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**April 4, 2011**

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## **Ohio Recovers \$9.8 Million in Fraudulent Unemployment Compensation**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced today that it has recovered more than \$9.8 million in fraudulently obtained unemployment benefits issued during 2010.

ODJFS, which administers Ohio’s unemployment compensation program, has stepped up efforts to identify fraudulently obtained benefits and has introduced new fraud detection tools. Agency fraud investigators conduct electronic cross-matching of employer new hire reports and quarterly employers’ wage reports. They share data with the ODJFS Office of Child Support and the Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation, and investigate tips and leads from concerned citizens.

Most fraud overpayments occur when claimants return to work but fail to disclose the work and earnings to ODJFS.

“Unemployment fraud is a serious offense, and ODJFS is committed to ensuring that only proper benefits are paid,” ODJFS Director Michael Colbert said. “I applaud our staff for working diligently to recover these funds.”

ODJFS pursues criminal prosecution against individuals who egregiously commit fraud. In 2010, more than 150 individuals in Ohio were found guilty of unemployment theft or similar charges. In addition to facing potential criminal prosecution, those committing unemployment fraud must repay the improperly obtained funds with interest and may have future unemployment benefits withheld.

Recovered funds are returned to Ohio’s Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund, the fund that pays unemployment benefits to eligible Ohioans.

Last year, ODJFS disbursed more than \$5 billion in state and federal unemployment compensation, and the U.S. Department of Labor named Ohio the top-performing large state for quickly and accurately disbursing unemployment compensation benefits.

Anyone who believes an individual is collecting unemployment benefits to which he or she is not entitled should call the ODJFS fraud hotline at 800-686-1555.