

N E W S R E L E A S E

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## **Employment Development Department Issues Unemployment and Disability Insurance Program Updates; Continues to Urge Californians to Guard Against Identity Theft Scams**

SACRAMENTO—The California Employment Development (EDD) today issued further updates on California’s unemployment and disability insurance programs, including how to submit additional documents to verify Pandemic Unemployment Assistance claims.

EDD has sent approximately 1.4 million notices to Pandemic Unemployment Assistance recipients reminding them to submit documents to prove employment or self-employment as required by federal law. Nearly one in five recipients responded so far and over 90 percent of those were found eligible. Additional notices will be mailed to all those who have not responded. Those found ineligible will be sent a notice with an opportunity to appeal and submit additional documentation.

A common error has been claimants submitting tax documents outside the correct timeframe before the start of the claim. Per federal requirements, tax records must prove employment or self-employment at some point between the start of the applicable taxable year and when the individual filed for benefits. For example, a claimant filing a claim effective December 27, 2020 would submit tax records showing self-employment between January 1, 2019 (the tax year start) and December 27, 2020.

Another common reason for denial has been when submitted bank statements or business information lacks any direct connection to the claimant. For example, claimants who submit business bank account statements in a business name should also submit documentation showing the claimant’s full name and relationship to that business.

To continue helping claimants understand these requirements, EDD has expanded guidance on the [PUA Self-Employment and Employment Documentation web page](#) to include this information.

Claimants should gather all necessary documents before uploading them to EDD. Once the claimant electronically signs the form in UI Online and selects “Finish” it is not possible to reopen the form and upload additional documents. If documents meet federal requirements, claimants will receive a notice confirming eligibility.

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Claimants who are denied benefits will receive a notice with the disqualification reason and appeal information. Claimants may appeal to EDD within 30 days and include any further documentation at that time.

### **EDD to Further Verify Disability Insurance Medical Providers**

EDD continues to remind Californians to safeguard financial and personal information online and elsewhere and remain vigilant to guard against identity theft. As scammers attempt to get personal information in many sophisticated and creative ways, EDD continues to enhance and update information on the [Help Fight Fraud webpage](#).

Scammers may “phish” for victims by pretending to be banks, stores, or even government agencies including EDD. They do this over the phone or in person, in e-mails, by text message, in the regular mail, and by other communications methods. Once scammers steal this information they may attempt to file false benefit claims such as disability or unemployment insurance claims, or even attempt to falsely register as a disability insurance medical provider.

EDD takes an aggressive approach to combatting fraud and these fraud-fighting efforts have blocked an estimated \$125 billion in unemployment insurance fraud attempts during the pandemic. Still, fraudsters continue attempts to file false claims using stolen information.

In an effort to further block the filing of fraudulent disability insurance claims, EDD will begin contacting medical providers by email next week to verify identities through ID.me before certifying disability insurance claims. Medical and health providers certify the existence of a disability that an applicant reports when seeking benefits.

Identity theft can happen to anyone, but there are [things everyone can do to reduce the risk](#). The California Department of Justice has [useful information and resources](#) to help reduce the risk of becoming a victim, as well as information to help victims.

EDD continues to deploy additional safeguards to stop scammers and validate legitimate claimants as well as medical providers of disability insurance benefits. Those who receive communications from EDD regarding a medical provider online account being created in the disability insurance system, or an application for public benefits (such as disability or unemployment insurance) and believe someone filed the claim falsely, should file a fraud report by visiting [Ask EDD](#) and selecting the Report Fraud category to complete the Fraud Reporting Form. Identity theft victims may also want to file an [identity theft report with the Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC).

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