

## **Work from Home/Online Frauds TV Alert**

Thames Valley Police are urging people to remain vigilant to what appear to be lucrative work from home opportunities being advertised online including on social media and in pop-up advertisements.

The reality is there is no job opportunity, and those targeted have been manipulated into sending their own money. This is also known as [Advance fee fraud](#) where fraud criminals target individuals to make advance or upfront payments for goods, services and/or financial gains that do not materialise.

These may be framed as a [Career](#) , [Work from home](#) and/or a [Business](#) opportunity, and although it can sound appealing to be able to earn money from home, people only end up losing money.

Examples include:

- Being contacted unexpectedly via WhatsApp or Telegram.
- Being contacted after registering with a job search website
- Being asked to write reviews on behalf of products and or services including hotels
- Being told you can earn money from playing games
- Being described as a 'freelance worker'
- Being told you can only start earning commission once you have deposited money
- Being asked to make or receive payments in cryptocurrency
- Being invited to become part of private WhatsApp groups to be coached or trained

No genuine job opportunity would ask you to write fake reviews for a product or service you have not encountered personally. Please remember reviews are designed to help others decide if a product or service is for them, based on a genuine personal experience. A fake review is only ever intended to mislead others where they too could end up losing money.

### **Spot the signs**

- You have seen an advert online or via social media that says you can earn a specific or minimum amount of money by running your own business.
- You are told the job is linked to marketing and/or trading/investments
- You are told to call a mobile number (beginning with 07) or respond to a web-based email such as @yahoo or @gmail. Genuine businesses usually advertise a landline number and/or their own email domain.
- You are given a reason to pay up front, such as to register, buy customer leads, set up a website, buy products to sell, or get an instruction manual.
- Many of these business opportunities only allow you to earn money if you introduce more people to it. These are known as [Pyramid schemes](#).

## Protect yourself

- Any advert that tells you that you can sit back and let a business run itself is a good sign that fraudsters are at work.
- [Be wary of paying money in advance](#). Most legitimate employers should not require you to pay anything to start working for them.
- If you have got involved with a scheme you suspect is fraudulent, keep any relevant letters, emails, or documents as evidence. Do not get other people involved.

If you have been a victim of fraud, please report to Action Fraud online at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk), or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Remember, if an offer seems too good to be true, then it probably is. Those targeted in this instance have not only lost money but have also ended using their valuable time to work for free as they have not been paid.

It is always recommended to Stop, Challenge, Protect and [Take Five - To Stop Fraud](#)