

From the New Mexico Department of Health

September 30, 2020

## **Public health job seekers targeted in online scam**

*Promise of jobs with the Department of Health used to steal financial information*

**SANTA FE** – The New Mexico Department of Health warns residents of a scam targeting job seekers that leads people to believe they are being interviewed for a Department of Health job when the real purpose is to try to gain access to their personal identification and financial information instead.

The Department of Health was made aware of the scam after multiple people contacted the department to report their experiences and share their suspicions about an interview and application process that did not seem legitimate – and ultimately wasn't.

The scam is a common but elaborate one, using, in this case, LinkedIn to create a fake job posting posing as the New Mexico Department of Health. Applicants promptly received an email congratulating them on being selected for a job interview and included both federal I-9 and W-4 forms.

The person or persons behind the scam then instructed applicants for the fake job opening to download and install a chat application on their phones where a job interview would take place. In those text message interviews, people would be asked to send the completed forms along with photocopies of their driver's licenses and Social Security numbers. The job seekers would also be provided with additional instructions that would also allow the scammers to gain access to the applicants' credit card information, effectively allowing them to steal both the applicants' money and identity.

The Department of Health is working with the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General to ensure anyone using the agency to defraud residents is prosecuted appropriately.

The Department of Health wants residents to be aware

- All Department of Health jobs, along with all available jobs with state government, are posted on the [New Mexico State Personnel Office](#) website.
- The State Personnel Office provides the [specific guidelines](#) for how the hiring process is conducted by this and other state agencies.
- Applicants are *not* asked to fill out I-9, W-4 or other employment forms until an applicant has accepted a job and reports for their first day of work.
- In addition, job seekers should be aware the State of New Mexico will never ask potential employees to send money or purchase their computer and office equipment as a condition for employment.

Anyone in New Mexico wishing to learn more about common scams or to report scam or fraud, can do so online by visiting the New Mexico Attorney General's website at <https://www.nmag.gov/>.

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