

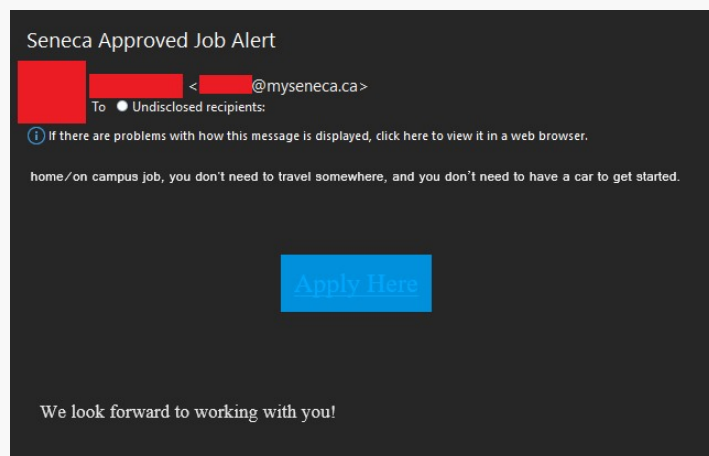
# Recognizing Fake Job Scams

Published 2/18/2022 by **Brian Devins**

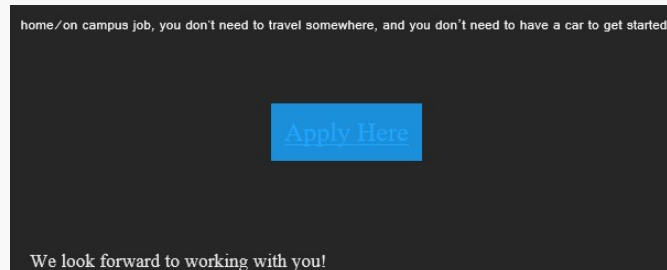
We could all use a little more money and we're willing to work for it. Unfortunately, criminals are eager to take advantage of our ambition. In 2021 several Seneca students fell prey to fake job scams and were defrauded out of their precious savings. In this blog post we'll familiarize you with the scam so that you will not be victimized.

## The email

Here's an example of a fake job offer email that was sent to several students last year. Before we review it step-by-step try to spot any clues on your own.



Let's first look at the most obvious clue: the look of the email.



Does this look like a professional email written by a postsecondary institution? It's unpolished and riddled with errors. There are three different fonts, the blue link text on a blue square is barely legible and the spacing between sentences is just weird. You should expect official emails from Seneca to have a more professional look.

Now let's take a look at the sender.

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@myseneca.ca>

This email was sent from a student's email address. We've blocked out the name to respect this individual's privacy but the important information remains visible. Student email addresses end with **myseneca.ca**. Emails from Seneca employees and official communications end with **senecacollege.ca**. In this case the student's account was compromised by a criminal who tried to earn the students' trust with a Seneca student email address.

Finally, let's think about what this email is promising us.

home/on campus job, you don't need to travel somewhere, and you don't need to have a car to get started.

When something sounds too good to be true, it usually is. Malicious emails often promise easy rewards, like a high-paying job with minimal qualifications.

## The web page

Hopefully this email has already seemed suspicious enough that you wouldn't have taken it seriously. However, let's see what happens when we click the **Apply Here** link: (click to enlarge)

The screenshot shows a web page titled "STAFF AND STUDENT EMPLOYMENT" by GUIDE STAR by Candid. The page has a yellow background and a blue header. The main content area contains a form with the following fields:

- Name \*
- Email \*
- Address \*
- Phone number \*
- Comments

At the bottom of the form, there is a "Submit" button and a "Cancel" button. The page also includes a Google Forms logo at the bottom.

At a glance this looks professional and is rather convincing. However, there are strong clues that indicate that this is not a legitimate offer. Let's review a few.

## STAFF AND STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Executive Personal Assistance  
Employment Type: Part-Time

Compensation: \$400

You have been offered a Job Opportunity at the convenience of your home or school, Which serve as a gateway to pay all expenses incurred on campus. This opportunity should be done at leisure taking at most 1 hr/day,2-3 times a week and earn \$400 Weekly.. It's a Flexible Opportunity where you will determine your working time. All the tasks are work from home/on campus job, you don't need to travel somewhere and also you don't need to have a car to get started. It's an home base office work you can be in any location and work from your home/school..The position available is for a Personal assistant someone who will be committed and ready to work with good manners, attitude and of course with safety as a priority.

