

# **Criminal Impersonation/Gathering Personal Information by Deception**

## Common Elements

Attempt to obtain employer, wage, state, or other confidential information for an SSN/name they provide. May provide an employer name, but is often neither in the base nor genuine.

Often say:

“not sure which state my employer is reporting my wages in”

“employer transferred me” or “the company was bought by another”

“will be laid off in a week, can you check...”

“my wages were wrong” or “my wages were reported under the incorrect SSN”

“the other state told me to call you” or “you told me to call XX but they said call you, can you check...”

“its an advertising company that reports in the clients state, can you check...”

Sometimes ask you to check a different SSN. Reasons given:

“oh, that’s my spouse’s SSN, sorry, here’s mine, can you check XX under that one...”

“oh, that’s my brothers SSN, sorry, I live with him, here’s mine, can you check XX under that one...” or

“I changed my name/SSN, my father was a very bad man, my old one was XX, can you check for XX under that one...”

“my wages were reported under the incorrect SSN”

## Red Flags

Uncertain or hesitant about key information. Can’t provide specifics.

Don’t know who they worked for (or where).

Not ready to file a claim, but pump you for detailed information.

Cannot provide a call-back or message number.

Say they are calling from in state, but the caller number is out of state.

They play to your sympathies (“single mom, 2 kids, can you check,,,”).

Attempt to redirect, or divert you from, inquiry questions.

The “story” seems possible on the surface, but becomes more and more unusual as the call progresses.

Adopt an assertive or abrupt manner or otherwise attempt to steer or control the conversation.

Some examples: talk over you, redirect your questions, imply/express frustration to dissuade you from being assertive yourself, communicate in a way that puts you on the defensive, make you self-conscious (or nervous), “assault” you with essentially useless info (a diversionary tactic – can also lend credence to their” story”), play problems we see to their advantage.

## What you should do

Maintain control of the conversation – get an answer to your question before proceeding; if you’re suspicious, keep asking questions.

Ask, don’t tell. Get in the habit of having *them* provide the information; do not verify anything that they have not confirmed first. Even saying “no wages” or “I show nothing” is giving out confidential information. After they hang up, memo the SSN they were inquiring after in case they call back. Notify a supervisor of suspicious calls.

Offer to file a claim. If they do not want to file, offer to cover the information when they do file, but otherwise it’s confidential until then. Tell them it’s for their own protection.