



Official

# Mystery Shopper Recruitment Scams

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## Summary

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Fraudsters are targeting job-seekers with a recruitment scam that has already claimed 35 victims with losses totalling over £51,000. All of the victims have so far been from London.

The fraudsters use recruitment websites and apps to identify potential targets. The victim is then cold-called by someone claiming to be an employee of a mobile phone network. The caller explains to the victim that they will need to take part in a “mystery shopper” test in order to pass the recruitment process.

The victim is instructed to visit one of the mobile network’s high street stores and take out a phone contract using the victim’s own personal and financial details. They are assured that the contract will be cancelled after the recruitment process is completed.

Once the victim has successfully taken out the contract, they are directed to drop-off points to deliver the phone and SIM card to a ‘colleague’ of the caller. The victim is reassured that the contract will be terminated.

In reality, the victims will never hear from the suspects again, and are left liable for the mobile phone contract they were convinced to purchase. Some victims are also asked to move the “employer’s” money through their own bank accounts, putting them at risk of committing money laundering offences. Others find out that their personal details have been used to take out loans, for which they are also now liable.

## What you need to do

- Personal information such as your full address, DOB, or NI Number should not be included on your CV or public profiles on a recruitment sites.
- To protect yourself against identity theft, always verify that the employer/recruiter you’re speaking with is who they say they are. Contact the employer via a telephone number or email address on their official website, or via the company’s verified social media accounts.
- Never allow an employer to move their money through your personal bank account. Legitimate employers won’t ask you to do this.
- For more advice and information about recruitment scams, please visit: <https://www.safer-jobs.com/>

For more information about how to protect yourself online, visit  
[www.cyberaware.gov.uk](http://www.cyberaware.gov.uk) and [takefive-stopfraud.org.uk](http://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk)

Every Report Matters

If you have been a victim of fraud or cyber crime, report it to us at [Actionfraud.police.uk](mailto:Actionfraud.police.uk), or by calling 0300 123 2040.