



March 29, 2021

TO: Texas A&M AgriLife Unit Heads
SUBJECT: Recent Spike in Fraudulent Unemployment Claims

In the past week, AgriLife HR has received and responded to a large spike in fraudulent claims related to our employees.

Texas Workforce Commission investigators have expressed that these, along with other fraudulent claims regarding employees of the Texas A&M University System, are likely the result of multiple breached data sources that are commercially available on the dark web, not a Texas A&M System data source. Therefore, the A&M System is not treating this as a cyber incident since there is no indication that A&M System information resources were compromised.

The following information aims to address concerns and explain our process for verifying and submitting information to TWC, the A&M System and affected employees.

[Our process for verifying unemployment claims](#)

As an employer of the state of Texas, AgriLife HR receives Notices of Application and Requests for Work Separation Information from Texas Workforce Commission.

We are required to respond to each TWC request by verifying whether the employee is still working or terminated and the reason and date of termination, so that TWC can determine eligibility for paying unemployment insurance benefits. If we report to TWC that an employee is still working, it may be considered a possible fraudulent claim.

[If we receive an unemployment claim verification regarding you, we will email you](#)

After responding to the TWC request, we also relay information to the TWC investigative unit and the A&M System Offices Unemployment Claim portal. Then, we notify the employee with the following email:

AgriLife Administrative Services recently received a fraudulent unemployment insurance claim for you from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). TWC has put a stop on the claim, locking access via the telephone and web, and has moved the benefits so payment is not released to anyone. The claim will remain on file to prevent another fraudulent claim from being filed. Below are websites TWC has provided on identity protection for your use:

www.ftc.gov

www.texasfightsidtheft.gov



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No other action is required on your part or AgriLife's part. We have received multiple fraudulent claims on people who are still employed within the A&M System, and we report each to TWC so they can investigate the claim. **TWC instructs us to let you know and provide the links above to you for more information.** TWC recommends you report the ID theft to the IRS, Social Security Administration, and credit card bureaus to be safe. It is also recommended by TWC to file a report as a victim of ID theft at www.ftc.gov. **None of these actions are required on your behalf but are recommended by the TWC. AgriLife has responded to TWC that this is a fraudulent claim, so investigators are working on it.** If you have any questions, please let us know.

A recent article provides additional insight: [College Station business owner warns about unemployment scams](#).

If this claim is not fraudulent, and you did submit an Unemployment Claim to TWC, please notify us immediately so we can work with you and others to get your work history in Workday updated.

More information

As mentioned in the [KBTX article linked to above](#), these fraudulent claims are not unique to A&M System employees and have affected other Texas businesses. Since TWC has not determined what has caused this surge in fraudulent claim activity, it is unknown how the data and employee information has been leaked or what other sources may have obtained employee data. Therefore, TWC recommends that our employees report the ID theft as described in the email above.

Additional information can be found at the following link to Texas Workforce Commission Website's Fraudulent Claims information: [Texas Workforce Commission Investigating Potential Fraud Cases](#).

If you have questions or concerns, please contact TWC's fraud hotline at 800-252-3642 or TWC.fraud@twc.state.tx.us.

Texas A&M AgriLife Administrative Services | <http://agriflifeas.tamu.edu/>