

Fraudulent Job Offers: The "Mule" Scam

In this economy, when many consumers are looking for extra money, you may think it's a dream come true to receive an e-mail like this:

From: Jonathon Griggs [mailto:jalijah@singnet.com.sg]
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 1:25
Subject: New vacancy

Metro Finans is opening a vacancy for the Correspondence Manager position.

Company Overview

Metro Finans is a National professional staffing and services firm exclusively dedicated to the construction industry. We work with employee and employer in the process of building a project team and take a hands-on approach at each step. Mail handling managers are providing an excellent service to our clients in various countries as valuable employees of our Company.

Job Description and Requirements

Correspondence manager is responsible for receiving and transferring packages from manufacturers and local shops to our customers. The detailed instructions are provided.

Our Mail handling managers are required to:

- Receive the correspondence from our company to his/her residential address • Report to our manager about new parcels (Every candidate will be included in manager's lists)
- Repack received items following the instructions our manager will send you.*
- Receive prepaid shipping label. First month we offer \$24 per each shipped out box. (In a week there can be more than 10 parcels, in a month - more than 50 parcels)
- Fill the forms and papers as it will be shown in our manager's instructions (You will receive e-mail with instructions for each box).
- Ship the package out using the specified shipping method (at this moment we use mainly EMS /every USPS office can ship it with EMS Global Express/) Base Payment Mail handling managers receive \$1000 salary per month and additionally \$25 for every shipped package during the trial period. The salary is paid via WU or PayPal monthly.

After the trial period it's equal to \$2000 per month and \$50 per package.

Please, contact us ONLY at: rachaelaser4221@gmail.com to get more detailed information and ask Your questions about the position of Mail Handling Manager.

However, this is a scam! Instead of "correspondence manager", the real title should be "mule". Unfortunately, these "employers" offer bogus contracts and other documentation to make them appear legitimate.

If you get a solicitation like this, ask yourself:

- Why does this company need a middle man to receive packages from manufacturers and send them to customers?
- Why doesn't the company just have the manufacturer send the package straight to the customer?

The bottom line is that the purchases from the manufacturers are made with stolen credit cards or are the result of ID theft. The merchandise is then shipped overseas to another mule who then forwards the merchandise to the thieves. The stolen merchandise is then sold.

Once the package has been reshipped, you are now "guilty" of receiving and shipping stolen property. This often leads to a visit from police, as the return address or shipping receipts lead back to you.

However, once the police realize that you just an employee of this fake company and are just reshipping product, the police investigation will likely end because the forwarding addresses go overseas, beyond the purview of the police.

A variation is the Western Union/Moneygram scheme where the mule is hired to go to Western Union/Moneygram to pick up the payment (which is addressed to the mule) who then wires the money to the thieves. It's reminiscent of the Canadian lottery scam and other sweepstakes cons. Again, the only identifiable person is the mule.

Protect yourself; don't fall for this scam.

- Avoid job listings that use these descriptions: "package forwarding," "reshipping," "money transfers," "wiring funds" and "foreign agent agreements." These and similar phrases should raise a red flag.
- If you have questions about the legitimacy of a job listing, contact the Better Business Bureau or the Federal Trade Commission.

Source: Robert Frimet, RMF Consulting Group, LLC – www.checkconsultants.com