

Tip of the Month - October, 2012

Beware of Job Hunting Scams!

Recent figures released by the Department of Statistics indicate that the average rate of unemployment in The Bahamas hovers, around 14.7%. This suggests that many Bahamians may be job-hunting but they must also be vigilant when responding to ads offering help in obtaining employment. Some firms may be legitimate and helpful, but others may misrepresent their services, promote out-dated or fictitious job offerings, or charge high fees in advance for services that may not lead to a job.

Bahamians are encouraged to use the services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development which has an online skills bank for jobs available at www.bahamas.gov.bs/labor

In addition, below is a “TO DO” list (as amended) suggested by the USA Federal Trade commission, which you should follow BEFORE you spend money responding to placement firms or completing placement contracts:

- Reject any company that promises to get you a job.
- Be skeptical of any employment-service firm that charges first, even if it guarantees refunds.
- Get a copy of the firm’s contract and read it carefully before you pay any money. Understand the terms and conditions of the firm’s refund policy. Make sure you understand what services the firm will provide and what you’ll be responsible for doing. If oral promises are made, but don’t appear in the contract, think twice about doing business with the firm.
- Take your time reading the contract. Don’t be caught up in a rush to pay for services. Stay away from high-pressure sales pitches that require you to pay now or risk losing out on an opportunity.
- Be cautious about purchasing services or products from a firm that’s reluctant to answer your questions.

- Be aware that some listing services and “consultants” write their ads to sound like they are jobs when they’re only selling general information about getting a job.
- Follow up with the offices of any company or organization mentioned in an ad or an interview by an employment service to find out if the company is really hiring.
- Check with your local government employment agency, Attorney General’s Office, and the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce to see if any complaints have been filed about a company with which you intend to do business. You also may contact these organizations if you have a problem with an employment-service firm.

Finally, always be mindful to take extra care with your personal information, particularly if you feel that too much data is being solicited.

For more information on this and any other data protection concern you may have, please email us at dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs or visit our website www.bahamas.gov.bs/dataprotection.

Remember “Privacy is the Best Policy”