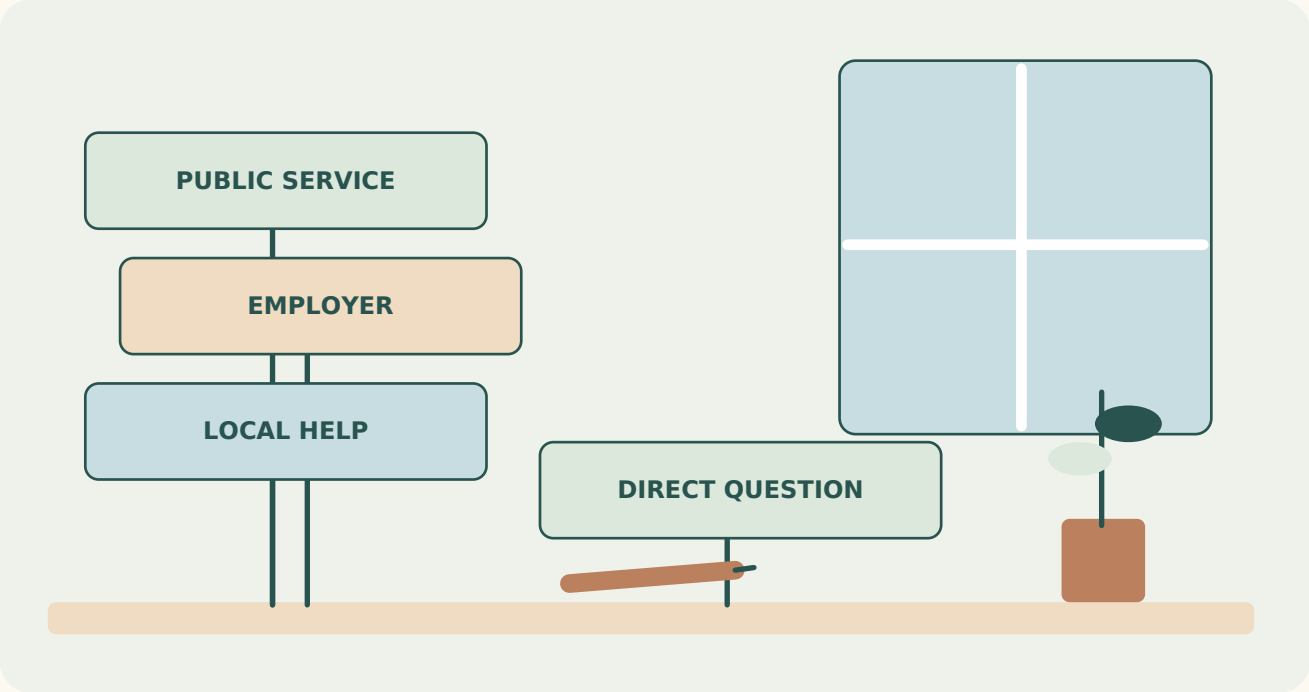
THE NEXT CHAPTER

Four Places to Look for Real Jobs

A calm, practical first search for people returning to work



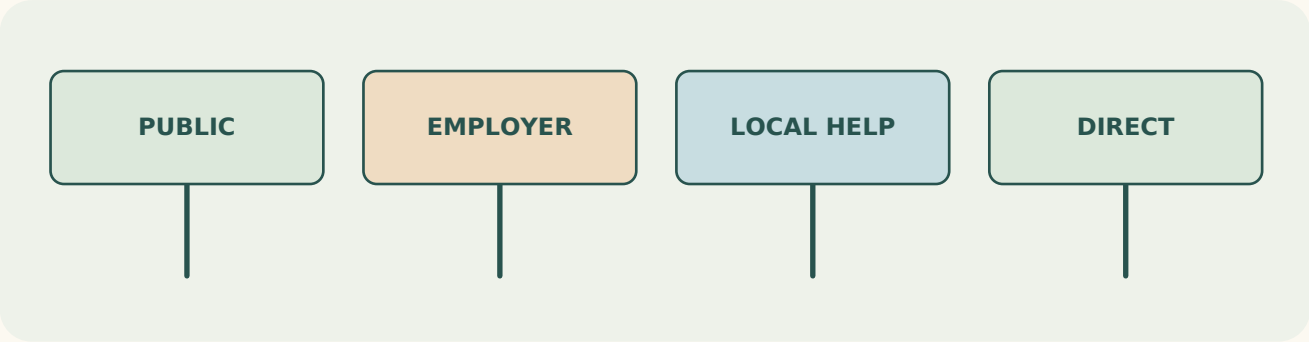
AN ORIGINAL STANDALONE FREE GUIDE

Four search routes · Three fictional searches · Two private cards

Begin | First search | Examples | Private cards

English edition | November 2026

A trustworthy place to begin



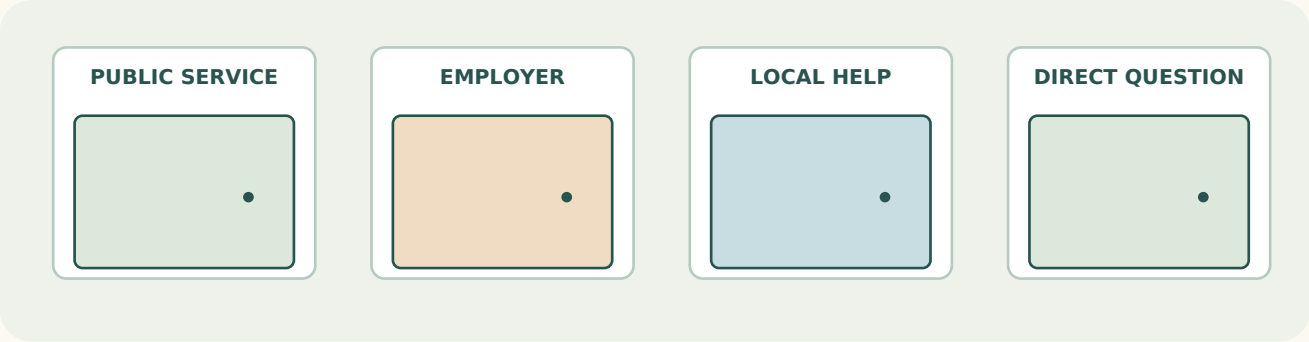
Looking for work again can feel unfamiliar even if you have worked for decades. Perhaps you left full-time employment years ago. Perhaps you want a few paid hours, a seasonal position or a modest role near home. Perhaps you are simply curious about the kinds of work that are available before you decide whether to apply. You may remember searching through newspaper listings or asking someone you knew. Today, many opportunities appear on screens - but a crowded search page is not proof that a particular vacancy is real or suitable.

The useful first question is smaller than “How do I find my next job?” It is **“Where can I look for openings, and how do I check that I have reached a real organisation?”** This free guide shows four distinct routes. You can test one route without creating a profile, sending a résumé, spending money or promising to take a position.

By the end, you can name a plausible search route, identify its limitations, recognize a source that needs further verification and complete a one-page record of what you actually discovered. If your result is “no verified opening today,” that is an honest result. It does not mean you searched badly.

Nothing here is a hiring service, an employment-law guide, an immigration eligibility check or a guarantee of an offer. The examples are entirely fictional. Job sites change; use the actual official services and employment rules that apply where you live.

1. The four routes do different jobs



Imagine four doors, not four copies of the same giant website.

