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News

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What to do in case of unemployment fraud
**Sheriff's office seeing increase in fraudulent
unemployment reports**

PORT ORCHARD, Wash. -- The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office has received more than 300 complaint reports from county residents who have been victims of fraud, with false unemployment claims filed under their name with the Washington State Employee Security Department.

Washington State agencies have not experienced any data breach - - fraudsters have not stolen the information from state agencies. Instead, they are using information that they had previously gleaned from other sources and previous breaches and using that to apply for unemployment benefits.

Identity theft is a felony!

Below are resources and methods to determine if you or your family have been affected, and what to do:

To check if a fraudulent account under your name / Social Security Number (SSN) has been opened:

1. Go to this link: <https://secure.esd.wa.gov/home/SAWUserRegistrations/SignUp> for the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD) and create a user account using your personal e-mail address. Doing so will not initiate an unemployment claim but will associate your SSN with the secure username and password that you used to set-up your account.



2. When creating your account, if you receive an error message stating that “The SSN you entered already exists and is linked to this partly hidden e-mail address” and you do not recognize the e-mail address shown, someone else has created an unemployment claim under your SSN. **See below for steps.**

3. If you don't receive an error message, your SSN will be associated with the account you've created. It cannot be associated with another (fraudulent) account. This will protect you from this scam, where the fraudsters set up a fake account using your name / SSN and a false e-mail address.

What to do if a fraudulent account has been set-up under your SSN:

Report Fraudulent Claim to ESD: Washington residents can submit a report using the [Imposter Fraud Reporting Form](#) or contact:

Phone: 1-800-246-9763

Fax: 833-572-8423

E-mail: ESDGPInternalFraud@ESD.WA.GOV.

If you e-mail or use the report form, you will need to include: your full name, last four digits of your social security number, date of birth, and provide permission for ESD to cancel the fraudulent claim.

Change Passwords: If you believe that your data has been breached, you should change every password that possibly has been affected, immediately. You should not use the same password for multiple sites.

Additional steps:

1. Credit Monitoring and Fraud Alerts:

- Contact **one** of the consumer reporting agencies to place the alert with all three of the agencies. Do so by phone or via the Internet:
 - Experian: 1-888-397-3742 or <https://www.experian.com/fraud/center.html>.
 - Equifax: 1-800-525-6285 or [https://www.alerts.equifax.com/AutoFraud Online/jsp/fraudAlert.jsp](https://www.alerts.equifax.com/AutoFraudOnline/jsp/fraudAlert.jsp)
 - TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289

2. **Identity Theft Recovery:** Go to the Federal Trade Commission identity theft website: www.identitytheft.gov for great resources on reporting Identity theft and see their information concerning Identity Theft Recovery.

3. **Identity Theft Recovery:** Go to atg.wa.gov/recovering-identity-theft-or-fraud for additional tips from the Washington State Attorney General.

4. **Free Credit Reports:** Request your free credit reports via www.annualcreditreport.com and review them for other fraudulent activities.



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