



19 July 2023

PRESS RELEASE

### **Alert on Recruitment Scam**

A public alert is once again being issued about a group of individuals running a deceptive pyramid scheme known as “EbayShop Online Recruitment.” The Consumer Council of Fiji (CCoF) has received numerous queries from consumers regarding the authenticity of this recruitment, prompting an extensive investigation.

The recruitment scheme operates by luring unsuspecting individuals through referrals to download the messaging app 'Telegram' for communication purposes. Upon joining, participants receive a link to a website created by the operators of this scheme. The website offers an enticing free trial, wherein users are presented with five online orders to process by clicking 'confirm order.'

Participants are promised a payment of 1 dollar per order, meaning they will receive a total of 5 dollars during the free trial period. However, when they attempt to withdraw their earnings, they discover that the minimum withdrawal amount is set at 6 dollars, leaving them unable to access the funds. Subsequently, participants are coerced into 'buying-in' by spending their own money to get more orders. The buy-in options range from a few hundred dollars, to upwards of a thousand dollars. The scammers have gone to extreme measures, including printing shirts and signage, which are prominently displayed on their Facebook page by their Marketing Manager, Mr. 'Jack Daniels.'

These orders appear to originate from popular shopping sites such as Alibaba, Shopee, Amazon, eBay, Best Buys or Wish. However, these orders are entirely fake and are generated by the scammers' website. Upon conducting thorough investigations, CCoF has received verifications of no association from eBay (the genuine online shopping site) and Best-Buys with Ebay Online Recruitment based in Nadi.

“We are alerting consumers of the complex and deceptive nature of this scheme as some early participants may earn money, giving an illusion of legitimacy. However, these schemes ultimately collapse, causing a vast majority of participants to lose money. No legitimate recruiter will ever ask individuals to pay money upfront in order to secure orders. Furthermore,

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online shopping platforms such as Amazon, eBay, Alibaba, etc, do not re-route their transactions to a third-party website for processing,” says Council CEO Seema Shandil.

The Council strongly urges the public not to fall victim to this scam and to report any instances of recruitment that appear to be done with the intention of deceiving and defrauding people. We urge anyone who has encountered or been approached by these scammers to report their experiences immediately. Consumers can reach out to the Consumer Council of Fiji via the national toll-free line 155, or email [complaints@consumersfiji.org](mailto:complaints@consumersfiji.org). Alternatively, consumers can lodge complaints via the Consumer Council of Fiji Mobile App.



**Ms Seema Shandil**

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