

UMass system reports fraudulent unemployment claims exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic for employees

Multiple federal agencies are reporting an increase in fraudulent unemployment claims exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically of state and federal government employees.

Within the UMass system, there have been several cases reported where claim requests have been submitted to the Department of Unemployment Assistance allegedly by our employees. Some of you may assume that the University filed this on your behalf due to an upcoming unpaid furlough or layoff. However, the University is not able to file on your behalf and therefore we suspect that an unknown party or parties is filing these fraudulent claims in an attempt to divert unemployment benefits.

Some of the information submitted on behalf of the employees may contain accurate information about the person reporting to be unemployed, including full name, address, previous unemployment, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, and possibly Driver's License number. However, other information is false such as the email address, direct deposit for payments and the number of dependents.

If you receive a letter or other notice from the Department of Unemployment Assistance, via U.S mail or online, and you did not file a claim please contact the following as soon as possible:

Nancy Holsworth, nholsworth@umassd.edu,
Office of Human Resources

Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance by email
at DUA-verify@mass.gov and by phone (877) 626-6800

Lastly, if you receive a letter which contains your social security number, please also visit the Federal Trade Commission website, on how to protect your personal information, including a review of different monitoring options.