



DEPARTMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: June 2, 2020

Rescission(s): None

Reference No.: 2020.09

To: All DUA UIOnline users
From: Katie Dishnica, Chief of Staff
Subject: Dealing with Threats from Claimants and/or Employers

Purpose

To provide practical guidance to Unemployment Insurance Online Users (UIO users) responding to claimant or employer threats.

Background

The Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) encourages all UIO users to exhibit a courteous, respectful and professional manner when dealing with claimants and employers. However, threats will not be tolerated. The well-being of all UIO users is of paramount concern, and no one should jeopardize their safety or the safety of others in dealing with such behavior.

Definitions

For the purpose of this guidance, threats are broken down into three (3) categories: Inappropriate Language-Louder Voice, Veiled Threats and Imminent Danger. All threats need to be taken seriously and documented but may require altogether different responses.

The first two (2) categories will most likely not require notification to Law Enforcement, immediate or otherwise. However, the third category, "Imminent Danger", is when the threat is a statement or comment in the present tense or an active mode whereby the individual indicates "I am going to shoot you, beat you up, blow you up," etc. which will require immediate notification to Law Enforcement.

“Inappropriate Language-Louder Voice”:

- If a claimant or employer uses profanity or a louder than normal conversational voice, the UIO user will attempt to ask them to refrain from using profanity or ask if they could lower their voice. If it continues, then the UIO user should advise them that it is DUA’s policy to terminate the call and ask the claimant or employer to call back call when they are prepared to conduct business in a professional manner.

“Veiled Threats”

- A veiled threat can be any remark directed at the employee or made indirectly to another person indicating that the person making the remark **might** consider an overt action:
“I’m not going anywhere”, “I’m going to do everything in my power”, “I’m going to sue you”, “I understand why people do things like blow up buildings”, etc.

“Imminent Danger”

- If upon receipt of a threat where there appears to be **“Imminent Danger”**, the UIO user should refer to the Procedural Guidelines indicated in the next section. These are some examples that would require Law Enforcement intervention:
“I’m going to get a gun and come down there”, “I’m going to find you and kick your butt”, “I’m going to blow DUA up”, etc.

(Note: All threats need to be reported to the Office of Internal Control and Security (ICS) via the ICID mailbox and the UIOnline user’s supervisor with a detailed summary of what occurred.)

Procedural Guidelines

First and foremost, upon receipt of a threat where there appears to be **“Imminent Danger”**:

Immediately notify the **Massachusetts State Police (MSP), Government Center Barracks at (617) 727-2917** to obtain assistance. Please provide your name and indicate that you are calling on behalf of the Department of Unemployment Assistance regarding a threat.

- If outside of the hours of operation noted below or on weekends, the call will be answered by the Troop Dispatch Center, which can alert the MSP Boston barracks and/or appropriate MSP barracks depending upon the details of the threat.

**Note: Hours of operation for the Massachusetts State Police (MSP), Government
Center Barracks
(Monday thru Friday, 7:00 AM to 11:00PM)**

It is very important to be prepared to provide the **MSP Trooper on Duty** with detailed information as to whom and where the threat was directed. If the threat is site-specific or directed at an individual or group of individuals, please make the location (City, Town, office building, etc.) and name or names of the individuals known as soon as possible. If the threat was directed at DUA in general and not a specific location or individual, please also make that known to the trooper.

Be prepared to provide the name of the individual making the threat, his or her address, telephone number, date of birth and location, if known, and what led to the threat. (Note: A claimant's DOB can be located in UIOnline by accessing the Claimant Information, then selecting Manage Claimant Account on the left, then selecting Authentication Information on the left underneath Manage Claimant Account.)

If the immediate threat is made at or related to the Hurley Building, UIOnline users should also contact Hurley Building security immediately at **(617) 626-6310** and notify them of the threat. Hurley Building Security will then immediately contact the **MSP Government Center Barracks** or appropriate MSP barracks if outside of the hours of operation or on weekends.

Employee Reporting Guidelines

All UIOnline users are required to fully document and report all alleged threats.

The MSP/Police Contact Worksheet (see attachment #1) should be completed and submitted to the Office of Internal Control and Security (ICS) as soon as the situation allows by emailing the ICID mailbox ICID@detma.org.

Also, upon completing a threatening call, all UIOnline users will add call history notes to provide visibility into past calls and to be better informed and gain control of calls. UIOnline users will utilize the "wrap up" button and add a call history note to the claim summarizing the threat and any other action taken. All call history notes will be part of the claim record. All notes should be professional in nature; no jargon, profane language or commentary.

Steps to add call history notes:

1. Click on **Claimant profile**
2. Add note
3. Click on drop down, select **Claim Maintenance**
4. Add notes in designated area
5. Upon completion of notes: click on **"ADD"**

Support for the Employee Who Received the Threat

Should support be needed for the employee who was the recipient of the threat, the employee should be encouraged to utilize free confidential support and counseling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Mass4You. The EAP is a service that provides employees with confidential and professional counseling and related services to assist them in resolving issues that may be work-related or of a personal nature.

Employees are encouraged to access the EAP service as early as possible should they need additional support by calling 1-844-263-1982 (available 24/7).