

Increase in Unemployment Fraud

Many of our counties and county employees have reported receiving fraudulent unemployment claim forms. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) has seen a spike in fraudulent claims since Christmas when the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program ended on December 26th. Recent legislation has since extended these benefits by 11 weeks.

Fraudsters who were targeting federal funds from the PUA began targeting Colorado's State unemployment system in higher numbers. Employees have reported receiving U.S. Bank ReliaCards, which the state uses to pay unemployment benefits, in the mail. At the same time, employers have reported receiving paperwork from the CDLE asking them to verify the unemployment claims. Phil Spesshardt, the Department of Labor's benefits services manager, stated that fraudsters are stealing mail and using addresses from rental and for-sale home listings to file false claims.

How to Report Fraud

If you receive unemployment paperwork or a debit card and you did not file a claim, you should submit a [fraud report](#) to the CDLE. If you are an employer and you received fraudulent paperwork asking you to verify a current employee's unemployment, then either you or the employee should submit one report. Both employer and employee do not need to submit a report for the same incident.

Additional Steps

The CDLE recommends that victims of fraud take the steps shown below:

An infographic with a dark blue background and yellow and white text. It features five numbered steps with corresponding icons: a credit card, three people, a police officer, a document, and a folder. The CDLE logo is in the top right corner.

Are You A Victim Of Fraud?
Follow These Steps

Step 1: Deactivate the card by completing the **U.S. Bank Form** or if needed by calling **1-855-282-6161**

Step 2: Contact the three consumer credit bureaus and put a fraud alert on your name and Social Security Number.

Step 3: File a police report.

Step 4: Report identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission at identitytheft.gov.

Step 5: Create a file where you can keep any records of fraud.

The CDLE also advises fraud victims to contact the three consumer credit bureaus and place a fraud alert on their name and social security number. Some fraud alert systems are automated and require callers to enter their social security number and date of birth. Never give this information or other personally identifiable information (e.g., bank account numbers, account passwords, etc.) to someone who calls you over the phone.

Credit Bureau Contact Info:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

Experian: 1-888-397-3742

TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289

What This Means for Counties

CTSI administers member counties property and liability, worker's compensation, and health pools. CTSI does not handle unemployment benefits. For more information about unemployment fraud, visit <https://cdle.colorado.gov/fraud-prevention> or contact the CDLE. 