



Fraudulent Unemployment Benefits Cards

More than 40 million Americans have filed for unemployment benefits since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Just in Illinois, approximately 1.45 million residents have filed unemployment claims due to the health crisis.

Over the past several weeks many complaints have been received by the Palos Heights Police Department concerning citizens receiving fraudulent unemployment debit cards that were not requested.

It appears that the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) computer systems have been compromised to issue debit cards to individuals that are not presently receiving unemployment benefits.

If you receive an unsolicited debit card:

- Do not use the debit card if you are not authorized to receive unemployment benefits. Unauthorized use will require reimbursement of funds to the IDES.
- Contact your local police department to immediately report this fraud.
- You can also contact the IDES at their website: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides> or call them at (800) 244-5631 to report the unsolicited debit card.
- Card recipients should be cautious if they are solicited from anyone concerning these cards.
- Card recipients may want to place a credit freeze or fraud alert to prevent any additional identify theft from happening. The below credit bureaus are available to assist with credit breaches. Credit breaches need only to be reported to one credit bureau. Once initially reported, the breach will be reported to the other two bureaus.
 - Experian: www.experian.com or (888) 397-3742.
 - Equifax: www.equifax.com or (800) 525-6285
 - Transunion: www.transunion.com or (800) 680-7289

Victims of these frauds face potential harm. The personal information collected by the scammers may be used to commit identity theft to file unemployment insurance claims. If you believe you have been the victim of one of these scams, immediately contact the Palos Heights Police Department for assistance.