

Somerset Police warn public of recent spike in unemployment fraud

Unemployment fraud continues to spike during the pandemic.

According to Somerset Police, this past week, ten Somerset residents reported unemployment claims being filed fraudulently using their social security information.

In a large-scale scam erupting in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, imposters are filing claims for unemployment benefits, using the names and personal information of people who have not filed claims. People learn about the fraud when they get a notice from their state unemployment benefits office or their employer about their supposed application for benefits.

If this happens to you, it means someone is misusing your personal information, including your Social Security number and date of birth. Act fast. Here are steps, courtesy of the Somerset Police, that can help you protect your finances and your credit:

1. Report the fraud to your employer. Keep a record of who you spoke with and when.
2. Report the fraud to your state unemployment benefits agency.
3. Visit [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov) to report the fraud to the FTC and get help with the next important recovery steps. These include placing a free, one-year fraud alert on your credit, getting your free credit reports, and closing any fraudulent accounts opened in your name. IdentityTheft.gov also will help you add a free extended fraud alert or credit freeze to your credit

report. These make it more difficult for an identity thief to open new accounts in your name.

4. Review your credit reports often. For the next year, you can check your reports every week for free through [AnnualCreditReport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com). This can help you spot any new fraud quickly.

If this happens to you, call your local police station.