

# JOB SCAMS



## IS THIS A REAL JOB?

"Lots of positions available"

"Act now!"

"No skills or experience necessary"

"Earn \$\$\$1000's weekly"

"All you have to do is sign up. Easy work."

## What is a Job Scam?

It is a false promise of work made to take money from people looking for a job. Unfortunately, job scams are common. Once you pay money to a company, it may be hard to get your money back.

## Tips to Avoid Job Scams

### 1 Is the company legal?

**Get as much contact information as you can** when you research a potential employer. Make sure you have the employer's first and last name, address, fax, phone numbers, and any other useful information like a head office, website or email address. If the company is not willing to give any of this information, do not pay them. It will be hard to find them if this is a job scam.

### 2 Do Not Pay to Work!

**No employer should ask you to pay a fee before you start working.** Examples of fees include payment for supplies, uniforms, equipment, training, transportation, placement fees, or application processing costs. Some will ask you for your credit card number. In some cases, after you have been hired, you may be asked to buy your own uniform - this is legal.

If your money interests the company more than your skills and experience, it's probably a job scam. Trust your instinct. Don't pay anything if it does not feel right.

### 3 Get on-the-job training

Watch out for employers or placement agencies that **make you pay for training to get a job.**

Often, employers provide some kind of training when you start a new job. **You should be paid for training**, especially if you are doing the same kind of work that you are trained for. Since you are getting ready to work for the company, you are entitled to pay for each hour that you are there.

### 4 Don't be pressured to sign any contracts

**Make sure you know exactly what the contract means before signing it.** Ask for time to think about the contract before you sign it. If you sign a contract, it does not mean you are agreeing to the illegal parts of the contract.

### 5 Watch out for fees deducted from your pay

**It is illegal for employers to deduct money for equipment, damage, or "faulty work".** It is also illegal for your boss to make deductions for cash shortage or stolen goods if you are not the only person to have had access to the cash or goods, and if you have not signed a written agreement.

## SARITA'S STORY

Sarita saw a job ad for security positions and went to apply. At the office, she was told that she would be guaranteed a job as a security desk attendant if she paid \$250 to complete a weekend security training program. Sarita agreed. After the training, she didn't hear from the company. She called and was told that they were finding her a job, but there was no guarantee she would get a job. She has no copy of the contract and the agency is not returning her calls.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

**It is important to prevent this situation from happening. If you are owed money, what can you do?**

- First, **write down a detailed description** of what happened. Include dates, times, places, actions, things said, witnesses, and license plate numbers. You might need this information later on.
- Demand your money back!** Go with co-workers, friends or family to the company. Get as many co-workers as possible to pressure the company for a better chance to get your money back.
- Did this company advertise in a newspaper? You can call that newspaper and ask them why they accept ads from companies doing job scams. **Have as many people as possible call the newspaper** with the same message. Help stop this company from cheating more people!
- If you saw the job ad at an employment centre, tell them what happened, ask them to take down that ad, and **ask the employment centre staff to call the company** who placed the ad.
- If you know other workers cheated by this company, the Workers' Action Centre can help you and your co-workers figure out what else can be done. **We can publicize this company's practices and get the word out together!**
- If they took your first week's pay as a 'fee', **it is illegal**. Contact us for ideas on how we can take action against this company.
- Some employers have made workers sign contracts that say they are "independent contractors". Companies do this to avoid labour laws. Often, even when you sign this type of contract, you are still an employee. **You cannot sign away your rights as an employee**. Call us for more details and to see if you could be eligible for benefits such as Employment Insurance (EI).

## GET SUPPORT.

**Workers' Action Centre**  
**(416) 531-0778**  
**[www.workersactioncentre.org](http://www.workersactioncentre.org)**



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