Identifying unemployment scams

(en español)

Protecting you and your personal information is a top priority for ESD. Use this page to help you identify and avoid unemployment scams.

We will never ask for:

- Information on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, or any other social media platform. As of December 2020, scammers are creating legitimate-looking Facebook pages for state agencies, and then leading claimants to web pages or emails that request private, secure information. Find a list of our official social media accounts.

- A credit card or bank account number, or anything to do with your financials.

- Your Social Security number over email. We will ask for your Social Security number over the phone and in eServices. If you do not feel comfortable providing this over the phone, we will accept the last 4 digits of your Social Security number along with some other identifying information.

- The Social Security numbers of your family members.

- Information about medical issues. For example: If you state you had an “able and available issue,” and we see that there is a medical certificate attached, we might ask, “without giving any personal or medical information, what is the status of that issue in your eServices account – was it allowed or denied?”

- You to buy gift cards or to make payments over the phone.

- Information over the phone that we have not first asked for through official correspondence by mail or through eServices. If you are unsure about what’s being asked over the phone, hang up and send the requested information through eServices.

- Your account login/password or access to eServices.

- Information about other claimants living at your address, or relate any information to you about someone else.

We will also not provide information about another person. We will tell you that we cannot confirm or deny any information about someone who isn’t you.

How else can I avoid unemployment scams?


- Be aware of known scams. See this example, explained by the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor. We will also share known scams further below on this page.

- Remember: Applying for unemployment benefits is free. ESD will never ask for a payment to process your claim.

- If you suspect you are the victim of fraud or a scam, follow the tips on the Attorney General’s website. Tips include:
  - Place a fraud alert or security freeze on your credit reports.
  - Monitor your financial accounts, billing statements and credit reports for suspicious activity.

- It is always a good idea to be wary of solicitors asking for your personal information online, by phone and text. ESD will ask you for information through official correspondence and through your ESD eServices account. If we call you, you can ask the agents to identify themselves. You can also ask the agent to send you a message through eServices to verify that they are with ESD. If you are unsure about what’s being asked over the phone, hang up and send the requested information through eServices.

- Some have suggested that people create an eServices account — even if they don’t need one — to prevent someone else from creating an account with their name. You can do that, but we don’t know if it will help prevent fraud. So, we neither recommend nor discourage it.

- We occasionally send text reminders but we never ask for personal information via text.

https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/unemployment-scams