

NEWS FROM SCDC

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSUMER AFFAIRS CAUTIONS ABOUT SEARCHING FOR JOBS ONLINE

Columbia, SC.....The current economy has not provided much relief for consumers and businesses. For many, business and income are coming in slowly these days; however, online job search engines are among the few staying quite busy. With millions of consumers looking for employment or supplemental income, these services are in demand more now than ever. Unfortunately, scammers have not missed a beat and are wreaking havoc through these sites.

Disguised as convenient, well-paying jobs, work-at-home scams are weaving their way through the pages of many reputable and trusted online job search websites. Reports from consumers have described various job offers advertised on sites such as Career Builders, Monster Jobs, Yahoo Hot Jobs, and others.

One offer described an available position for a delivery person. The consumer was asked to work out of their home as a third party shipper delivering packages internationally. Other schemes include envelope stuffing jobs or at-home sales opportunities that are nothing more than cleverly disguised pyramid schemes. In most cases, these “scam jobs” are posted directly on the job search website. Some scammers, however, will post listings that direct the consumer to another web page after clicking on a link. The consumer may believe they are still operating within the pages of the search engine when, in fact, they are not.

About the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs:

Established by the Consumer Protection code in 1974, The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs represents the interests of South Carolina Consumers.

Our mission is to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, mediation, enforcement and education.

For more information, visit www.scconsumer.gov.

Experts say work-at-home offers provide a legitimate lead roughly once for every 55 offers. In other words, odds are high that pursuing one of these leads will result in lost dollars or worse. Regardless of how reputable the job search engine may be, scammers have the same access to post jobs as legitimate employers. Consumers should keep in mind that while the search engine may be trustworthy, individual companies and positions should be checked and verified separately. Consumers should also be wary of emails from “employers” that respond to the consumer’s posted resume but do not have a job listed online.

Tips Before Applying Online:

- Verify the company’s history and background separately from the job search site.
- Do not provide financial information.
- Take caution before paying for job search services.
- Do not click on links in emails from job search sites.

For more information, contact the Public Information Division at 803.734.4190, toll free in SC at 1.800.922.1594, or online at www.sccoconsumer.gov.