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## \*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*

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## Scammers Impersonating Utah Government Officials and Targeting Licensed Professionals

The Utah Department of Commerce's Division of Professional Licensing (DOPL) reports a rise in scam calls using spoofed DOPL numbers and letterhead

Salt Lake City, UT – The Division of Professional Licensing (DOPL) is warning licensed professionals of an alarming scam involving impersonation and intimidation tactics. Recent reports indicate that scammers are making fraudulent calls to healthcare licensees using spoofed DOPL phone numbers, posing as DOPL officials, and issuing false threats of license suspensions and criminal investigations. These tactics resemble a <u>government impersonation</u> <u>scam</u>. Those affected report the callers demonstrate knowledge of their profession and professional licensing topics.

One recent victim reported receiving a call from a person identifying themself as the "Chief Investigation Officer" at DOPL. The scammer stated that the victim's license was temporarily suspended because of an FBI investigation involving illicit drug trafficking. The caller threatened

the victim not to disclose investigation details and instructed them to visit a nearby UPS store to receive more details via fax. The caller insisted that the individual could not hang up during this conversation.

DOPL confirms that the caller, who offered a fake name to the licensee, is not a legitimate employee, and no such investigation exists. Victims have reported similar experiences involving threats of license suspension and demands for payment to avoid supposed fines or losing their license.

## Key Points for Licensed Professionals:

- Be aware that scammers will try any means necessary to keep potential victims on the phone.
- DOPL communicates with professionals before taking disciplinary action. Immediate threats are a clear indicator of a scam.
- Do not engage with the caller or provide any personal information. If you receive a call that seems suspicious, hang up immediately.
- Always verify the authenticity of any communication by contacting DOPL directly at 801-530-6628 or emailing doploutreach@utah.gov.

DOPL previously issued an <u>advisory</u> about similar scams targeting licensed professionals. Licensees reported scammers used similar tactics and even sent <u>authentic-looking letters</u> <u>featuring DOPL logos and official seals</u>, further misleading potential victims.

These recent reports indicate that the scammers are currently targeting healthcare licensees, but DOPL has seen similar imposter scams affecting other industry professionals. **All** licensed professionals should remain vigilant and cautious regarding unsolicited communications.

For further information or to report any suspicious activity, please contact DOPL directly.

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<u>About the Utah Division of Professional Licensing</u>: The Utah Division of Professional Licensing is one of 10 divisions/offices within the Utah Department of Commerce. Its mission is strengthening trust in Utah's professional workforce through effective licensing, balanced regulation, and consumer engagement to facilitate informed decisions. Consumers can find more information and submit complaints at dopl.utah.gov.