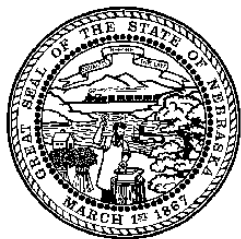


STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF BANKING AND FINANCE

John Munn

Director

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DATE: May 14, 2009

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance Issues Warning of Mystery Shopping Scam

Lincoln, Neb., May. 14, 2009 – The Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance is issuing a warning of a scam targeting consumers who want to become mystery shoppers. A company calling itself Global Compliance, Inc., which lists its addresses as 8555 Eagle Point Blvd, Lake Elmo, MN and 1391 Windmill Lane, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, offers consumers an opportunity to participate in a paid customer research program known as “mystery shopping” or “secret shopping.” The Department has verified that the company does not have offices at the addresses listed.

The company requires consumers to complete a paid training assignment. In this case, the company sent the consumer a counterfeit cashier’s check in the amount of \$2,930 to assist with the training. The consumer was instructed to deposit the check at his bank, use the proceeds to purchase goods at retailers and restaurants, and evaluate the quality of service he received. The consumer was also instructed to send \$2,450 of the proceeds to a representative of Global Compliance via MoneyGram.

There are many variations of the money transfer and counterfeit check scam. With this type of scam, the scammer sends a check or another type of financial instrument to the consumer to deposit into his/her bank account. The consumer is then asked to keep a portion of the funds and wire the remainder back to the company. When the check is deposited, the funds may be available relatively quickly and the consumer assumes they can safely wire money to the company. The counterfeit check eventually bounces and the consumer is responsible for any funds withdrawn against the bank account. The Department strongly cautions consumers against cashing the check and sending money to this company.

- MORE -

The Department offers these tips when receiving a mystery shopper opportunity or a check in the mail from an unknown source:

- Don't pay to become a mystery shopper. A legitimate company will not require the shopper to send them money.
- Before you withdraw funds against a check you have deposited from an unknown source, always ask your financial institution if the funds have been finally collected, rather than simply counting on the availability of the funds.
- If you are not absolutely sure who you are dealing with, get the company's number from the telephone book or from directory assistance, and call it to make sure you know with whom you are dealing. Sometimes scammers pretend to be another legitimate company. Take the time to find out if the company really exists and whether or not it is valid and reputable.
- Contact the Department to check the status of the company by calling 402-471-2171 in Lincoln, or the toll-free consumer hotline (877) 471-3445 for Nebraska consumers outside of Lincoln.

Report mystery shopper scams to the Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance by calling the Department at the telephone numbers listed above or by visiting the Department's Website at www.ndbf.ne.gov and completing a Financial Institutions Complaint Form. Consumers may also contact the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) to file a complaint.

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