Official public employment services can help you start from a recognised national or regional government-backed source. Depending on the service, you may find vacancies, training information, job-search support or links to local programmes. The government service does not necessarily employ the person advertising every vacancy. It may be a place that *lists* third-party opportunities.

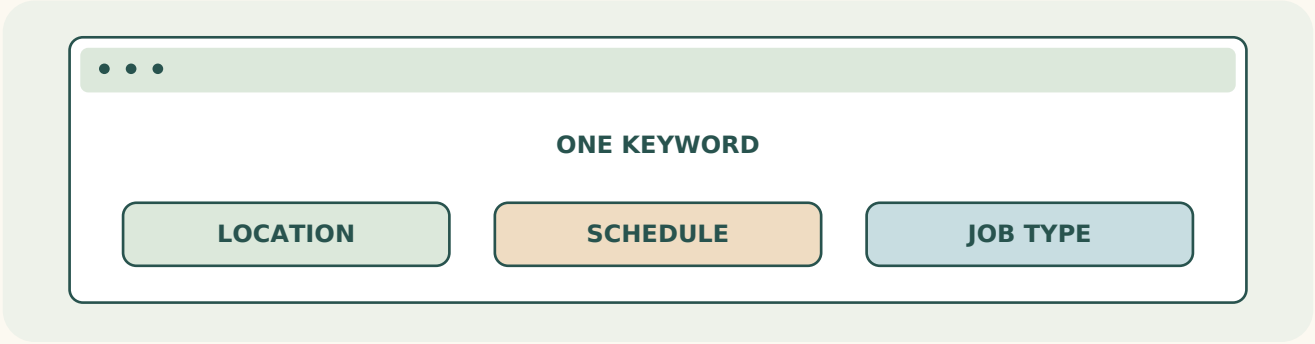
Employers' own career pages show what an organisation says it is recruiting for. They can give more reliable application instructions than an unrelated screenshot, although career pages sometimes contain old listings, evergreen talent pools or jobs only open to certain applicants.

Local employment organisations and community support may offer a person to talk with, a computer you can use or help learning a new online application process. Some advertise positions; others do not. A workshop or résumé class is not itself a job opening.

A respectful direct inquiry can answer whether a particular employer accepts applications and where the legitimate instructions are. An inquiry is not an application, an interview invitation or a personal referral unless the employer actually says so.

Each door can be useful. You do not have to enter all four at once. Start with the one that best matches how much information, help and privacy you want today.

2. Route one: an official public employment service



Begin with the real government or publicly mandated employment service in your country or region. You may know the service through a library, employment office, local government website or a trusted public agency. Search for its current official address using the agency's full name rather than clicking a promotional link from an unsolicited message. Check the site address and the information about who operates it.

An official service may let you search by a simple title such as “reception assistant,” by location or by schedule. You can start with no account if public listings are viewable. Choose **one** reasonable keyword and **one** location you can genuinely reach. If the result set is broad, refine it by work hours or temporary/part-time status where such filters exist. If nothing appears, try a nearby job-title synonym before concluding that the entire local market has no work.

