

Quick Tips

Here's How to Protect Yourself (continued)

- Refuse to sign any contract until you have read it, fully understand it and get a copy of it.
- Get all promises in writing.
- In the case of a business opportunity, get a lawyer, accountant or business adviser to read the disclosure document and give you their advice.
- Protect your personal information. Don't give your banking information, credit card number or Social Insurance Number to an agency.
- Use free job search services available from different levels of government and other agencies, the internet and libraries and let family and friends know you are looking for work.

If the business opportunity is operated wholly or in part in Ontario, the province's franchise laws may apply. For a copy of the *Arthur Wishart (Franchise Disclosure) 2000 Act*, go to www.e-laws.gov.on.ca.

In cases where the job hunter was hired as an "employee" of a company, the Ministry of Labour's employment standards legislation may apply. For information regarding employment standards legislation, visit the Ministry of Labour's website at www.labour.gov.on.ca

Ontario consumers with questions, complaints or comments regarding employment scams can call the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services' Consumer Protection Branch at **1-800-889-9768** or **416-326-8800**.

Visit the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services' Consumer Protection Branch's website at www.ontario.ca/consumerprotection for information on topics such as:

- Home Renovations
- Real estate fraud
- Car repairs
- Cancelling a contract
- Gift cards
- Identity Theft – and more.

To find out about your rights as a consumer, how to file a complaint against a business and ways you can protect yourself in the marketplace, please contact:

Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services

Consumer Protection Branch
p | 416-326-8800 | 1-800-889-9768
e | consumer@ontario.ca
w | ontario.ca/consumerprotection

Order a free copy of our Smart Consumer Calendar at www.serviceontario.ca/publications or call **(416) 326-5300** in the Greater Toronto Area or toll-free at **1-800-668-9938**.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EMPLOYMENT SCAMS



Smart consumers are
good for business.

Ontario is a leader in consumer protection and has clear rules for consumers and businesses. Know your rights – shop smart and protect yourself in the marketplace.



Job Hunting Traps

Looking for a job is stressful enough without losing money in the process. A number of fraudulent employment agencies take advantage of job hunters who are eager to get to work by promising employment for a fee. Beware if you are asked to pay for:

- Specialized job training in exchange for a “guaranteed” job.
- An upfront fee to a job placement company to get a dream job.
- An upfront investment fee for an “outstanding” business opportunity.

Typical Employment Scams

Here are some typical employment scams to watch out for:

“Guaranteed” Jobs

Look out for ads that offer to train you for a guaranteed job and high starting salary with the same company that offers the training. This “training” often does not lead to a job with the company – or any other employers who may not recognize your certification.

Phoney Employment Agencies

Watch out for employment agencies that prey on people who have posted their resumes online or with a job-search engine. These companies will invite you to an interview and promise you a job with a large annual salary. You are then pressured to sign a contract and asked to pay an administration fee for the job placement service. After that, you may never hear from the company again or are given a list of companies to approach for work. These companies may never have heard of the employment agency you’ve signed up with and may have no work to offer you. If you complain, the employment agency will tell you to read “the fine print” in their contract, which says employment is not guaranteed.

Bogus Business Opportunities

Keep an eye out for companies that advertise specialized business opportunities, such as office cleaning. The ads will promise you a contract in exchange for an “investment fee” of several thousand dollars. The paperwork will suggest you are a “partner” or “sub-contractor” and you may even be encouraged to register your business separately from the company. The company may guarantee you will have a certain number of clients within a certain timeframe – or even promise to refund your investment fee – but fail to follow through on these promises.

Quick Tips

Here are some tips to keep in mind about employment scams:

Beware of:

- Companies that ask for payment upfront.
- Claims of high salaries for jobs with minimum education requirements and “no experience necessary.”
- Guaranteed job placements that sound too good to be true.
- Heavy pressure to sign right away and threats that the offer will be “gone tomorrow.”
- Spoken promises that are not included in the written contract.

Ask Questions:

- What services do you offer?
- Do you place clients?
- How much does the service cost?
- Who pays for the service (the prospective employer as a recruitment fee or the prospective employee)?

Here’s How to Protect Yourself

- Be suspicious of any employment agency that promises or guarantees you a job.
- Walk away from anyone who won’t give you clear, straight answers.
- Follow up with the head office of the company listed in an ad by an employment agency to find out if that company is actually hiring.
- Never pay money in advance for a job opportunity.