This job description makes some questionable claims that should make you suspicious for instance:

## STAFF AND STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

It's a little strange that the job offer is for Seneca staff and students. The scammer is trying to convince anyone reading the email to think "hey, that's me!"

You have been offered a Job Opportunity at the convenience of your home or school, which serve as a gateway to pay all expenses incurred on campus. This opportunity should be done at leisure taking at most 1 hr/day,2-3 times a week and earn \$400 Weekly.. It's a Flexible Opportunity where you will determine your working time. All the tasks are work from

How does \$200 per hour compare to other jobs you've done? It's suspiciously generous. The scammer is offering something that's too good to be true. And what's with the double period in the sentence? Not very professional.

## STAFF AND STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

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car to get started. It's an home base office work you can be in any location and work from your home/school..The position available is for a Personal assistant someone who will be committed and ready to work with good manners, attitude and of course with safety as a priority.

Isn't it strange that the job title is written differently in the same document? This poor attention to detail is typical of job scams. Read carefully and be suspicious of job offers with sloppy writing.

- Assist with general official errands, support and assistance with various administrative tasks and project as needed

This position will be home-based and flexible part time job, You can be working from home, School or any location

The job description promises that this is a home-based job, yet one of the requirements is to assist with errands. Here is another copy error:

- Paying strict attention to detail and takes detailed **noted**

Shouldn't this word be "notes" instead of "noted"? ☹️ Good thing you paid strict attention to detail and could spot the sloppy grammar in this scam.

BENEFITS

- . AD & D Insurance
- . 401(k)..(After 3 months with us, plus an increase in your weekly paycheck)
- . Free medicals..(After 1 months with us, plus an increase in your weekly paycheck)

Do these benefits make sense to you? They specifically mention AD&D insurance (accidental death and dismemberment), 401k (a retirement savings plan used only by employers in the USA), and "Free medicals", whatever that means. Plus they're going to increase your pay after one and three months.

Finally, let's take a look at what the scammer is trying to convince us to give to them:

Email(not school email) \*

Your answer

This job offer was supposed to be a Seneca-authorized job. Why would Seneca specifically ask you not to use your school email address? The reason is so that Seneca cannot investigate or help you once you've been defrauded. Students are always expected to use their myseneca.ca email address to communicate with anyone at Seneca.

Address \*

Your answer

Phone number \*

Your answer

You're also being asked to submit your sensitive personal information. A phone number might be understandable, though it's a little strange since they've also asked for your email address. However, it's very suspicious to be asked for your home address before you've been

offered a job. We advise you to be extremely suspicious of anyone asking you for your sensitive personal information because it can be used by criminals to impersonate or harm you.

## The scam

Here comes the sad part.

A few individuals who were convinced by this sophisticated scam attended an "interview" over email and were contacted again a few days later with the great news that they'd been "hired".

Their first task as a new employee was to deposit a cheque for several thousand dollars into their personal bank account, transfer some money into several other bank accounts and keep the remaining balance of funds as their pay. However, a cheque sent to you by a criminal is not legitimate and when it is cancelled by your bank the funds will be removed from your account.

## What to do

We hope that our first IT security blog post has helped you identify the characteristics of a fake job scam. To summarize:

- If a job offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is
- Check who the email is from. Does it make sense for this person to be offering you a job?
- Make sure employment-related emails and web pages look professional. If not, distrust them
- Legitimate employers will not ask for sensitive personal information during the interview process, such as your home address or Social Insurance Number

If you receive a fake job scam email or any suspicious email in your **myseneca.ca** inbox, please report it by clicking the red fish button as described on the [Phishing](#) page.

If you suspect you have been victimized by a fake job scam please contact your bank and your local police department.

For more information on this scam we encourage you to read these pages from the [Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#) and the [American Federal Trade Commission](#). For Seneca-

specific information please read the [Phishing](#) page here on MySeneca.

tags : student-news