



# News Release

Pat Quinn, Governor

Jay Rowell, Director

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## **Criminal Prosecutors Added to IDES to Fight Unemployment Benefits Fraud**

*New Positions Will Step Up Enforcement, Recoup Taxpayer Dollars and  
Prosecute Offenders*

**CHICAGO** – As part of Governor Quinn’s ongoing effort to combat unemployment fraud and protect taxpayer dollars, two prosecuting attorney positions have been created to assist the investigative staff at the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), Director Jay Rowell announced today.

Under Governor Quinn’s direction, the IDES and Attorney General’s partnership will enhance unemployment fraud enforcement efforts. The prosecutors, who are Assistant Attorneys General, will allow the IDES and the Attorney General’s office to increase fraud prosecutions involving the unemployment insurance program. The new IDES prosecutors also will allow the IDES to pursue criminal proceedings in cases that would have been targeted only for the recovery of the stolen benefit dollars, largely through tax garnishments.

"Unemployment insurance benefits are designed to help hard-working individuals and the small businesses they patronize survive an economic crisis. Stealing money from those who play by the rules hurts our economy and cannot be tolerated," Rowell said. "We will use every tool in our possession to help those who want to help themselves and prosecute scammers to the fullest extent of the law."

The Assistant Attorneys General, who have already begun work, will work under the direction of Attorney General Lisa Madigan, and will be paid through IDES funds.

"These attorneys will provide critical support in our ongoing efforts to recover money lost through fraud and criminal conduct," said Attorney General Lisa Madigan. "At a time when essential government programs are facing budget cuts and families throughout Illinois are struggling, we are working to ensure that unemployment insurance benefits are going to people who need them."

The IDES recovered \$73.8 million in stolen benefit payments between calendar years 2009-2011. More than \$42 million dollars has been collected in tax garnishments so far in 2012.

Governor Quinn identified three primary goals when he appointed Rowell less than one year ago: use benefit dollars to help families stay afloat during difficult economic times; protect taxpayers by guarding against waste, fraud and abuse; and transform the unemployment office into an employment agency by connecting workers ready to work with businesses ready to hire. Creating the two prosecuting positions helps achieve Gov. Quinn’s on-going objectives for the IDES.

