



February 12, 2021

**To:** The AT&T SE Local Presidents, District 3 Staff, & Secretaries

**From:** Nicholas E.M. Hawkins, Assistant to the Vice President

**Subject:** AT&T Southeast/BST - Imposter Unemployment Claims

The District 3 Office was recently notified that many of our members at AT&T Southeast, who had not actually filed an unemployment claim, were being notified by their supervisors that an unemployment claim had been filed in their name. As this issue began to spread, we became concerned that some of our members personal information may have been exposed as part of a data breach. We immediately contacted AT&T Labor Relations, and received the response listed below:

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*Issue: Manager of represented employees are receiving notices for unemployment claims filed by employees who are still on the payroll.*

*Equifax response: This is an ongoing issue since the pandemic began. It is a nationwide issue that is affecting all employers in every city, every state. Homeland Security, FBI and Secret Service have been investigating and the largest group is based in Nicaragua. For further information you can google unemployment fraud and read the numerous articles regarding the issue.*

*Process: Once an unemployment claim has been filed with the state, Equifax is notified, Equifax sends notice to the Company that employee xx has filed for unemployment. Once the Company replies to the Equifax request that the employee in question is currently on the payroll this message is send as a reply.*

*According to the unemployment office, the employee filed for unemployment. Please speak with him/her to see if he filed for unemployment. If he/she did not file, then his/her identity was compromised and this is an imposter claim.*

### *What is an Imposter Claim?*

*An imposter claim occurs when someone files for unemployment using the information of someone else (identity theft). Imposter unemployment claims are most generally at their highest during national disasters or when the economy is in a recession period. It*

*is possible that you may come across some imposter claims during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

### *How Do I Handle an Imposter Claim?*

*If you discover an imposter claim when responding to a request for information, please let your Equifax Service Team know. If you are using CaseBuilder, this can be done by selecting “Still Working” and “Employee did not file claim” when picking a reason for separation. It is very important to use this reason for separation because it allows the response that we send back on your behalf to contain special verbiage alerting the state agency of a potential fraud situation.*

*Per unemployment law, the employer must input the last date physically worked. If the employee is working on the day that you complete the form, you will input that day as the last date worked.*

*The employee impacted by the imposter claim will also need to report this fraudulent activity. He/She can do so by visiting the Federal Trade Commission website at [www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov). He/She will also want to contact the local unemployment office to report that an unemployment claim has been filed using his/her information. It is also recommended that a police report also be filed.*

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Please share this information with your Local’s membership. We will advise Locals if we receive any additional information on this subject. As always, should you have any questions or concerns regarding this issue, please feel free to contact me at the CWA District 3 Office.

Cc: VP Honeycutt  
AD O’Dell  
AD Wells  
District Counsel Weaver

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