

# Fraudulent Job Postings and Scams

*(Credit: Brock University Career Services)*

***If you have encountered a job scam on [CareerLink](#), please contact the [Student Employment and Career Centre](#) so that we can investigate the employer and advise you on additional steps you may need to take.***

Recent fraudulent postings typically involve the “employer” asking the candidate/job seeker to do one of the following:

- Send money from their own bank account to the “employer” (for pre-employment screening, training, etc.) via wire transfer or money order; the candidate never hears from them again and loses their funds.
- Deposit an “employer” cheque into the candidate’s account, immediately withdraw the funds, run minor errands for the employer and send the balance (often several thousand dollars) to the employer; the candidate is informed by their bank that the cheque is a fake, and the candidate is responsible for repaying the funds.
- Provide detailed personal information as part of the application process; the “employer” then uses the information for identity theft.

## Other Examples of Job Scams / Fraudulent Job Postings

*(Taken from Alison Dolye, About.com Job Searching)*

**Fake Job Application Scam:** This email asks to complete a job application online. The link takes you to a website where you are to fill out all info needed to steal your identity. The email says: “We look forward to reviewing your application and bringing you in for an interview, but cannot do so until you complete our company application.”

**Pay for Background Check Scam:** With this scam, a job seeker is told a position has just opened up and an over the phone interview is conducted. The applicant is notified that they would be responsible for the cost of the background check. Then the applicant is told that they have to purchase pre-paid \$75 Visa debit card and send it to the interviewer to pay for the background check.

**Pay for Software/Programs Scam:** The company ask applicants to set up a Yahoo Messenger account for the job briefing and interview. The company then explains that the applicant will need to buy programs in advance and say they will reimburse the candidate.

**Credit Report Scam:** Here's an email sent to a Craigslist applicant: Company would like to take this moment to thank you for your response to our Craigslist job posting, as well as inform you that, after reading through your resume, we are interested in discussing this job opportunity with you in person. In order to proceed to the next step of the hiring process you will need to get your credit score checked. The applicant is directed to a website where they will input personal information including name, address, social security number, etc.

**Bait and Switch Scam (PR/Marketing):** This job description isn't what it seems: Start entry-level, develop transferable skills, work with the world's leading corporations, advance to new positions, make money, and along the way figure out what you really want to be when you grow up. The job is actually door-to-door sales.

**Pay for Training Materials Scam:** The company asks candidates to complete interview tasks such as testing on accounting questions. Then they will tell you that they are going to set you up with software so you can work at home. Instead of a package they send a cashier's check. They ask the applicant to deposit the check into their bank then withdraw funds, and then send those funds Western Union to get the "training" materials.

**Pay for Online Training Scam:** In this scam, the job seeker receives an email from a person about a job they applied for that was filled. They had another job that the person was qualified for, but they had to pay to do some online training. This scam used the name of a legitimate company and an email address similar to the real company name.

**Direct Deposit Before Interview Scam:** The applicant is offered the job via email and told that all employees are paid via Direct Deposit with the company's banking institution - no additional cost for you. The applicant is sent to a website to sign up and told: "After registering your Direct Deposit confirmation, please respond back to this email with your ideal interview date/time. Remember, you need your Direct Deposit account info prior to your interview, as we will be processing your payment information at that time."

**Trial Employment Scam:** The applicant is told that they were selected as one of two people to go through a three-week trial period. The name of the company and the website seem legitimate, but they ask you to fill out a contract with personal information including your SIN number

## Red Flags and Tips

*(Lisa Kuiper, Career Services, Brock University)*

**Do Not Accept or Pay Money** — Do not accept (or cash) cheques (i.e. for running errands for the employer or transferring funds as part of your job). No legitimate employer will ask you to do this.

**Pay for pre-employment screening** - You should not have to pay for any type of training, screening, etc., until the company actually hires you. Note, some employers will ask for a police check; sometimes the candidates are asked to provide this as a condition of employment. In this case, the candidate pays for the police check (directly to the police, not the employer); the police will provide the report to the candidate to take to the employer. Some positions may require a credit check; the employer should pay for that, not the applicant. If there is online training required, it is usually provided by the employer (at their cost).

**Research the Company** — Do your homework and visit the company website (search by company name). If they don't have one or it doesn't match what was included in the job description, this could be a problem. Dig a bit further by searching under company name, followed by the term "scam" or "fraud" - this might reveal any reported problems involving the company.

**Job Description** — Review the job description carefully. Lack of or incomplete information or a vague description (salary not stated, missing company or contact information), could indicate a problem. Also, be wary when the job description changes significantly from what was posted. Be especially careful of employers located outside the country who are hiring for work in Canada.

**Get Rich Quick Scams** — Avoid applying for jobs that guarantee you great/instant financial success or will help you "get rich quick". Steer clear of job postings that offer you high income for part-time hours – if it sounds too good to be true, it's probably a scam.

**Job Offers** — Be very wary when contacted for a job you never applied for. This can be a tricky one, especially in light of increased social media usage by employers. You should be suspicious of being offered a job without applying for one, or without being interviewed, especially if they ask for detailed personal information before you will be interviewed (do NOT provide it!).

**Fake Interview** — If the interview process seems a little bit too easy, there might be a reason why. Make sure you ask direct questions to be sure the company and job are legitimate. No employer will tell you "you'll just have to see it to believe it"; walk away from any job where the employer cannot be very specific about your duties, responsibilities and wages.

**Banking/Personal Information** — Do not provide your SIN or banking information before the offer of employment; NEVER give this information out over the phone or in online applications. A legitimate employer will need that information, but not until you actually start the job; you can provide this information to them in person on your first day, or when you sign your employment contract.