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WICHITA, KAN. – In a difficult economy, a person may look for a work-at-home opportunity as a way to supplement income. Working at home may also be an opportunity for those who are unable to have a full time job away from home.

Job announcements posted online may promise the opportunity to be your own boss, set your own hours and earn money quickly. But scams involving these announcements are difficult to spot, and can take a variety of forms.

The Consumer Protection Division of the District Attorney's Office was recently contacted by a man who found a work-at-home position repackaging items and mailing them. The man asked if the job was "legitimate." He was referred to a U.S. Postal Inspector who advised the merchandise he was repackaging could have been purchased with stolen credit cards.

In the case of stolen postal money orders, the scam artist needs help to redistribute them to other scammers. Be aware if you receive payment for your work, the check or postal money order could be counterfeit.

Another online scam requests the job seeker send a resume to an 800 number. A representative calls stating his company works with businesses to find employees. But the service costs the job seeker \$495. The job seeker is told the amount is fully refundable if he or she is not satisfied or if another job is found. The person may be promised if he or she is hired, there is a good chance the new employer will reimburse the fee. There are never any interviews and never a refund.

The Consumer Protection Division advises:

- Never pay in advance for an online job listing.
- Be suspicious if told, "Must act fast!"
- Promises to make thousands of dollars by working in your home are not true.
- Never deal with someone who guarantees a job.

To learn more, the website for the United States Postal Service - <https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov> - contains information on various work at home scams along with the Federal Trade Commission website consumer.ftc.gov. Contact the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division at 316-660-3653.

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