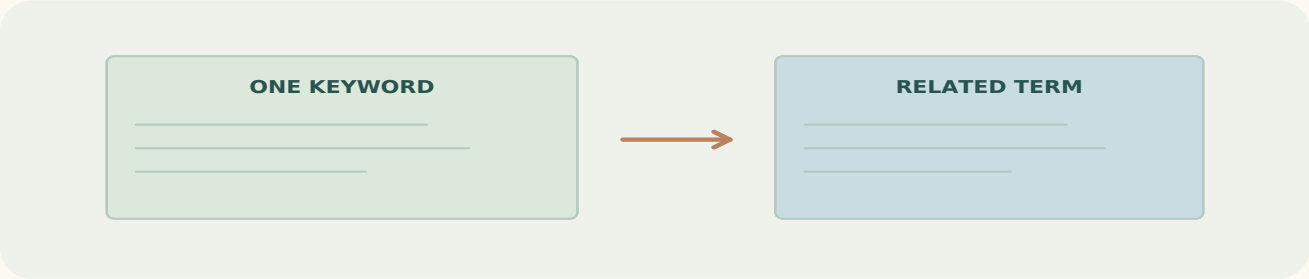
Official examples have different scopes



For illustration, Canada's government Job Bank is at https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/ and USAJOBS, which focuses on United States federal positions, is at https://www.usajobs.gov/. In Europe, Europass offers a job search supplied through the EURES network at https://europass.europa.eu/en/find-jobs. These services differ in geographic scope, eligibility, job coverage and processes. **Do not assume the US federal service covers all US private-sector jobs, or that an EU portal makes you eligible to work in a different country.** [S1][S2][S3]

Before contacting anyone, note the full vacancy title, employer, posting or reference identifier if shown, posting date if shown, closing date if shown, and link. A listing on a real public website is a strong place to begin checking; it is not a guarantee that the role remains open, that the employer is suitable or that the applicant qualifies.

3. When the public search produces too much - or nothing



Large search services can overwhelm you with opportunities you could not reasonably commute to, schedules you would not accept, and unrelated positions sharing a keyword. Fewer results that you can actually examine are often better than hundreds that sound exciting.

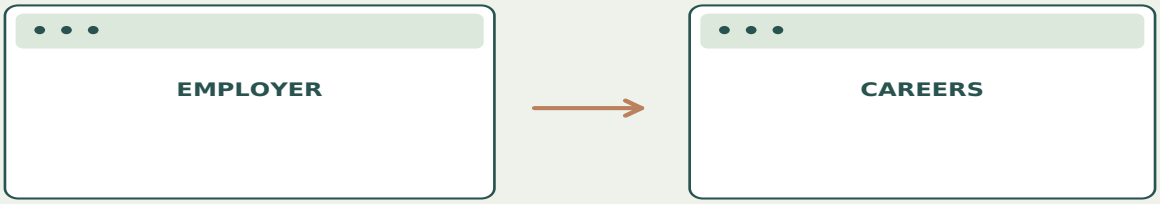
Start with the work you would be willing to do. If “office manager” is too broad or too demanding, try “office assistant” or “administrative support” and check what those descriptions actually mean. If “garden work” produces specialised professional posts, try “seasonal garden centre assistant” in a plausible travel area. These are search suggestions, not assertions that those vacancies are available today.

A job site may say “remote,” “flexible,” “part-time,” or “temporary.” Those words can have different operational meanings. Do not infer a fixed shift, guaranteed hours or work-from-anywhere permission from a filter label. If it matters, keep the item as a **question**, not a confirmed benefit.

Try the following small search experiment: write your keyword, the location or distance limit, and one schedule requirement. View up to three listings. Save at most one promising one for further verification. If you find nothing appropriate, record which requirement made the result unsuitable. This is enough for one first exploration.

Do not create multiple accounts, pay for enhanced access, upload identity documents or subscribe to expensive services as a reflex. A sound first search should be possible to understand before you disclose more than necessary.

4. Route two: go to the employer's own careers page



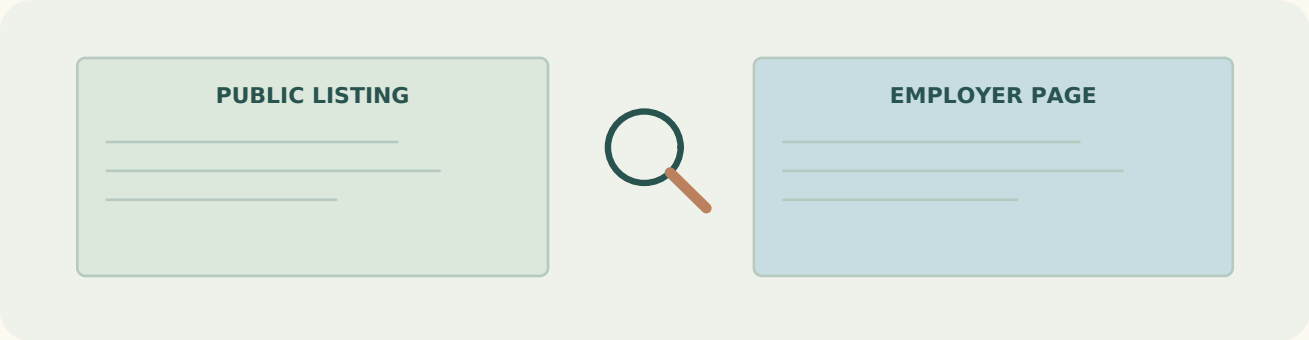
Suppose you see an interesting position mentioned on a public job service or a noticeboard. You can often learn more by finding the actual organisation independently. Type the employer's known main website address or locate it using a trustworthy directory, then look for “Careers,” “Jobs,” “Work with us,” “Vacancies,” or similar wording. Some organisations use a legitimate third-party application platform; a different domain is not automatically fraudulent. Verify that the employer's real site explicitly directs applicants there.

