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June 21, 2023

Contacts:

[Ron Leix](#), Treasury, 517-335-2167

[Nick Assendelft](#), UIA, 517-388-3135

State Treasurer and Unemployment Insurance Agency Director Ask Michigan Residents to Be Alert for Fake Letters in Collections Scam

***State Offers Payment Solutions,
Fake Letters Should Be Reported***

LANSING, Mich. – State Treasurer Rachael Eubanks and Unemployment Insurance Agency Director Julia Dale today urged Michigan residents and businesses with past-due state debts to be on alert for scam letters making the rounds through the U.S. Postal Service.

“It is disheartening to see the lengths scammers will go to make a quick buck from Michigan residents,” State Treasurer Rachael Eubanks said. “The state of Michigan works collaboratively with individuals to find solutions to their outstanding state debts. If you receive an aggressive and threatening letter, please contact us through a verified phone number so we can log the scam and talk about options.”

In the scam, residents or employers receive a letter about an overdue state debt that requests immediate contact through a toll-free number to resolve the outstanding balance. The letter aggressively threatens to seize property – including bank accounts, wages, business assets, cars, real estate, refunds and cash – if the debt is not settled.

The correspondence appears credible to the recipient because it uses personal facts and information pulled directly from the internet and public records. The scammer’s letter attempts to lure a person or business into a situation where they could make a payment to a criminal.

UIA Director Julia Dale, who has made fighting fraud a cornerstone of her efforts to transform the UIA into a national leader in fast, fair, and fraud-free service, cautioned businesses to be on alert for bad actors who try to scam money using questionable documents.

“It’s important for businesses to recognize when they are receiving legitimate correspondence from the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency and when to be suspicious,” Director Dale said. “Employers face many obstacles every day. Falling victim to an attempt to steal hard-earned income should not be one of them. The UIA urges employers or third-party administrators to contact the agency if they have any suspicions about letters they receive asking for payment.”

The Michigan Department of Treasury -- which functions as the state's collections agency -- and the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency correspond with residents and businesses through official letters sent through the U.S. Postal Service that use state of Michigan letterhead.

Treasury's letters embody both the names of the governor and state treasurer, provide several options to resolve an outstanding debt, and outline taxpayer rights. UIA's letters embody both the names of the governor and the director of the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). UIA is a part of LEO. Letters from the unemployment agency will include information about how to protest and appeal payment determinations.

The UIA posts correspondence to an employer's Michigan Web Account Manager (MiWAM) account. If an employer has questions about their account, a payment, or their balance, they should contact UIA by calling 1-855-484-2636.

Any business that is unsure about official-looking correspondence requesting direct unemployment insurance payments should call the UIA's Office of Employer Ombudsman at 1-855-484-2636.

Attempts at fraud or identity theft can also be reported through an employer's MiWAM account.

Individuals who receive a letter from a scammer or have questions about their state debts should call Treasury's Collections Service Center at 517-636-5265. A customer service representative can log the scam, verify outstanding state debts, and provide flexible payment options.

To learn more about Michigan's collections process, go to www.michigan.gov/treasury or follow the state Treasury Department on Twitter at [@MITreasury](https://twitter.com/MITreasury).