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CONSUMER FACTSHEET

ONLINE JOB SCAMS



When using the Internet to look for jobs, you need to be aware that con artists are targeting job seekers to get their money or identity.

There are several types of online employment scams; one example targets consumers who have posted their resumes on the Internet. The job seekers are contacted by an individual claiming to represent a company and are informed that they have been selected to process the company's payments. The individual explains that the consumer will receive checks or money orders from buyers. They are instructed to deposit the checks into their own bank account, withhold a percentage as their pay, and wire or overnight the remaining balance to the business. Later the consumer discovers that the checks or money orders were counterfeit and they are now responsible to their bank for the money wired and any bank fees. There never was a job, only a scam.

Tips that a "job offer" may be a scam:

- You are told to pay an upfront employment processing fee.
- You are notified by email that you have the job, without any interview process.
- You are asked to submit your Social Security number or a copy of your driver's license for a background check. (Never give out information until you have researched the company.)
- You are chosen to be a "secret shopper", issued a check with instructions to shop at specific stores and wire a large amount of the check to the employer in order to evaluate the wire transfer company. Again, the check turns out to be counterfeit.
- The potential employer hires you for "re-shipping/quality control" to verify that their orders are shipped correctly. They are actually looking to hire you as a fence for items purchased with stolen credit.
- Checks or money orders are made out to you and not the company and sent without any exchange of a product or service.
- You are asked to deposit money into your personal bank account and then wire or overnight an amount to a third party.
- The potential employer sends messages from a webmail account only; most legitimate employers will email you from a company's email address.

REMEMBER, if you are looking for a job there are a variety of free and low-cost resources available to help job seekers in their search for employment, including local and state government job service offices such as the Department of Job and Family Services.