



SAFERjobs: Fighting UK Job Fraud

Job scams and fake jobs pose a serious threat to job seekers. Fraudsters prey on both those actively seeking jobs, and those approached via social media for that next career move. The aim is to defraud individuals by extracting money for jobs or services which do not exist, or by extracting personal information from the individual for the purpose of fraud.

The Daily Telegraph named job scams as 1 of their Top 10 scams to watch out for in 2014, high profile cases have been covered by BBC News, Fake Britain, and the One Show in the last 6 months profiling scams involving high street names such as Harrods and with values as high as £1million.

How does this affect you?

We have all looked for a job at one time or another, and many of us are on LinkedIn or similar networking sites, where fraudsters pose as genuine companies or recruiters to defraud the unsuspecting.

Job fraud covers both fraud aimed at job seekers, as well as employment fraud committed against organisations, often by people who have committed application fraud to get the job in the first place.

Most financially-motivated job scams are known as advance fee fraud and occur where the fraudster requests money upfront from job seekers for job-related services. Common advance fee fraud include asking job seekers for money in advance for screening checks (such as police checks), informing job seekers their profile matches the great new job but they need to use a CV writing service first, arranging an interview using a premium rate telephone number, or charging upfront for visas or administration services.

Job scams exist with any level of role from entry level to boardroom. The cash value of the scams aimed at job seekers varies significantly, from £50 to uncapped amounts for travel, visa, and legal fees during the job process.

Genuine companies are affected too, either by fraudsters copying their website or logo, or by copying their readily available job ads. Fraudsters then act as an employee of the organisation, or as a dedicated recruiter, to defraud individuals into thinking they are going through the job process. Even legitimate recruiters have been duped by fraudsters who have advertised fake

jobs and posed as genuine self-employed contractors to gain payment for work never completed (known as contractor fraud).

How do we stop this?

SAFERjobs (www.safer-jobs.com) are a voluntary, non-profit organisation created to tackle job-related fraud and to protect job seekers in their search. SAFERjobs work in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, National Crime Agency, Department for Business, Innovation, and Skills (BIS), and the main recruitment industry trade associations (APSCo, the REC, and TEAM).

SAFERjobs offer free and expert advice to the public in order to prevent any financial losses. Through this SAFERjobs prevent thousands of pounds of fraud a month but there is still so much more to be done. Action Fraud and BIS signpost jobseekers to SAFERjobs whenever they get a report of job-related scams which has helped SAFERjobs to collate data that can be shared with organisations and job seekers to protect those searching for a new role, or companies looking to hire.

By sharing potential fraud, SAFERjobs can act quickly to advise job seekers and organisations. By sharing actual fraud, SAFERjobs can continue to update advice to others in a bid to stop the same fraud from reoccurring.

Why Report Fraud to SAFERjobs?

SAFERjobs offer free advice on both potential and actual fraud, SAFERjobs always welcome and encourage any job seeker and organisations to report a situation they are suspicious about. SAFERjobs are committed to helping job seekers stay safe in the job search.

SAFERjobs investigate every report of suspected or actual fraud and provide free, expert advice to the public on next steps. If the issue is not criminal, but relates to professional misconduct in the recruitment sector, SAFERjobs report this to the main recruitment trade associations, as well as to BIS.

Cracking down on the growing issue of fake recruiters SAFERjobs receive numerous reports of bogus recruitment companies. Sadly it seems all too easy to create a recruitment company website and begin offering fake jobs. We advise all job seekers on how best to engage with recruitment businesses and what telltale signs to look out for.

All information is anonymous and used to create future guidance to job seekers and organisations to help protect people in future by educating people on current scams. The key to tackling job fraud is increased awareness and education of this growing issue.

Follow SAFERjobs on Twitter (@RosserKeith) and LinkedIn (<http://linkd.in/1ytjgsy>) for advice on how to stay safe in the job search.