



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



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State Successful Pursuing Unemployment Insurance Claim Offenders

(Anchorage) – The Employment Security Division in the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development is achieving a high conviction rate in fraudulent unemployment insurance cases. Fraudulent claims totaling more than \$3.1 million were uncovered during the 12-month period ending Dec. 31, 2005.

“We are committed to providing unemployment insurance benefits that are fair and benefit the great majority of workers who are honest,” said Commissioner Greg O’Claray. “The small minority who break the rules face serious consequences.”

In one recent court case, the offender failed to report her employment wages and did not disclose that she was not physically able to work. She received Workers’ Compensation payments during several weeks in which she claimed benefits. She was sentenced to 24 months in jail with 23 months suspended for a felony count and three days in jail for each of the 11 misdemeanor counts for a total of 63 days to be served. She will be on probation for three years and was ordered to pay restitution to the Unemployment Insurance Trust fund in the amount of \$4,464.

“Violators also risk the loss of future unemployment benefits,” said Employment Security Division Director Tom Nelson. “And courts may impose full repayment of false benefits, heavy fines, jail time, probation and community work service.”

Unemployment fraud is frequently revealed when division staff make a computer comparison of the information claimants list on weekly claim certifications to quarterly wage reports filed by employers. This cross-matching includes reviewing reports of persons who may be collecting benefits fraudulently in Alaska while they are employed in other states.

Suspected Unemployment Insurance fraud can be reported by calling 1-877-272-4635. For additional information, go to www.labor.state.ak.us and select Employment Security Division, Unemployment Insurance, and Fraud.

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