taken, or plans to take, in response to the recommendations. ACL responded that it is not seeking resources to support a set percentage of onsite compliance reviews but will seek resources to conduct reviews, including onsite reviews, based on the risk, scope, and scale of the issues.

Although ACL’s implementation of the COMP could include onsite reviews to address compliance concerns, we continue to recommend that ACL determine whether it can allocate the funds needed to conduct required onsite compliance reviews of independent living programs.