Compare what you found with what the employer publishes. Is the employer name consistent? Does the job title and location match? Is the position still visible? Is there a clear application method? Sometimes the listing is on a public employment service but no longer appears on the company's site. That mismatch is a reason to confirm, not immediate proof of fraud. A role may have closed, moved to another platform, or have been posted by a recruitment agency with a different process.

The employer's page can answer questions about its stated mission, work locations and recruiting contact. It cannot tell you from its design alone whether the job will suit your energy, schedule or household commitments. Nor does a professional-looking page guarantee good working conditions.

If a hiring advertisement tells you to apply through an unfamiliar link, verify the employer and authorised destination before sending your résumé or personal details. A link that arrives by text is not a substitute for checking the employer's own public route.

5. Do a two-source reality check



A single screenshot or forwarded link is weak evidence. Two independently reached sources are often better. This is especially true when a message pushes you to act before you have had time to inspect it. You do not need an elaborate investigation for every advertisement; one sensible cross-check can reveal enough to proceed or stop.

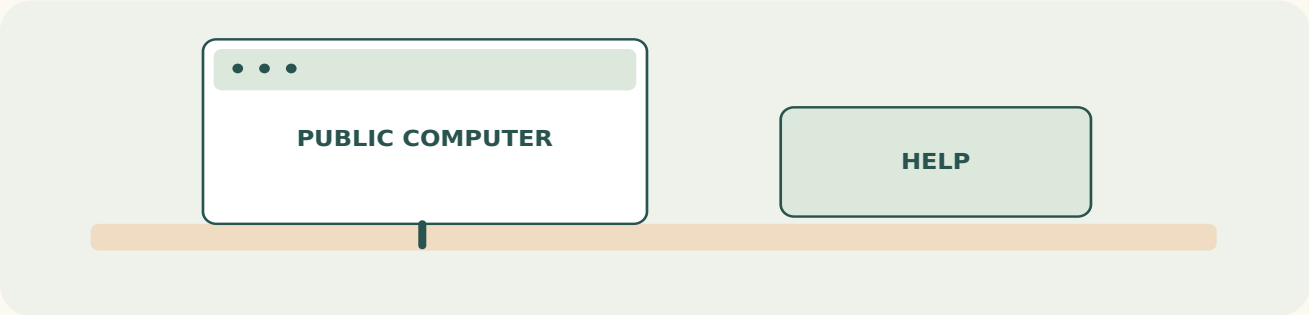
First, write down where you encountered the opportunity. Next, find the employer's public website **without using the link supplied in the suspicious message**. Check whether that website links to the posting or the application platform, or whether its official contact information can confirm the recruitment channel. If you cannot establish the connection, do not enter sensitive details into the unfamiliar form.

A genuine employer may not list every role on the main site, especially when using a staffing agency. The answer may be “not yet confirmed.” Treat it as such, not as permission to send documents to the first person who replies.

A useful record is only four lines: *I found the claim at …; I independently checked …; the items matched/did not match/could not be compared; I will next …*. This keeps the decision anchored in evidence. It also protects you from an easy mistake: reading the same fake claim on two copied sites and assuming that two copies are independent confirmation.

For any consequential question, use official contact details you found independently. Do not call a phone number supplied only in an unsolicited job offer and count that call as independent verification.

6. Route three: ask for local employment help



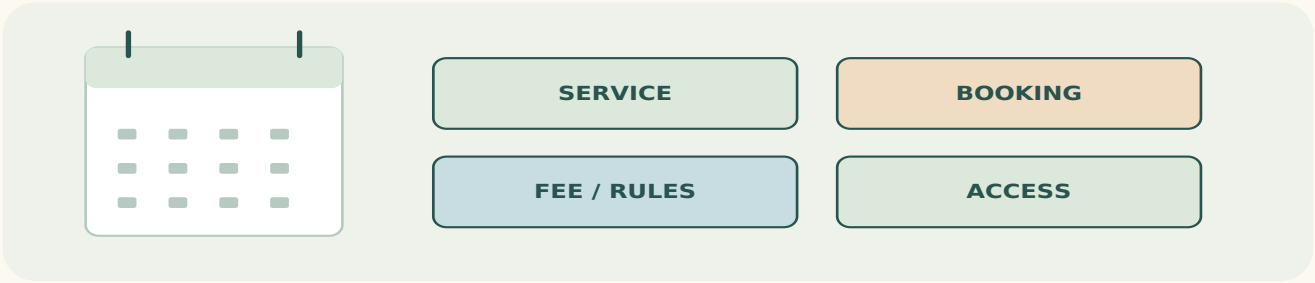
Not everyone enjoys navigating hiring software. A public library, publicly funded employment centre, community employment organisation, adult learning centre or other locally established service may help you locate reliable opportunities and use application tools. Availability varies widely. Some places offer open computer time; some provide job-search workshops or one-to-one guidance; others refer you to an official employment agency. **Do not assume a particular local institution offers a service before checking.**

Start with the institution you already know or the regional public employment service's official list of partners. Check the organisation's public address and current contact details. Ask a simple question: “Do you help adults look for current paid job openings, and is an appointment or fee required?” This tells you whether the place can help with what you need, rather than merely providing a lecture on careers.

The distinction matters: a trusted community organisation may help you understand how to use a website without endorsing every job listed there. A job fair advertises access to employers, not a guarantee of interviews or positions. A training programme may have its own cost and eligibility requirements; you do not have to join it to begin exploring work.

If travel or accessibility is a concern, ask whether telephone assistance, an accessible computer, language support or a remote meeting is available. Do not plan a long journey until you have confirmed the service, location and appointment details through its actual public channel.

