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Beware of Unemployment Insurance Scams; You Should Never Have to Pay a Fee for Unemployment Insurance Filing

The Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit based in Neenah with a focus on workforce training and job search assistance, has been made aware of a scam in which a web site attempted to solicit a payment from a recently laid off worker to file an Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

A record number of individuals being laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including many first time filers, has overwhelmed the state's UI web site and telephone support line. Complicating things is the confusion over federal government stimulus checks and where "gig" and contracted workers should be filing for their share of relief.

With each passing week, unemployed workers without paychecks are looking for any way to find income. For some, a small fee to help cut through the bureaucracy may sound very enticing, but the Board urges against this.

“The only way to legitimately file an unemployment claim in Wisconsin to go through the Department of Workforce Development’s (DWD’s) official channels,” said Anthony Snyder, CEO of the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board. “You never need to pay a fee to file a claim. Any person or entity asking for a fee to assist you with UI filing is not legitimate.”

The best way to begin to file a claim is at dwd.wisconsin.gov. Individuals can use either a computer, tablet or smart phone. Individuals with no internet access, can call 844-910-3661 to file a claim via phone, but that should be a last resort.

The local workforce board operates five job centers in the region, all currently closed due to Governor Evers’ stay at home order. Individuals looking for temporary roles at essential employers can find a list, updated every two weeks, www.foxvalleywork.org.

For more information on the Fox Valley Job Centers or the work of the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, please visit www.foxvalleywork.org or call 920-720-5600.

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Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB) is a not-for-profit building a world-class workforce in northeast Wisconsin. Serving six counties — Calumet, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago — FVWDB collaborates with a number of state and local workforce partners to help job seekers gain the skills needed to find employment and help businesses find the highly skilled workers they need.

FVWDB is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider.

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