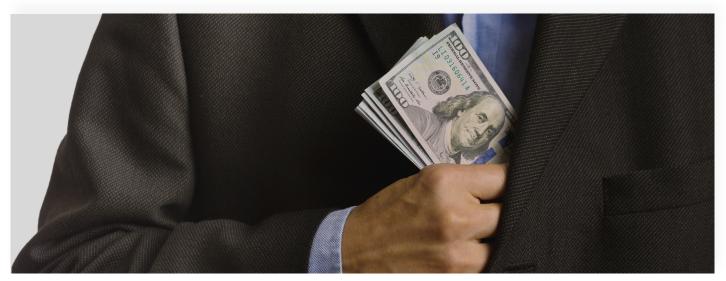# SAFE Alert!
Massive Fraud Against State Unemployment Insurance Programs

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A well-organized crime ring is committing large-scale fraud against multiple state unemployment insurance programs according to a new alert issued by the U.S. Secret Service. They have already stolen millions of dollars from several states, with potential losses in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Fraudsters have been filing fake unemployment claims using Social Security numbers and other personally identifiable information (PII) belonging to identity theft victims, and a substantial amount of the fraud has used PII from first responders, government personnel and school employees. This is happening while states are already dealing with the historic number of recent jobless claims due to the current COVID-19 crisis.

Initially, Washington State started realizing the extent of the problem when individuals still employed started calling to question why they had received unemployment paperwork. Major fraud has now been reported in North Carolina, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Wyoming and Florida, and it's extremely likely that every state is vulnerable to this scheme and will soon be targeted, if they have not been already.

What should you do?

- If you are, or will be, filing for unemployment benefits soon, *always go directly to the official government department* you need and never use a link or contact information you find online for help.

- If you get a letter, an email, a phone call or text asking for information to help you file, do NOT respond to them. Again, *go directly to the official government department* you need.

- If you receive a letter, email, phone call or text asking for information about a current claim for you and you have not made one, *contact your state right away* and let them know.

- *Be wary* of quick-money job offers or other suspicious financial arrangements that involve accepting and cashing checks for others you don't know.

- If you've been a victim of Identity theft, *check your accounts for any suspicious activity*.

SAFE: Security Awareness For Everyone

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