7. Four questions before visiting a support service



It can be disheartening to travel across town and discover that a service is not open, requires a referral or provides only general workshops. A short confirmation call can spare unnecessary time, money and effort.

Ask whether the service **currently assists with paid job searches**, not merely general volunteering or career classes. Ask **whether you need to book**, and what identification, if any, you actually need for that particular service. Ask **whether it costs money or has eligibility rules**; a public location does not automatically mean every programme is free. Finally ask **what access or language arrangements are available**, especially if you need a quieter appointment or help reading a website.

If the organisation confirms only a library computer and printed information, that may still be useful. You can try an official job service at your own pace and save the results. If it offers a counsellor, you may choose one question to bring rather than retelling your full employment history at the first meeting. A reasonable question is, “Which official site covers ordinary part-time openings in this area?”

Write down what the institution actually confirmed and the date. Do not turn “they have a job-search class next month” into “they found me a job.” These are different outcomes, and recognising that difference makes future choices easier.

If support is unavailable, that does not make the whole search impossible. The employer career page route and a modest direct inquiry remain options.

8. Route four: a respectful direct inquiry



Sometimes you know exactly the sort of organisation where you would like to work. You may live near a small employer, admire a local business's activities, or have relevant experience in a sector with few public advertisements. You can ask where it publishes openings without claiming that a job exists.

Use a verified public contact address or published telephone number. Keep the question short and specific. For example: “Hello. I am interested in possible part-time administrative work with your organisation. Do you currently publish vacancies, and if so, where is your official application page? I am only asking about your usual recruitment process. Thank you.” You can adapt the role and omit your age, past job titles and personal history. No résumé needs to be attached to that first question unless the verified employer explicitly requests one through a suitable process.

Be willing to accept “We are not recruiting,” “Please check the website,” or no answer at all. Repeatedly contacting workers or using private personal accounts is not a strategy this book recommends. A private social profile or personal mobile number found on the internet is not automatically an appropriate recruiting channel.

A direct inquiry also helps you avoid treating networking as an obligation to ask friends for favours. You can seek the public process instead of putting someone you know in the position of defending an employer's decisions.

9. A polite question is not an application



One easy confusion is believing that because someone responded warmly, you are already on your way to employment. Consider the stages separately. **An inquiry** asks if there is a process. **A verified opening** means a particular role appears or is confirmed through an appropriate channel. **An application** submits requested information through that process. **An interview invitation** is a distinct message from the employer. **An offer** requires its own careful verification and consideration.

You can stop at any stage. Today you may want only to know whether occasional paid work is plausible in your area. You do not have to upload a detailed employment record to answer that question. If a recruiter says a formal application is required before they can discuss a role, you can decide whether the opportunity is worth that disclosure.

If an employer requests sensitive identity, banking, tax, immigration or health records, consider what stage the legitimate recruitment process is at, why the item is necessary and how the official institution securely collects it. Laws and obligations differ, and some data may legitimately be needed later. A generic unsolicited first contact is not the place to provide it.

Keeping these stages separate is both an accuracy habit and a useful protection against pressure.

10. Warning signs that deserve a stop



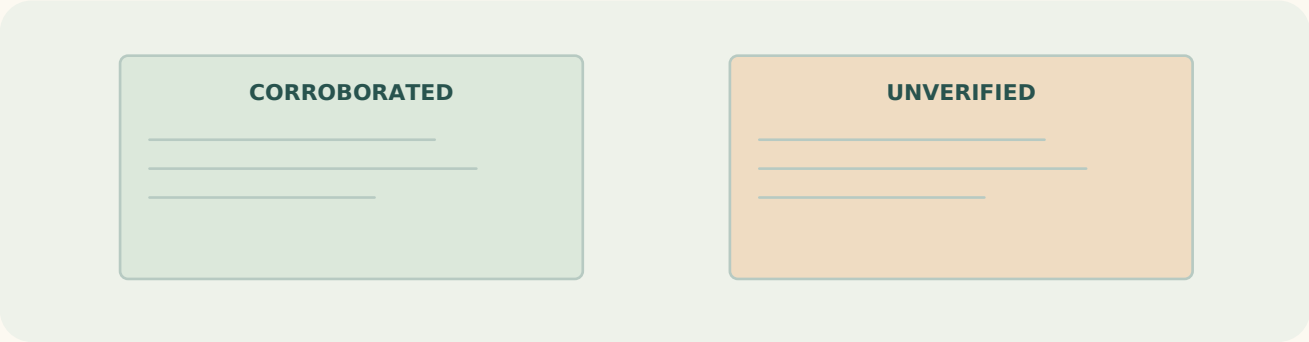
Job-search scams can imitate employers, employment agencies or friendly recruiters. The apparent urgency is often part of the trap. Be cautious when someone offers you a job you never applied for, promises unusually easy income, requires an upfront payment to unlock work, asks for money to release wages, sends a cheque and instructs you to return a portion, or demands sensitive information through a suspicious link.

The United States Federal Trade Commission advises against paying for the *promise* of a job and warns specifically about fake-cheque arrangements. Canada's Job Bank warns against sharing sensitive financial and identity details with questionable recruiters and advertisements. These are useful cautionary principles, not a complete list of every fraud or a substitute for local consumer protections. [S4][S5]

The safe next action is not to argue with the stranger until they convince you. Stop using the supplied link, find the employer independently, and verify through an official source you already trust. If you have already sent funds or sensitive information, contact the relevant financial institution or reporting authority promptly using independently verified contacts. This book cannot assess a particular fraud case or recover money.

