

Avoiding Job Scams

With the proliferation of technology, job scams are flourishing! Job searchers must be alert for those claiming to be employers who are looking for an easy way to phish for information and the ability to steal the applicant's identity and money. Although the Schar School's Office of Career Development reviews advertised positions and takes steps to verify the legitimacy of job postings, we cannot guarantee that every advertised position is legitimate or appropriate for you. You must also take steps to determine whether a potential job matches your skills and interests, and if a potential job is legitimate. The following tips will help you research a company.

DO YOUR RESEARCH BEFORE SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

- Google the name of the company to find its webpage, LinkedIn page and Facebook page.
- Search the company name along with the terms "scam" or "rip off".
 - This search might alert you to any reports of a questionable job announcement.
- When visiting the company's website, look for contact information. If there is no contact information listed, including a physical (street) address, or the information is not active (i.e. phone is disconnected), consider that a warning sign.
- Review the Better Business Bureau's profile on the company.

JOB POSTING RED FLAGS TO CONSIDER

- The organization requests for sensitive information such as driver's license number, social security number, bank account information or credit report; or scanned/copies of documents containing this information.
- Ad sounds too good to be true, requires little experience or few hours for high pay.
- Poor grammar, missing punctuation, and/or misspelled words.
- Inconsistencies throughout the posting (ie: the same contact person is listed multiple times, but with different titles).
- Employers with contact email using a consumer domain, such as yahoo.com, gmail.com, or hotmail.com.
- Offer of a job without an interview.
- Employer without web presence in multiple places (website, LinkedIn profile, Facebook page) and/or only job announcements online (no company information, press releases, etc.)
- Requires payment for training, relocation, etc.
- Company asks you to pay for a credit report as part of the application process.
- Employer asks for you to cash a check and forward some of the money to a third party.
- Salary details are not clear. If the company does not pay an hourly rate or salary, carefully investigate the details.

IF YOU ARE SUSPICIOUS OF A JOB POSTING OR HAVE BEEN THE VICTIM OF A JOB SCAM

Please contact Schar School Career Services at 703-993-3188 or at dbradsha@gmu.edu for further guidance and information. You may also consider filing an incident report through the Federal Trade Commission at the Department of Justice: <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#crnt&panel1-1>. Additional information about researching a suspicious posting and what to do if you are a victim can be found at: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0243-job-scams#Signs>