



Fraudulent Unemployment Claims Target Residents *Report Fraud to Colorado Dept of Labor & Employment and SSPD*

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-January 5, 2021-Fraudulent unemployment claims using stolen identity information is on the rise across the county due to the pandemic and is affecting residents in the Yampa Valley including more than a dozen employees at the City of Steamboat Springs.

“We’re seeing a significant uptick locally in reports concerning unemployment fraud,” said Steamboat Springs Police Chief Cory Christensen. “In fact, the department logged twelve reports this morning alone and I believe these claims will continue to come in as scammers try to take advantage during the pandemic.”

In these instances, someone files a bogus claim for unemployment benefits using the names and personal information of people who have not lost their jobs. The suspicious claim is often flagged when the Human Resources department is contacted to confirm the filing. In the city’s case, the HR department has caught the fraud; notified the targeted employees and is working with them on steps to address the fraud.

If you are a victim of a fraudulent unemployment claim, immediately file a report through the [Colorado Department of Labor & Employment website](#). Individuals should contact the three credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, TransUnion) and place a fraud alert on your name and social security number.

In addition, review your credit report for unknown accounts and continue to monitor quarterly. Should you notice an inquiry from another state on your credit report, there is a good chance a fraudulent claim was submitted there, and a report should be filed with that state’s labor department.

The State of Colorado also recommends a “counter report” is filed with your local police department as the victim of fraud. This doesn’t mean the law enforcement agency will investigate the matter but provides a report for your records should it be needed to prove fraud to creditors. In addition, contact your bank to flag your account for fraudulent activity. Finally, individuals should retain all documentation in case it is needed later.

“This can happen to anyone including myself,” continued Christensen, who was one of the city employees targeted. “I urge everyone to take precautions such as changing passwords regularly, monitoring credit information, protecting personal information and responding immediately when notified of fraudulent activity.”

At this time, HR departments across the Yampa Valley should be on guard for suspicious claims especially around unemployment benefits. The Steamboat Springs Police Department provides an online reporting platform where a report can be filed at steamboatsprings.net/police.

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Contact

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