An advertisement with a low salary, sparse description or unusual schedule is not automatically a scam, and a polished one is not automatically legitimate. Verification matters more than appearance alone.

11. What “verified” can and cannot mean



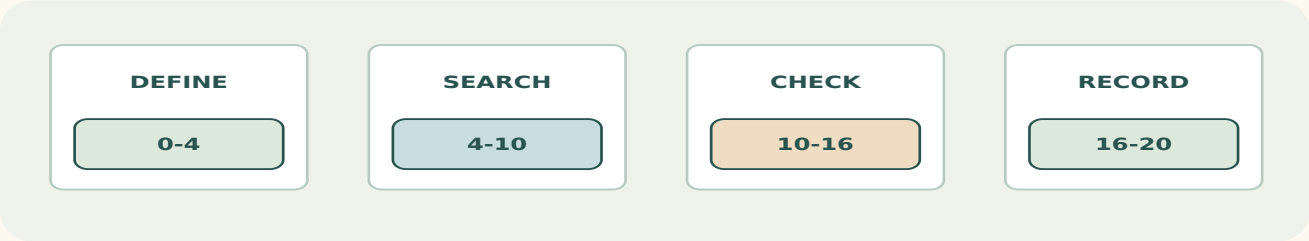
Suppose you have found a job advertisement through a legitimate public search service. You independently reach the employer's site and discover the same advertised position, with a clear path to apply. You can reasonably record that its **posting and application route are corroborated**. You cannot yet know that the schedule will suit you, the pay has no hidden condition, the role is still available this afternoon or the employer will select you.

Now suppose the advertisement remains on the public service but has vanished from the employer's careers page. It might have closed; it might live on a connected agency site; it might have been copied without permission. You do not know which. Record “not corroborated yet,” and either seek a verified clarification or move to a different opening. Do not spend hours solving a puzzle if a safer, clearer candidate is available.

Finally, suppose someone sends a message claiming to be a recruiter, but the only application link is a lookalike website and no official employer channel supports it. Record **“unverified; do not disclose or pay.”** This is enough to stop for today. You do not need to prove a criminal offence before protecting yourself.

Verification is about the evidence you have for a particular claim. It is not a lifetime guarantee that an organisation or role is good.

12. A twenty-minute first exploration



This is a bounded example, not a required job-search quota. If you need more time because of access, technology or language, use the time you need - or stop after the first stage. The purpose is to leave with **one clear observation**, not a numerical performance score.

Minutes 0-4: Write one job family you could genuinely consider, one workable travel area or fully remote requirement, and one schedule limit. You might write “shop assistant; local bus route; up to two weekday shifts.” These are preferences, not claims about available work.

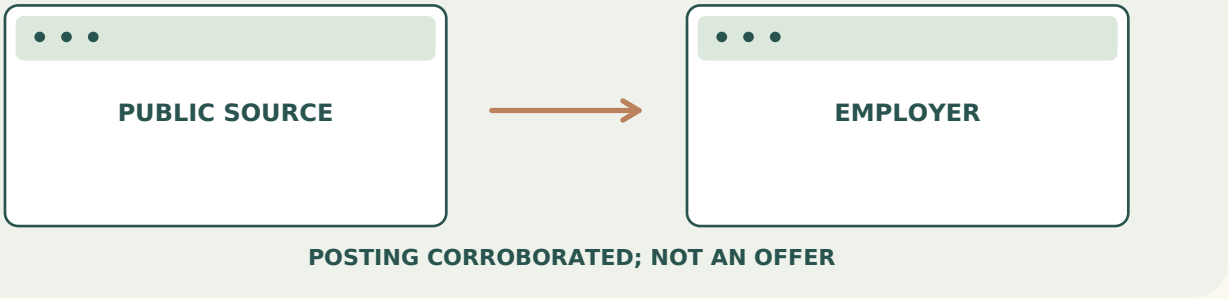
Minutes 4-10: Open one genuine official public employment site or a known employer's careers page. Search one phrase and apply the location or schedule filter if available. Do not open accounts yet simply to produce search results.

Minutes 10-16: Examine at most three candidate headings. Choose one only if it is relevant enough to inspect. Independently verify the employer or the application's real official route where possible. Mark unknown details as unknown rather than inferring them from the search snippet.

Minutes 16-20: Record the result. It may be “one position located and employer channel confirmed,” “one plausible listing not corroborated,” “no role within my schedule,” or “I need help using the site.” The next action could be asking a question, seeking local support, or stopping for the day. You have not promised to apply.

You can repeat this exercise on another day if you choose. It is not a four-week paid programme hidden in a free article.

