

Avoiding Job Scams

If it seems too good to be true....it usually is!

A growing trend in phishing scams takes advantage of students and new grads seeking employment. Chances are you're putting yourself out there, applying for jobs and hoping for the best. And suddenly along comes an email or text message that is offering you a job, no interview necessary, great (or at least decent) pay, and probably very little work required. **DO NOT REPLY!**

These phishing scams will require you to provide personal information, as you would expect with a new job. This will typically include your full name, address, phone number, and banking information.

Tips for staying vigilant

Look it up – If you believe it might be a scam try looking up information online. Enter in the email address or the person's name or some unique detail to see if search results are scam warnings, or at least very similar information on a job posting in another city or country.

Did you apply? – If you didn't apply for the position, and the person contacting you isn't a recruiter from a reputable company or recruitment firm, chances are it's a scam.

You saw the posting online – Scammers utilize websites like Kijiji, Craigslist, and Indeed to recruit potential victims. Always be sure you can find a company name and search their company website online, ensuring they have a physical address. This will help mitigate the risk that it is a fraudulent company.

What type of position is it? – Work from home or secret shopper jobs are more likely to be scams. Mainly because they're appealing to a student or new grad who is looking to supplement their income while they're in school or searching for their dream job.

Watch out for job offers that skip the interview – In these scams they will often claim to be out of the country, which is why they don't have time to interview or meet you before offering you employment. No reputable company or business person will make a job offer without having met you first.

Never spend money to get a job – A legitimate job or recruiter will never ask for money! There are some reputable multi-level marketing companies. If you consider these as viable businesses, remember that they are designed like a franchise. You are not employed by the company, you are an investor and self-employed sales agent of the brand/product/service.

If they want to send you a cheque, decline – Many of these phishing scams will claim they need to send you a cheque to spend for a business purpose, or they are out of the country so they will have a cheque sent to you to deposit to your financial institution on the agreement that you will provide the money to them at a later date. Once you spend the money previously deposited or re-issue a cheque out of your account you will be notified that the original cheque was fraudulent and the money spent your responsibility.

The email is legit, it's from Gmail – Be wary of an employer using a web-based email system, they are free and difficult to trace.

Check their email address in the posting – To achieve their objective, fraudsters may use an email address with a domain name that is identical or similar to that of the company to which they claim to be associated and may send forms or other documents bearing the name, logo or other trademark of the company in question.

With a bit of attention to detail, a fraudulent email address can be a big give-away. For example, a job posting for the University of Guelph-Humber: It provides legitimate contact information for someone that works at the University (Jane Doe), the website provided is the correct website (www.guelphhumber.ca), to apply you need to send your cover letter and resume via email (jane.doe@guellphumber.ca). Did you spot the difference? Notice there are 2 L's and 1 H in the email address, but the website only has 1 L and 2 H's. Let's try another one...

Job posting for a server at "Club Café Restaurants". All info seems legitimate. The website address is www.clubcaferesto.com, the email is jane.doe@clubcafesresto.com. Spot the difference? Take a closer look! The email address has an S ([clubcafeSresto.com](mailto:jane.doe@clubcafeSresto.com)), which is not in the web link.

If you're unsure about a job posting, visit your Career Services Coordinator for re-assurance.