



MEDIA RELEASE

CT Department of Labor *Communications Office*

Dennis C. Murphy, Acting Commissioner

“Use the Card that Works!”

Labor Department Warns Claimants About Problems Associated With Certain Debit Cards Issued by Check Cashing Companies

WETHERSFIELD, Feb. 7 - The Connecticut Department of Labor is alerting unemployment insurance claimants of serious problems that arose this week after up to 1,000 claimants used a debit card issued by a check cashing company to try to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

This week the Labor Department began paying unemployment insurance benefits electronically, providing claimants the option of selecting either direct deposit or debit card payments. If a debit card is selected, a state-approved Visa debit card issued by Chase Bank is mailed to a claimant and benefits are loaded directly onto the card.

Some claimants have signed up with check cashing companies to receive a debit card that is not a Department of Labor approved card. For as many as 1,000 claimants, the check cashing company entered erroneous information, and as a result, claimants were unable to access the benefits using the check cashing company’s debit card. The Labor Department is now working to ensure that affected claimants receive their weekly benefit amount, although it is likely that payments will be delayed while the check cashing company errors are corrected.

“Use the card that works!” urged Acting Commissioner Dennis C. Murphy. “We encourage claimants to opt for either the direct deposit or debit card payment methods that are approved by the State of Connecticut and the Labor Department providing personal, confidential information to others opens up security risks for claimants including identity theft.

“We want the public to know that there is never a charge to receive a state-approved debit card, or for selecting the direct deposit option for electronic payments,” Murphy said. He added that claimants that opt for a state-approved debit card can withdraw their benefits at no charge by following these guidelines:

- Unlimited and free over-the-counter withdrawals at any Visa member bank or credit union.
- No charge for cash back when making a point of purchase sale at a retail store.
- One free withdrawal per benefit deposit at any Chase or People’s United Bank ATMs.

Anyone with concerns about their payment method or questions about the new program can visit the agency’s website at www.NoPaperChecksCT.com or email questions directly to dol.directbenefits@ct.gov.

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