

**Douglas A. Ducey, Governor**  
**Evan G. Daniels, Director**

## PRESS RELEASE

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Media Contact: James McGuffin  
[James.mcguffin@difi.az.gov](mailto:James.mcguffin@difi.az.gov)

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### **DIFI Fraud Unit Increases Staffing to Better Serve Southern Arizona**

The Arizona Department of Insurance and Financial Institutions (DIFI) Insurance Fraud Division has increased staffing to enhance service to southern Arizona communities.

Effective September 20, 2021, DIFI assigned one full-time special agent to the Tucson area and another special agent to split time between Tucson and Phoenix. The agents newly assigned to the Tucson metro area will focus on investigating insurance fraud in Arizona's southern counties of Pima, Graham, Greenlee, Santa Cruz, and Cochise.

These special agents will have the ability to develop a network with law enforcement and other stakeholders to share information and conduct investigations on fraud-related matters. The agents will work cooperatively with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Vehicle Theft Task Force and local insurance company special investigation units. A local presence in Tucson will allow for quicker response to industry and citizens living in Tucson and the southernmost areas of the state.

In FY21 (July 2020-June 2021), the DIFI Fraud Division received 3,548 insurance fraud referrals, often referred to as "questionable claims." DIFI Fraud Division investigations in FY21 resulted in court-ordered restitution in excess of \$1.8 million dollars, in addition to fines imposed by the court. Defendants' sentences ranged from probation to multi-year prison terms.

"Criminals committing or conspiring to commit insurance fraud should understand that nowhere in Arizona is safe for them to get away with their crimes," said DIFI Director Evan Daniels, "A full-time presence in Southern Arizona will devote needed resources towards questionable claims coming out of that part of the state and further develop coordination with our dedicated law enforcement counterparts."

The DIFI Insurance Fraud Division has eight AZPOST certified peace officers and is responsible for investigating insurance fraud committed in the State of Arizona. Insurance fraud affects insurance companies through financial loss and insurance consumers through increases in policy premiums.