

# Identifying Fraudulent Employers and Job Scams

## Recognize & Avoid Job Scams

Some job scams are easy to spot, while others appear legitimate. So how do you know who to trust? You can start with these basic guidelines to avoid a potential scam.

## How To Identify Job Scams

There are many potential signs of a job scam. Here are some. Be wary if the job posting or email exhibits any of these signs:

- Email or contact you that you were not expecting to receive
- Asks for any money
- Asks for you to make purchases on their behalf, such as gift cards
- Asks for sensitive personal information
- The person is out of town or on a business trip and not physically able to meet
- Focuses on how much money you'll make. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Uses a generic email address such as @gmail.com or @yahoo.com (check on the actual email address used in the from the field or email address given as the reply to)
- References their company but don't use an email address from their company's domain
- Links to a fake or minimalist website
- Lists a company without an established physical office
- Has spelling errors or lacks a professional tone
- References getting your contact information from your university or career center

**If a company is legitimate, it usually takes them a while to sort through applications and respond to you. So be wary of immediate responses to your applications.**

## How to Avoid a Job Scam

Before you accept a job offer, and certainly before you pay for one, take these steps to protect yourself from job scams:

- **Do an online search.** Look up the name of the company or the person who's hiring you, plus the words "scam," "review," or "complaint." You might find out they've scammed other people.
- **Talk to someone you trust.** Describe the offer to them. What do they think? This also helps give you vital time to think about the proposal.
- **Don't pay for the promise of a job.** Legitimate employers, including the federal government, will never ask you to pay to get a job. Anyone who does is a scammer.
- **Never bank on a "cleared" check.** No legitimate potential employer will ever send you a check and then tell you to spend part of the money or buy gift cards with it. That's a fake check scam. The check will bounce, and the bank will want you to repay the amount of the fake check.

### Never:

- **Never give out personal information** like your social security or bank account number over email or phone.
- **Never take cashier's checks or money orders** as a form of payment. Fake checks are standard, and the bank where you cash them will hold you accountable.
- **Never cash a check that comes with "extra" money;** do not buy gift cards and send bar codes at an employer's request. Scammers send checks that require you to deposit a check at your bank, withdraw the "extra" money as cash, and then deposit that cash elsewhere. The check will bounce, and you will be held accountable.
- **Never wire funds** via Western Union, MoneyGram, or any other service. Anyone who asks you to wire money is a scammer.
- **Never agree to a background check** unless you have met the employer in person.
- **Never apply for a job emailed to you out of the blue.**

### Always:

- **Be skeptical.** If a job offers a lot of money for very little work, it could be a scammer trying to get personal information from you.
- **Research the employer.** Do they have a reputable website or professional references? Is the job listing you want to apply for also on their main career page? Note: work-study jobs may not be advertised on employer websites.
- **Meet face-to-face with a potential employer.** An in-person interview or informal chat over coffee will help you determine the employer's intentions.
- **Trust your instincts.** A job is likely a scam if it sounds too good to be true.

# How to report if you suspect you were scammed

## Report the Incident to the Police Department

If the solicitation was made through your school email or in service of any other university accounts, report to Campus PD by calling (909) 537-5165 to file a report. If the solicitation was not made through school accounts, contact your local police department for assistance.

## Contact the Career Center

If the job listing was through the Career Center via Handshake, [let us know](#) immediately. Then, we can remove the job posting. Our goal is to provide accurate job listing information on our website; however, we make no representations or guarantees about positions posted. You are responsible for your safety, wages, and working conditions.

## File with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

You will want to [file a complaint online](#) with the FTC. Check out their video on [reporting scams](#) and more [ways to avoid fraud](#).

## Protect yourself

Visit the [FTC website](#) for more details on protecting your identity and assets.



## Get in touch with us:

 (909) 537-5250

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