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Ohio expands identity verification options for unemployment claimants at most U.S. Post Office locations

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director Matt Damschroder announced today that some unemployment applicants now have the option of visiting a participating Post Office if they are prompted to provide copies of identity verification documents. This option was launched on Jan. 26, 2024, and is available only to claimants who applied for benefits on or after that date and are prompted to provide copies of documents.

Ohio’s unemployment program was the seventh in the nation to offer this new service, in a collaboration with the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Department of Labor.

“Identity verification is a critical step in preventing unemployment fraud, but it can also be one of the most frustrating parts of the process for claimants,” Damschroder said. “This partnership lets us keep our focus on fighting fraud while empowering claimants with more options, freeing up agents to spend more time helping those with more complex issues, and reducing processing time.”

Everyone who applies for unemployment benefits must verify their identity. Most are able to do so as part of the normal automated application process. Those whose identity can’t be verified via the automated system are asked to submit additional documentation. In the past, this had to be done by uploading the documents online, by fax, or by mail.

With the new Post Office option, individuals can now go to any participating Post Office to verify their identity. This includes 726 Post Offices in Ohio. ODJFS will process the results and notify claimants of their status. There’s no cost for claimants, and no appointment is needed. Individuals have up to seven days to provide the documents. For Post Office locations, visit usps.com.

“Offering government-operated identity verification services through trusted partners like the U.S. Postal Service will help workers in Ohio access the unemployment insurance benefits they deserve,” said Andrew Stettner from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Unemployment Insurance Modernization. “Made possible by funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, the expansion of services is also key to our ongoing commitment to protect the UI system from fraud.”

If individuals prefer not to visit a Post Office, they still can submit the documents directly to ODJFS. However, in certain situations, a Post Office may be a good option – for example, if they don’t have an



Mike DeWine, Governor | Jon Husted, Lt. Governor | Matt Damschroder, Director

OHID account, if they don't have an address, or if they have an out-of-state ID. In certain cases, if the identity verification at a Post Office is unsuccessful or incomplete, they may be asked to submit documents directly to ODJFS.

Early results show that the program is proving successful. In the first month, approximately 4,100 claimants elected to use the USPS verification after having been offered the option. More than 3,000 have completed the process, with 98% passing the in-person verification. This has reduced verification-related calls and duplication of efforts, freeing up staff to focus on more complex customer issues. In addition, the new program appears to be reducing fraud attempts, with the percentage of initial claims flagged for potential fraud dropping from 38.9% for the week ending Jan. 20 to 25.9 % the week ending Feb. 24.

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The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, child care, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support services.