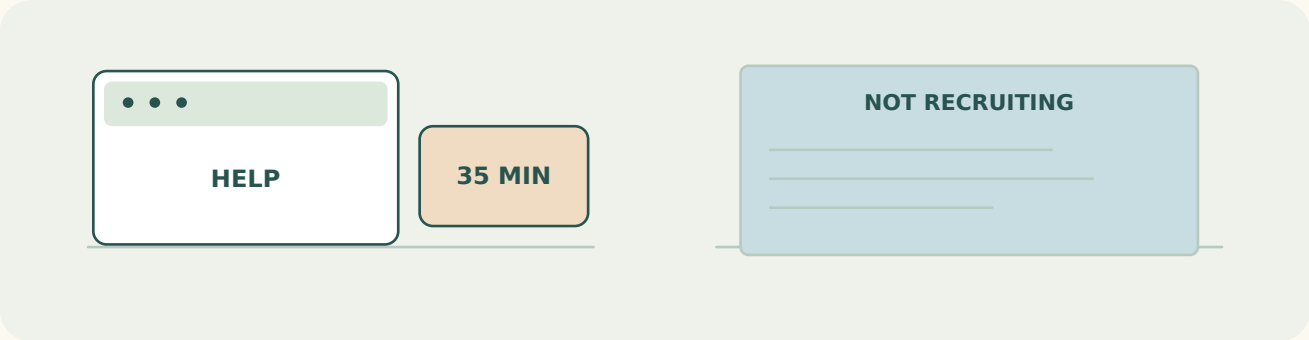
13. Three fictional searches, three different results



These situations and people are invented for teaching. The employer names, organisations and positions below are fictional and are **not live advertisements**. Any minute counts or costs describe only the imaginary events, not average job-search outcomes.

Mina: the public-service route yields a corroborated posting. Mina previously worked in customer service and would consider two short weekday shifts. She opens her region's real official employment service, searches “front desk assistant,” and examines two displayed items. One appears to match her travel area. She independently finds the fictional employer's real careers page through its known public domain and sees a matching vacancy. She records the role title, the source link, a check date and “posting corroborated.” She has not applied, interviewed, been hired or earned money. Her useful first result is a candidate she can choose to read more closely another day.

Three fictional searches continued

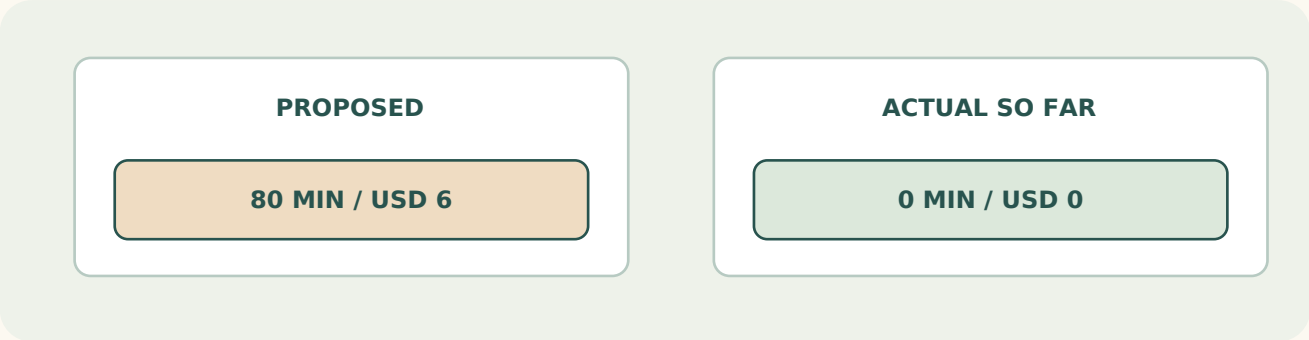


Evan: a community centre gives help but not a vacancy. Evan does not enjoy online forms. After verifying the current service by telephone, he takes a **fictional 35-minute round-trip** to a public library's general computer-help desk. Staff show him how to reach a legitimate employment service, but they do not know of a current vacancy that matches his preferred hours. He spends **fictional USD 0 in new cash** because the story assumes he walked and paid no programme fee. His result is a working starting point and an accurate “no suitable opening confirmed,” not a job found. In real life, travel and services can cost money.

Ruth: a direct inquiry reveals a boundary. Ruth is interested in occasional work with a small organisation. She finds its official public contact page independently and sends one short inquiry asking where vacancies are posted. The employer replies that it currently has no paid openings and directs her to the careers page for later. Ruth records “not recruiting; no application submitted.” She does not keep sending unsolicited messages. She has gained clarity about one organisation while respecting its process.

The three outcomes have equal legitimacy: **a corroborated lead, an accessible search route, and a confirmed absence of openings**. Do not add them together and call them three job offers.

14. Count the actual cost of looking



Even a no-fee job search can use time, travel and attention. A free search engine does not make the entire process costless. Before taking a train to a workshop or paying for a service, ask whether it provides something you need now and whether a verified free alternative exists. Some optional professional services are legitimate, but a paid subscription is not a precondition for finding a real job.

For an imaginary inquiry, suppose the bus trip takes 25 minutes each way, a meeting takes 30 minutes and the fare is USD 3 each way. The **total away-from-home time would be 25 + 30 + 25 = 80 minutes**, and **new cash spent would be USD 3 + USD 3 = USD 6**, *if the visit actually happened*. If it is only a proposed visit, the actual new time away and actual cash spent are both zero so far. This example does not give you a real fare or a real appointment.

There is a useful distinction between a search, a confirmed vacancy, and a job you could accept. The first two may be possible without spending any money at all. The third may involve travel, equipment or other genuine requirements that you should check at the correct stage - without paying a stranger to “unlock” an offer.

If you need to limit costs, choose a route you can complete from a trusted public computer or your own device before booking journeys. If you choose to visit a local employment service, verify its hours and service first.

15. Know when to stop searching for the day



Without a stopping point, looking for jobs can become an endless stream of tabs. One site suggests that you lack experience; another offers a course; a third gives an impressive salary with no clear employer. None of these signals obliges you to investigate everything immediately.

