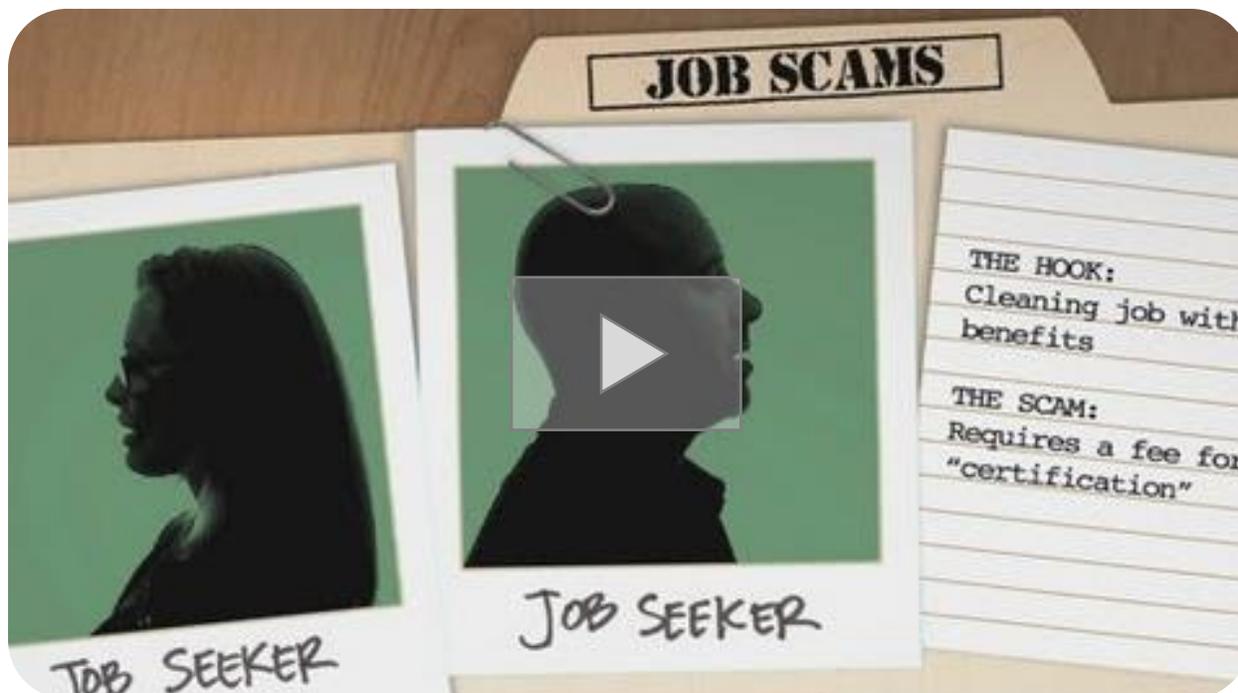


# Job Scams

Scammers know that finding a job can be tough. To trick people looking for honest work, scammers advertise where real employers and job placement firms do. They also make upbeat promises about your chances of employment, and virtually all of them ask you to pay them for their services before you get a job. But the promise of a job isn't the same thing as a job. If you have to pay for the promise, it's likely a scam.



Job Scams Video – courtesy of the Federal Trade Commission.

## Signs of a Job Scam

Scammers advertise jobs where legitimate employers do — online, in newspapers, and even on TV and radio. Here's how to tell whether a job lead may be a scam:

### You need to pay to get the job

They may say they've got a job waiting, or guarantee to place you in a job, if you just pay a fee for certification, training materials, or their expenses placing you with a company. But after you pay, the job doesn't materialize. Employers and employment firms shouldn't ask you to pay for the promise of a job.

### You need to supply your credit card or bank account information

Don't give out your credit card or bank account information over the phone to a company unless you're familiar with them and have agreed to pay for something. Anyone who has your account information can use it.

## Job Placement Services

Many job placement services are legitimate. But others lie about what they'll do for you, promote outdated or fake job openings, or charge up-front fees for services that may not lead to a job. In fact, they might not even return your calls once you pay.

Before you enlist a company's help:

### Check with the hiring company

If a company or organization is mentioned in an ad or interview, contact that company to find out if the company really is hiring through the service.

### Get details — in writing

What's the cost, what will you get, and who pays — you or the company that hires you? What happens if the service doesn't find a job — or any real leads — for you? If they're reluctant to answer your questions, or give confusing answers, you should be reluctant to work with them.

Get a copy of the contract with the placement firm, and read it carefully. A legitimate company will give you time to read the contract and decide, not pressure you into signing then and there. Make sure any promises — including refund promises — are in writing. Some listing services and "consultants" write ads to sound like jobs, but that's just a marketing trick: They're really selling general information about getting a job — information you can find for free on your own or at any PA CareerLink®.

### Know whether it's job placement or job counseling

Executive or career counseling services help people with career directions and decisions. They may offer services like skills identification and self-evaluation, resume preparation, letter writing, and interview techniques, and general information about companies or organizations in a particular location or job field.

But job placement isn't guaranteed. Fees can be as high as thousands of dollars, and you often have to pay first.

### Check for complaints

Your [local consumer protection agency](#), [state Attorney General's Office](#), and the [Better Business Bureau](#) can tell you whether any complaints have been filed about a company. Just keep in mind that a lack of complaints doesn't mean the business is on the up-and-up. You may want to do an internet search with the name of the company and words like *review*, *scam*, or *complaint*. Look through several pages of search results. And check out articles about the company in newspapers, magazines, or online, as well.

For more information, please visit the [Federal Trade Commission](#).

## Report a Job Scam

If you feel you have been targeted by a job scam, do not provide any information, and contact the Department of Labor & Industry immediately at [jobgateway@pa.gov](mailto:jobgateway@pa.gov).