

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 20, 2024

TO: Jessica Rosenworcel, Chairwoman
Brendan Carr, Commissioner
Geoffrey Starks, Commissioner
Nathan Simington, Commissioner
Anna Gomez, Commissioner

FROM: Fara Damelin, Inspector General 

SUBJECT: Notification of Identity Theft Against 35 FCC Employees

As a result of the significant levels of Unemployment Insurance (“UI”) and Paycheck Protection Program (“PPP”) fraud being reported by other Federal Inspectors General, the FCC Office of Inspector General (FCC OIG) conducted and completed a proactive investigation to determine if current Commission employees fraudulently obtained benefits during the Covid-19 pandemic. To assist our investigative efforts, the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee (PRAC)¹ and the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General (DOL OIG) provided us with data from state UI benefits programs and loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration’s PPP Program.

After a thorough investigation of the data provided, we did not identify any FCC employees who fraudulently obtained UI or PPP benefits. However, we determined that the stolen identities of 35 current FCC employees were used to fraudulently obtain UI benefits during the Covid-19 pandemic. We informed all 35 employees that their stolen identities were used to claim UI benefits. Additionally, we provided these employees with information disseminated by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on steps they may take in these circumstances. Our investigation also identified 15 instances in which individuals who never worked for the FCC fraudulently claimed they lost their positions at the FCC and applied for UI Benefits. We did not find identity theft against FCC employees with respect to the PPP program.

We shared the results of our investigation with the PRAC and the Department of Labor OIG. Please feel free to let us know if you have any questions.

cc: Narda Jones, Chief of Staff
Mark Stephens, Managing Director
Michele Ellison, General Counsel

¹ In March 2020, the PRAC was established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, as a Committee of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) to oversee pandemic relief spending and coordinate related oversight among Federal OIGs.