

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

SMALL FAVOUR, BIG RETURN*

*MUST HAVE A BANK
ACCOUNT + BE WILLING
TO BREAK THE LAW

South Africa's tough economic climate has forced a lot of cash-strapped students, recent graduates and previously unemployed persons to accept any ol' job to make ends meet. Some of these jobs, however, are employment scams and can result in you becoming an unwitting Money Mule.

Online job seekers, especially, are being targeted by fraudsters who pose as genuine employers. They promise easy money for little work. Many of these job adverts are very sophisticated and placed on legitimate recruitment websites. The fraudsters even offer you an authentic contract of employment.

And while the job titles differ greatly – from "Mystery Shopper" to "Financial Manager" – they all have the same requirement: you must have a personal South African bank account and be willing to use it for business purposes.

LOOK OUT FOR THESE WARNING SIGNS:

- + Job adverts that promise large amounts of money for very little work or prior experience.
- + Any job that requires you to use your personal bank account to transfer money.
- + An employer who has little or no online foot print, particularly if they claim to be based overseas.

This is a red flag – you could be required to launder money through your account.

How does it work? Once funds are paid into your account, you are asked to either transfer it to another account or to withdraw the cash and send it somewhere. You receive a set fee or commission for each transaction.

The clincher is that while you might be a victim, you will be the easiest part of the criminal chain to track down. As a result, you will be deemed complicit in money laundering and could be criminally charged. In addition, your bank will be required to take certain actions, which can include closing your account.

If you think you might be a victim of a money laundering scam, contact your bank immediately.

AVOID BECOMING A MONEY MULE. FOLLOW THESE TIPS:

- + Thoroughly research a potential employer and their company.
- + Never open a bank account in your name on behalf of someone else.
- + Do not allow anyone to use your bank account to make deposits or to transact on.