

EMPLOYMENT SCAMS

Trap

Bob from Lake Worth saw an ad in the newspaper for a job in corporate finance. He faxed his detailed resume and personal information as requested to the 800 number. He received a call almost immediately from a woman who said her company works with many businesses to find employees to fill their positions. He was told the fee was \$495 but would be refundable if he found a job on his own or was dissatisfied with their efforts. Bob wired the money but never got any interviews and now cannot reach the company.

Tips

- Be skeptical of any employment service firm that charges first, even if it guarantees a refund. Obtain a copy of the firm's contract and read it carefully before sending any money.
- Avoid vague offers. "*We work with major companies*" or "*We have thousands of jobs*" are red flags.
- Be leery of ads guaranteeing employment or offering too good to be true salaries with no experience necessary.
- Limit personal information on your resume. Do not divulge your Social Security number, driver's license number or financial information before a face to face interview and job offer. (Crooks are taking advantage of the unemployed by posting fake job ads and using your personal information to steal money or assume your identity.)

Free and low-cost resources are available for your job search:

- All federal government jobs are on <http://www.usajobs.gov>.
- Federally funded and state operated Public Employment Service (also known as Job Service) provides internet access to America's Job Bank (AJB). They post vacancies and also offer counseling and referrals to other job resources (<http://www.ajb.dni.us>).
- Local libraries can direct you to information on writing a resume, interviewing or compiling a list of companies to contact.
- Also check with the Federal Trade Commission (<http://www.ftc.gov>); Privacy Rights Clearinghouse (<http://www.privacyrights.org>); and World Privacy Forum (<http://worldprivacyforum.org>).

For more information, call Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs at 561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray residents call 1-888-852-7362 toll free)