

# Job scam awareness guide

## Protect yourself from fraudulent job offers

### Introduction

As a growing number of Ukrainian refugees and migrants seek employment, scammers are taking advantage of vulnerable job seekers by posing as legitimate employers or recruitment agencies. These scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated, often mimicking real organisations with official-looking documents, websites and communication.

The purpose of this guide is to help you stay informed, recognise red flags, and protect yourself and others from scams, regardless of where you apply. By understanding how these scams operate and what to look for, job seekers can protect themselves and others from falling victim.



### Understanding job scams

A job scam is a fraudulent scheme in which someone poses as an employer or recruiter to deceive a candidate, usually with the intention of stealing money or personal information. Scammers often exploit the urgency and need for employment to pressure individuals into taking quick action without verifying the legitimacy of the offer.

### Key characteristics of job scams

- Fake job listings that appear on trusted platforms
- Impersonation of real companies using slightly altered contact details
- Requests for upfront payments for visas, relocation, or background checks
- Fake recruitment agencies or visa offices
- Professional-looking documents that mimic real offer letters, contracts, and application forms

## Common warning signs of fraudulent job offers

|  <b>Warning sign</b>         |  <b>Why it's a red flag</b> |
|---|--|
| Requests for upfront payments (visa processing, accommodation, administrative fees).                          | Legitimate employers do not require candidates to pay for job offers or visas.                               |
| Communications from free/suspicious email domains (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, or slightly misspelled company names). | Fraudsters often mimic real companies using lookalike email addresses.                                       |
| Job offer received without an interview.  | Real companies require interviews and proper verification before offering a role.                            |
| Unusual urgency or pressure to act quickly.   | Scammers often push candidates to respond or pay quickly to avoid questions.                                 |
| Instructions to communicate only via messaging apps like WhatsApp or Telegram.                                | Legitimate recruitment is typically done via professional and verifiable channels.                           |
| The role sounds “too good to be true”.  | Unrealistic salaries, benefits, or job descriptions are common tactics to lure applicants.                   |



### How to protect yourself as a job seeker

To stay safe while searching for work, particularly internationally, follow these best practices:

1. Do **NOT** pay for a job offer

- No legitimate employer or agency will ask you to pay for a visa, training, recruitment or application processing.

2. **Verify** the employer

- Research the company through its official website, LinkedIn, and other trusted websites and official pages.
- Contact the employer through verified email addresses or phone numbers listed on their website.
- Cross-check the job listing with the company's official careers page.

### 3. Confirm **email addresses** and domains

- Pay close attention to email addresses. Scammers may use addresses that differ from the real company domain by just one character.

### 4. Insist on a **formal interview process**

- A proper hiring process should include at least one interview with a company representative, either virtually or in person. Be cautious if you are offered a position without an interview.

### 5. Be cautious with **personal information**

- Do not send copies of your passport, ID, or bank details until you have confirmed the legitimacy of the employer and have signed a verified employment contract.

### 6. Use **trusted platforms**

- Apply only through reliable job platforms that have employer verification systems in place. Report any suspicious job postings or messages to the platform administrators.




## **Real case: Attempted job scam on a recruitment platform**

In March 2025, a job seeker applied to a position at a hotel in London via a recruitment platform. After submitting her application, she was contacted by someone impersonating a hotel representative using a nearly identical email address to the real hotel.

The scammer provided official-looking documents, including a job offer and accommodation arrangements. Eventually, she was referred to a supposed UK visa office that requested a 1,200 euros fee. She was about to transfer the money via MoneyGram when a branch employee warned her that the recipient appeared fraudulent. After further investigation and contact with the real hotel, she confirmed it was a scam.

The incident was reported to:

- The Ukrainian Embassy in Bucharest
- The recruitment platform staff
- The hotel involved

 This case illustrates how professional and convincing scams can appear. It is crucial to remain cautious and follow safety protocols throughout your job search.

## Steps to take if you suspect a scam

1. **Cease all communication** immediately
2. Do **NOT** send any money or provide further personal information
3. **Report** the incident to:
  - Jobs for Ukraine support team ([inspector@jobs4ukr.com](mailto:inspector@jobs4ukr.com))
  - The Embassy or Consulate
  - The impersonated employer (via their official contact information)

## Useful resources

### 1. IOM: Guide for safer employment for refugees

<https://romania.iom.int/news/guide-safer-employment-refugees>

- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has developed a practical guide, offering clear steps on how refugees and migrants can safely navigate job searches, avoid exploitation, and recognize legitimate opportunities.

### 2. IOM: Recognising legitimate employment (video animation)

<https://romania.iom.int/news/recognizing-legitimate-employment-ukrainian-dubbed-animation>

- A short, easy-to-understand animated video (with Ukrainian voiceover) that explains how to spot fake job offers and verify real employment opportunities. Ideal for quick learning and awareness.

### 3. LiberatED: Guide on Recognising Legitimate Employment

<https://www.liberated.global/labour-trafficking?rq=legitimate%20employment>

- The guide highlights red flags of untrustworthy job offers, how to verify employers, and what steps to take to avoid exploitation or trafficking.

**!** Your safety is our highest priority. While Jobs for Ukraine takes proactive steps to monitor and vet employers, no platform is completely immune to attempted fraud. Staying informed and vigilant is the best defense. **If you are ever unsure about a job opportunity, please contact our support team ([contact@jobs4ukr.com](mailto:contact@jobs4ukr.com)). We are here to help.**