

March 13, 2020

**RAOUL: BERWYN MAN CHARGED WITH IMPERSONATING ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE
EMPLOYEE TO STEAL THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS**

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced that a Berwyn man was arrested and charged with posing as an employee of the Illinois Secretary of State's office, offering government jobs and other favors for cash payments and ultimately defrauding four Cook County residents of at least \$15,000.

Hugo Torres, 47, was arrested and charged with one count of theft by deception over \$10,000, a Class 2 felony, punishable by three to seven years in prison, and one count of theft by deception over \$500, a Class 3 felony, punishable by five to 10 years in prison. Torres was previously convicted in a similar scheme in which he posed as a supervisor for the Illinois Secretary of State and made phony promises of jobs with the Secretary of State's office. Torres has never been an employee of or affiliated in any capacity with the Secretary of State's office. Torres' bond is set at \$200,000, and he remains in custody.

"I am committed to holding accountable individuals who engage in employment scams that defraud victims who are in search of good-paying employment opportunities," Raoul said. "I will continue to partner with the Secretary of State's office and other agencies to pursue justice for the victims."

"I find the actions of this individual reprehensible," said Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White. "The Secretary of State Police and Attorney General's office have partnered successfully on this investigation, and I want to thank Attorney General Raoul for his commitment to obtaining justice in this case and for the victims."

White urges the public to call the Secretary of State Police if ever confronted by anyone offering jobs, driver's licenses or any other state services outside of the Secretary of State's Driver Services facilities. The public is urged to report suspicious incidents to the Illinois Secretary of State Police at 630-693-0551 or contact the Office of the Inspector General at 217-785-2012.

Raoul alleges there were at least four victims who shared similar stories of being approached by Torres, who claimed to be a supervisor with the Illinois Secretary of State's office looking to hire employees at various levels within the office. Torres typically charged \$400 in cash for fake application fees for a job exam. In some instances, Torres also falsely claimed he could provide assistance to obtain driver's licenses and help resolve traffic tickets in exchange for cash.

According to Raoul, this is the third time Torres has engaged in a scam to defraud people by impersonating a Secretary of State employee. Torres is on parole after pleading guilty to a charge of Class 3 theft on Sept. 8, 2016 in Will County, and a charge of Class 3 theft on Nov. 27, 2018, in Cook County for engaging in similar schemes.

Assistant Attorney General John Walz is handling the case for Raoul's Special Prosecutions Bureau. The case originated as an investigation by the Secretary of State Police.