



NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PAUL RODRIGUES ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
455 COUNTY STREET
NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 02740
www.newbedfordschools.org

(508) 997-4511

THOMAS ANDERSON
SUPERINTENDENT

DATE: June 11, 2020

TO: All Staff of New Bedford Public Schools

FROM: Heather Emsley, Executive Director of Human Capital Services

RE: Unemployment Fraud

Recently in the media we have seen reports on large increases in unemployment fraud occurring across the country by cyber criminals targeting the unemployment security system. These criminals are using individual's personal data including names and social security numbers to collect millions of dollars in unemployment. The Secret Service, federal law enforcement, and state authorities are all working together to investigate these crimes and to get the money back. Thus far, Massachusetts has been targeted, along with Rhode Island, Washington, Florida, and Hawaii.

For your protection we wanted to bring this matter to your attention, as well as to immediately increase your awareness and vigilance in dealing with your personal financial affairs. We want to assure you that we are fully aware of this situation and we are employing more detailed data checks for each unemployment claim we receive.

Specifically, for each unemployment claim received, the office of Human Capital Services verifies the employee's name and social security number for accuracy. If an employee is still actively employed with New Bedford Public Schools a "red flag" will go up. In those cases, we would contact the employee, via NBPS email, to verify if a claim had indeed been submitted. If it wasn't, then we would prevent the claim from moving forward and simultaneously notify the employee about the suspicious activity. We would then take the necessary steps to protect their personal identity and financial interests.

In some cases of fraud, the employee will directly receive a notice from a state unemployment office regarding a claim you did not file. In these cases, it is likely the



The New Bedford Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, homelessness, gender identity, gender expression or immigration status.



claim filed was for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a benefit directed to assist those who are self-employed. In those cases, NBPS would not have received a claim for unemployment as no employer was listed. Should this occur, you should immediately contact the unemployment office and follow their instructions for reporting the fraudulent claim. The link to report fraud or to learn more about unemployment fraud from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance can be found here: [MA Unemployment Fraud](#). In addition, we ask you to inform the office of Human Capital Services by emailing Grace Rodriguez at grodriguez@newbedfordschools.org.

Finally, the NBPS issued mandatory training in Cyber Security. While this training will help protect NBPS staff, it also provides information useful to protect your personal equipment and your personal information from cyber threats outside of the workplace. We encourage all employees to complete the training prior to June 18, 2020 and to remain vigilant of suspicious emails and websites.

Thank you.