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How to Avoid Job Scams During the Holiday Season

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Are you among the many people who look for seasonal work over the holidays? [The National Retail Federation](#) predicts that retailers could add as many as 650,000 new temporary positions over the 2018 winter holiday season.

Many consumers are scrambling to apply but some of those postings may not even be real.

During the holiday season, scammers look to take advantage of those seeking temporary work. In 2017, over 2,400 employment scams were reported to BBB Scam Tracker.

— *an announcement from the Better Business Bureau*

According to the BBB Risk Index, the employment scam is the third riskiest scam for all consumers. It is also the riskiest scam for students and those between the ages of 25 and 34.

The BBB suggests being aware of these red flags in order to avoid employment scams that try to steal your personal information, money or hard work.

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<https://darienite.com> **employment scam.** No legitimate job would ever overpay an employee and ask him/her to wire the money elsewhere.

You should also be wary if someone wants you to make an advanced payment or buy materials to start working from home. You should not have to pay money to start a job. Scam artists will often ask you to wire payments (especially to destinations in other countries) because they know it's harder to get your money back.

Some positions are more likely to be scams. Always be wary of [work-from-home offers](#), [secret shopper positions](#) or jobs with generic titles such as caregiver or customer service representative. These positions often don't require special training or licensing, so they appeal to a wide range of applicants.

See also:

- "[Police: Darien Teen Gets Close to Being Scammed in Summer Job Scheme](#)" (May 2017)

Job scam tips from the Federal Trade Commission:

- [A scam story: Secret shopping and fake checks](#) (May 16)
- [Work-at-home scams lead to business coaching schemes](#) (May 17)
- [Work from home business scam sidelined](#) (June 11)
- [Promoter pitches "secrets" to big bucks on Amazon](#) (Aug. 6)

Watch out for on-the-spot job offers or job offers from strangers. You may be an excellent candidate for the job, but beware of offers made on the spot or after a brief online chat. If someone offers you a job without getting an application from you, meeting you, or doing an interview, it's probably a scam.

Big bucks for simple tasks. Be wary of positions that promise a large salary for minimal effort, skill or perks well above similar positions. If similar jobs offer to pay \$10/hour and this position pays \$20/hour, chances are that there's a catch.

Nowhere is scam-free. You may think that sites like LinkedIn and other well-established, reputable job sites are free of scammers but they aren't. Employment scams are everywhere. Whenever you receive unsolicited contact from a recruiter or employer, whether it be on a website, email, or by phone, be careful.

Businesses are often impersonated. Scammers will often pretend to be from a real company, create look-alike websites and send emails from addresses that appear legitimate.

Look up the company independently through a search engine, and go to the company's website to verify the position is posted. If not, get in contact with someone from the business to make sure the job exists and it

isn't a scam.

Do your research. Look up the business online. Start at bbb.org to see their BBB Rating and if there are red flags in their complaint history or past reviews. Look at other review websites as well, and see if there are negative reviews about the business or if it has been impersonated in the past.

There is no contact information. Be cautious if a company is trying to get you to accept a job, but does not have a physical location or address available. A cell phone number and website address are not enough to prove the business exists.

Refusal to give you full details in writing. Ask for complete information in writing. Look carefully at any documentation they might provide to make sure it answers all of your questions. If they won't give details or don't respond to questions, don't do business with them.

If you encounter an employment scam, make sure to report it to [BBB Scam Tracker](#).