

# Scammers target the unemployed

Fake adverts target would-be teachers for 2 000 non-existent posts

By ARETHA LINDEN

**S**CAMMERS preying on desperate Eastern Cape job seekers are on the rise.

There are 754 000 unemployed people in the Eastern Cape, 180 000 more than the 574 000 jobless in 2016, according to the latest quarterly labour force survey statistics released two months ago by the new statistician-general Risenga Maluleke.

At least three government departments have raised warning flags on cons doing the rounds.

Callous scamsters call for people to apply for non-existent jobs and learnerships, or to make payments for the supply of goods for fake government tenders.

Departments who have been caught up in the scamsters' snares are the provincial departments of education and public works and the national Department of Water and Sanitation.

The departments have issued an urgent warning to the public.

According to the department of education, a bulletin calling for 2 000 post level 1 teachers across all learning areas to apply for jobs was fake.

The fake bulletin has been circulated on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, as well as via e-mails.

Education spokesman Loyiso Pulumani said they were alerted to the scam when they had to field numerous calls from members of public querying the validity of the bulletin.

The department has launched an investigation to find the culprit.

"At this moment the department is not aware of who is behind this," said Pulumani.

Spokeswoman for public works Vuyokazi Mbanjwa, said their East London offices in Amalinda had seen an influx of desperate job seekers this week responding to a recruitment notice.

Mbanjwa said the fake recruitment notice, distributed through various channels including social media, invited young people to apply for learnerships and internship programmes.

Mbanjwa said the post targeted youths who had left school after Grade 11 and upwards.

The department has since notified the public, through their Facebook page, that there are no internship or learnership programmes being advertised in the department, saying the applications for internship programmes had closed on March 23.

"The department urges the public to exercise caution and take additional measures to satisfy themselves about the authenticity of vacancies before responding to submit applications for possible employment.

"The department would like to

apologise to the public," said Mbanjwa.

In another scam, the name of the Minister of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Gugile Nkwinti, who is from the Eastern Cape, was being used to solicit money for non-existent government tenders.

Explaining the *modus operandi* used in this scam, DWS spokesman Sputnik Ratau said unsuspecting victims would be contacted via phone or e-mail requesting them to supply goods for a tender.

Ratau said the goods varied, depending on what the tender was for.

When the victim fell for it, they found there was only one "supplier" of the required goods who was based in Cape Town.

"One would then be allowed to make a fictitious order for a certain amount.

"When one then places such an order and the money is paid into an account, the money is quickly withdrawn and the account closed."

Ratau urged people to check the validity of such approaches thoroughly and to look after their money. — *arethal@dispatch.co.za*

## Check if job offer is genuine

**WHILE** the desperation to secure a job is understandable job-seekers are advised to double check the source of the job adverts to ensure that the job listing is valid.

Here are some tips to protect the public from being tricked and ripped off. They were provided by government spokespeople.

- Check that the job listing or bulletin is advertised on the official website of a government department or company or on the Department of Public Service and Administration website where

government jobs are posted.

- All bulletins issued by the department of education, will always contain instructions signed by the provincial superintendent-general of education as well as a management plan.

- Tenders can be verified by visiting the government's e-Tender portal at [www.etenders.gov.za](http://www.etenders.gov.za)

- Make a phone call to the hiring department's human resources office and ask if the job listing is legitimate or a scam. — *arethal@dispatch.co.za*