



SCAM ALERT!

January 2021



PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SCAM!

Scammers have been emailing what looks like a genuine notification from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), but the agency issued a warning to current and past recipients of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) to not click on the links that appear in the email.

The "phishing" email instructs you to click on a link in three different places in the bogus graphic to claim additional pandemic stimulus benefits. Do not do that!

The graphic appears to be from ODJFS complete with the agencies logo, but the agency stressed these emails are fake and that ODJFS doesn't send out those types of communications.

Common signs to watch out for in any unexpected email you receive:

- Hover before you click - Phishers often try to conceal Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) leading to Malware this way. A good rule of thumb is to always hover over hyperlinks in emails before clicking on them since that would reveal the true destination or the URL, no matter what the linked text says. (Example: hover over this link <http://www.test.com> and you will see it does not take you to where you think it might.)
- Be suspicious of generic greetings - Any messages addressed generically, especially ones regarding financial transactions, should raise a red flag.
- Be wary of attachments - Though attachments are regarded by some IT experts as a holdover from the days of cassette tapes and dial-up internet, the Malware-carrying file attachment is still a common tactic for phishers.
- Don't be intimidated - Phishing emails will often seek an emotional response from the recipient using inflammatory or threatening language, or in the case of the ODJFS email, a fake deadline to apply for additional benefits. If the subject line or body of an email urges you to do something right now, or else, assume that it's a fraud.

IF YOU THINK YOU ARE BEING SCAMMED:

Call the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Consumer Fraud Unit at 937-225-5757 and ask for our consumer fraud division.

The above ALERT is part of the Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney's initiative to help citizens become aware of ways they can avoid becoming a victim, or ways they can help stop criminal activity that may be occurring. Upon request, the office can provide presentations on crime prevention actions and activities to halt crime and increase the quality of life in our community.

If you would like additional information on the above ALERT, or would like additional information regarding our programs to assist consumers in general and/or seniors in particular, please contact Kimberly Melnick, Supervising Attorney, Adult Protection Unit, or Anthony Schoen, Supervising Attorney, Fraud and Economic Crimes Unit at 937-225-5757.

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