



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State of Vermont
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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FRAUD NOTICE (Department of Labor Stresses Heightened Awareness for All Vermonters)

MONTPELIER – A letter from the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) may be your first notification that a fraudulent unemployment insurance claim has been filed in your name. VDOL reminds all Vermonters that if you receive a letter from the Department in your mailbox, be sure to open it, to ensure there was not a fraudulent claim filed using your information.

“Vermonters notifying us that they received a letter or packet in the mail can actually help us stop unemployment fraud,” said Labor Commissioner Michael Harrington. “It’s important to know that this is not a system issue, but rather a preventative measure to ensure the claimant is who they say they are. Think of it like the confirmation email you get when someone accesses your online account. We want you to know that a claim was filed using your information, and we want you to let us know when it wasn’t really you who submitted the claim.”

The number of fraudulent unemployment insurance claims filed has increased tremendously during COVID-19, as coordinated national attacks have been launched by scammers looking to use the pandemic as an opportunity to take advantage of overwhelmed state unemployment systems. Personal information collected as a part of mass data breaches, in some cases from multiple years prior, is used by scammers to file fraudulent unemployment insurance claims and divert benefits. In some cases, scammers have very specific information on individuals, including name, address, Social Security Number, driver’s license number, and even a photo of an individual’s driver’s license.

The Department has implemented additional identity verification measures for unemployment insurance claims and continues to work with federal partners and law enforcement including, Vermont State Police, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation, and the Vermont Attorney General’s Office.

VDOL stresses that Vermonters should be aware of unemployment insurance fraud, whether you have previously received benefits or not. Vermonters who believe they may be the victim of UI fraud, or who want to be proactive against fraud, should take the following steps:

CHECK YOUR MAILBOX: If you receive a monetary determination letter or other information from the Department, and you DID NOT file a claim for unemployment insurance benefits, contact VDOL immediately. Notices are automatically mailed upon submission, even before the Department reviews the claim. Because of this, it is important that you contact the Department immediately if you receive notice of



a claim being filed in your name. Once a claim is determined to be fraudulent, the Department stops payment on the claim, preventing any benefits from being distributed in your name. If you are a victim of fraud, you will not be held liable for any benefit payments you did not receive.

REPORT UI FRAUD: Contact VDOL immediately if you believe a fraudulent claim was filed using your personal information.

- **Submit a Fraud Report Online:** <https://labor.vermont.gov/form/report-ui-fraud>
- **Email:** labor.uifraud@vermont.gov
- **Phone:** 802-828-4104
- The Department will only contact you if more information is required.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Additional information can be found at <https://labor.vermont.gov/ui-fraud>.
- Close any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.
- Close any financial or credit card accounts that are no longer in use.
- Report identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at <https://www.identitytheft.gov> or call 877-438-4338.
- Contact the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213 and review your social security statement at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement> for workers 18 and older.
- For concerns about tax fraud, contact the IRS at <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/how-irs-id-theft-victim-assistance-works> to notify them you are a victim of identity theft. Fill out the IRS Identity Theft Affidavit (FORM 14039). You may also contact the Vermont Department of Taxes at (802) 828-2865.

BE PROACTIVE: Vermonters can also take proactive steps to preventing fraud from occurring, as there are a number of resources available.

- **2020 UI Claimants:** Vermonters that received unemployment insurance benefits in 2020 are also encouraged register for free identity protection services through IDX Protection Services. The deadline to enroll is May 18, 2021. More information at <https://response.idx.us/vermont/>.
- **Review Credit:** Obtain a free copy of your credit report to review it for suspicious activity at <https://www.annualcreditreport.com>.
- **Credit Freeze:** Place a free fraud alert on your credit:
 - Experian: <https://www.experian.com/help/> or call 888-397-3742
 - Transunion: <https://www.transunion.com/credit-help> or call 888-909-8872
 - Equifax: <https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/> or call 800-685-1111
 - Innovis: <https://www.innovis.com/personal/securityFreeze> or call 800-540-2505

For more information and updates on the Vermont Department of Labor, please visit labor.vermont.gov.

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