



State Reminds Nevadans to Remain Vigilant About Unemployment Scams and Identity Theft

DETR has discovered numerous fraudulent schemes related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Scammers are using unscrupulously obtained personal information to apply for unemployment insurance and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits often in another person's name. This phenomenon, not unique to Nevada, is being experienced nationwide. The agency is working with Nevada's COVID-19 Fraud Task Force to investigate unemployment fraud.

Any individuals or employers who think they have been a victim of fraud, or know someone is committing fraud, should visit DETR's website at detr.nv.gov and select the Fraud Reporting Form on the left-hand side under "Quick links" to file a report. Claims will be investigated by DETR staff. DETR or Nevada's COVID-19 Fraud Task Force team may or may not follow up to obtain more information. Employer accounts will not be charged for fraudulent claims.

Unemployment fraud is considered a felony under Nevada Revised Statute. The State will be following fraudulent claims up to and including prosecution and other civil remedies afforded under law. In April of this year, Nevada Attorney General Aaron D. Ford and U.S. Attorney Nicholas A. Trutanich formed the Nevada COVID-19 Task Force. The Task Force is comprised of local, state and federal investigators and prosecutors with significant experience in handling complaints and cases related to general fraud, health care fraud, Medicaid fraud, insurance fraud, workers' compensation fraud and cybercrime, among others. Together, they will share information and resources to protect Nevadans from those using the COVID-19 pandemic to take advantage of consumers.

Individuals and employers are also strongly encouraged to report an allegation of potential fraud involving unemployment insurance by filing a complaint through the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3), at www.ic3.gov.

The following are some tips to protect yourself against unemployment scams and identity theft:

- Never give out personal or financial information over the phone.
- Thoroughly review all financial statements for any unusual activity. Immediately contact the company if an item looks suspicious.
- Shred or destroy credit card statements, bills, insurance papers or bank statements before throwing them out.
- Do not carry your Social Security Card in your wallet.
- Be wary of anyone calling to “confirm” personal or financial information. Often, these are criminals trying to obtain those facts under the guise of “confirmation”.
- Release your Social Security number only when absolutely necessary or when required by law.
- Ask how you can remove unnecessary information or information that is not required for the service you are receiving.
- Check credit reports, banking information, medical information that may have details that need to be removed or secured.
- Do not provide or validate your personal information from contacts not initiated by you.
- Protect and update passwords to your online accounts regularly.
- When creating passwords and PINS, do not use anything that could be discovered easily by thieves.
- Memorize all your passwords and PINS.
- Remove old accounts and passwords that are no longer in use.
- Use additional security measures provided for your accounts wherever available.
- If you think an identity thief is using your Social Security number, call the Social Security Fraud Hotline at (800) 269-0271.