



What are job scams?

When you are looking for employment, it can be wonderful to have an amazing job offer come to you with little to no effort. Unfortunately, students have to be careful with offers such as these, as there are people who will pose as employers or recruiters to get your money and/or your information. Many job scams involve sending money to the employer, depositing money into your account and withdrawing it to send somewhere or spend on something, and/or providing the employer with personal information before you have the job. This tip sheet can help you to identify some job scams and stay safe.

Warning signs the job posting/offer might be a scam

- Spelling and grammar errors.
- Blocked or unavailable phone number.
- Email address from an address (such as @hotmail or @gmail) that does not match the company's web domain.
- Your first contact is via a text message. Though not unheard of, this is not typical and can serve as a warning sign.
- You did not apply for the job. Though legitimate recruiters may reach out to you, use caution when dealing with anyone who contacts you first and keep an eye out for other warning signs.
- You need to provide money or banking information.
- You are offered the job without an interview.
- The job involves you depositing and then transferring or taking out money from your own account.
- High salaries, but no interview and/or vague job requirements.
- You are asked to give money. You will never have to pay true employers for materials, training, or screening before you have the job.
- Contact information and details that do not fit the company's website information. You can find this by researching the company online.
- They request your SIN or banking information before the employment offer. Employers will eventually need this information, but never give away this information before you have been hired.
- If the job seems too good to be true, it is probably fake!

Common job scams

Below are descriptions of some scams. These are not all of the job scams out there, but they are some common ones.

Moving money scams. Often called a "financial agent", "client manager", or "payment processor", these scams seem to be some of the most common with our students. The fake employer will deposit a cheque into your account. You will keep part of the money and send the rest of it to another person or business. The cheques are often fraudulent, so you end up sending your own money. You can potentially also become involved in illegal practices with these scams.

Mystery shopper scams. There are some legitimate mystery shopper employment opportunities, but this is also a common job scam. You may receive a text message or email or see an ad asking you to contact them for a mystery shopper opportunity. If you reply, you will receive a cheque in the mail and instructions to take out some of the money to spend at various stores as an assessment of those stores, and to send the rest of the money (via money order or transfer) as an assessment of various banks. The cheques end up being fraudulent and you send your own money.

Buying materials scams. The fake employers will have you deposit a (fraudulent) cheque and buy materials or equipment, such as software, etc., and send the rest of the money back to them. You do not get a job.

Car wrap advertising scams. Scammers will contact you and offer to pay you to wrap your car in an advertisement. You deposit a cheque you are sent and withdraw some of the money. You then deposit money into a specific bank account, which scammers say is to pay for the graphics. The cheques are fake.

Application/training/screening fee scams. Fraudsters will charge you an application, training, or screening (for background or credit checks) fee before employment and sometimes will guarantee employment at the end of it. You will pay money, but you will not get a job at the end. They also may send you a cheque to pay for these things, but the cheque will be fraudulent.

Phishing scams. Scammers will try to get your personal information by sending an unsolicited text or email responding to a resume you have posted. They will often say that you have the skills they need, but that they need some more information from you. Sometimes, they will direct you to an application or a background/credit check on their website that asks for personal information. This personal information can be used to steal your identity.

Reshipping scams. The fake employers will have you pick up and reship packages. They will not reimburse you, and they are often involved in illegal activities (moving stolen goods).

Recruitment agency scams. There are legitimate recruitment and placement agencies that can be fantastic for finding employment; however, agencies that place workers into temporary positions are prohibited by law to charge you any sort of fee. For agencies that place job seekers in permanent work, they can charge for services, such as resume reviews, etc., but they cannot charge for helping you find work. Keep in mind that you have these services available to you for free at the University of Windsor's Career Development and Experiential Learning.

Are you suspicious of a job posting or a job offer?

If you are suspicious or unsure about a job offer or job posting, email careerservices@uwindsor.ca or drop in at the Joyce Entrepreneurship Centre with the job posting/offer for advice.

You can also try Googling the company and job title followed by the word "fraud" or "scam". Often, other job seekers will post about recent scams and can sometimes verify your suspicions.

If you found the suspicious job on a job posting site, report it to the site host so they can investigate and take appropriate action.

If you suspect a posting or offer is a scam, contact:

- Windsor Police
 - info@police.windsor.on.ca
 - 519-255-6700
- Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre
 - <http://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/reportincident-signalerincident/index-eng.htm>
 - 1-888-495-8501

If you think you have been scammed, follow the instruction provided by Consumer Protection Ontario here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/report-scam-or-fraud>

Some of this content was adapted from Queen's University's *Recognizing and Protecting Yourself from Job Posting Scams* and Brock University's *Fraudulent Job Postings and Scams*.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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