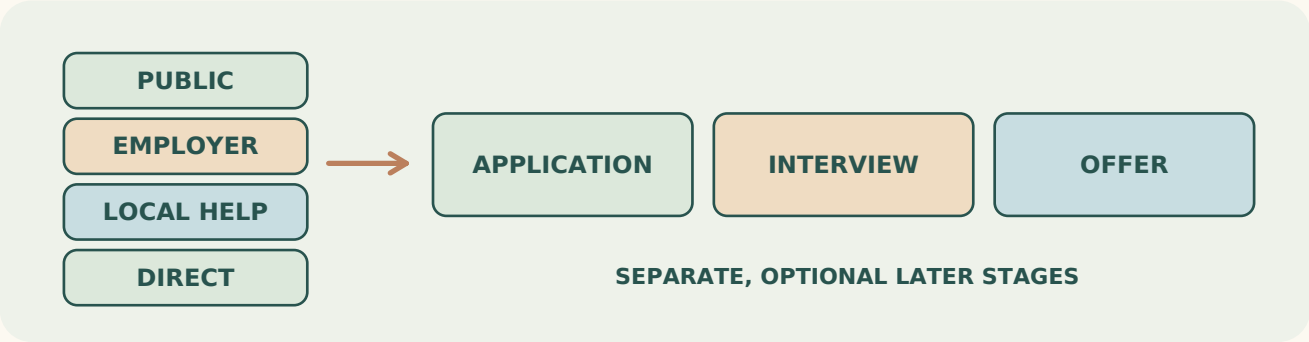
After one honest search, ask: **Did I find a verifiable opportunity? Did I learn that the route itself works? Did I find a meaningful mismatch with my needs?** Any one of these is useful information. Record it, then decide whether another search is worth the time today.

You are allowed to close the browser when results are stale, links are confusing or the work conditions do not suit you. A newly retired person may be testing whether paid work is desirable at all. A person who urgently needs income may have a different timetable and may benefit from appropriate local support, but this guide cannot prescribe a specific employment plan.

Do not confuse a provider's recommendation algorithm with your obligations. Being shown an advertisement does not mean you are suitable, eligible, required to apply or entitled to the job. Equally, an empty results page does not prove that no work exists locally.

The first step is complete when you can say, truthfully, where you looked, what you checked and what remains unknown.

16. Your next action should match what you discovered



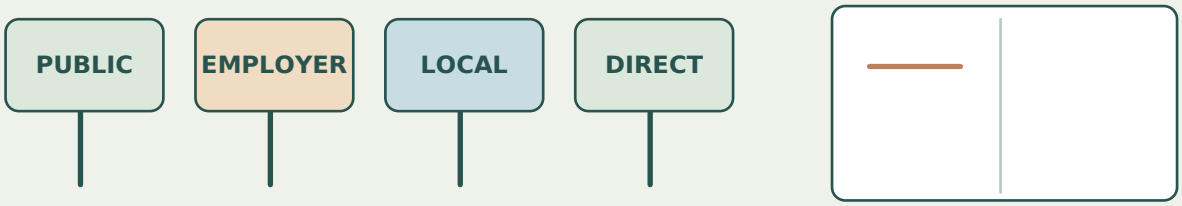
If you found a corroborated opening, the next useful act may be to read its full requirements and application instructions before deciding whether to apply. Another The Next Chapter free guide, *Six Lines to Check in a Job Ad*, is designed for that separate task; this book does not assume you have read it, or that it is available at any particular public URL.

If you found only an interesting but unverified claim, the next act is a source check through official employer information - not sending personal documents. If a community support organisation helped you understand a website, you may practise that single navigation step once more. If a direct inquiry got “not recruiting,” you can thank the organisation and move on. If every lead conflicts with your schedule or transport limits, rethink a keyword or the area you are willing to search; do not immediately abandon legitimate boundaries.

A search need not end with an application. You may decide not to return to work, to wait until another obligation changes, or to seek different kinds of income and activity. Those are larger decisions than this guide promises to make.

What matters is that your first search creates a little more reliable choice - and less exposure to an invented job or an avoidable fee.

17. The four-door reminder



An **official public employment service** is a reasonable place to start a broad search, though job coverage and eligibility vary. An **employer's own careers page** can clarify whether a particular employer is advertising a role and which application route it authorises. A **local employment organisation** can help you use search tools and find legitimate support without promising vacancies. A **respectful direct inquiry** can confirm where an employer posts jobs or whether it is currently recruiting.

For each route, the same honest rule applies: *show the source, distinguish a vacancy from advice, and say what you have not verified*. Do not pay for a job promise, let a stranger redirect money through your account or disclose sensitive details in response to an unverified first message.

Choose just one route to try when you are ready. If your time is limited, use the source you can verify with the least travel and new expenditure. A person who searches for twenty minutes and finds one authentic official route has done more useful work than someone who fills a notebook with unsupported offers.

The next chapter in your working life, if there is one, does not have to begin with a polished application. It can begin with a trustworthy place to look.

Optional private card A - My first genuine search

This card is for your own use only. It should work on paper or in local fields in the final reader. **Do not send its contents to The Next Chapter, a third-party form, or a job contact merely because you filled it out.** Avoid entering identity numbers, passwords and sensitive personal details.

The kind of paid work I might actually consider:

My workable area or remote-work requirement:

My important schedule limit:

One route I used (public service / employer / local help / inquiry):

Official address or independently verified source I used:

Date checked and what I actually observed:

Status: corroborated vacancy / unverified claim / support only / no suitable opening / not finished

Optional private card B - Verify, ask or leave it

The one claim or role I might want to investigate:

Where I first saw or heard it:

What the employer or official service independently confirms:

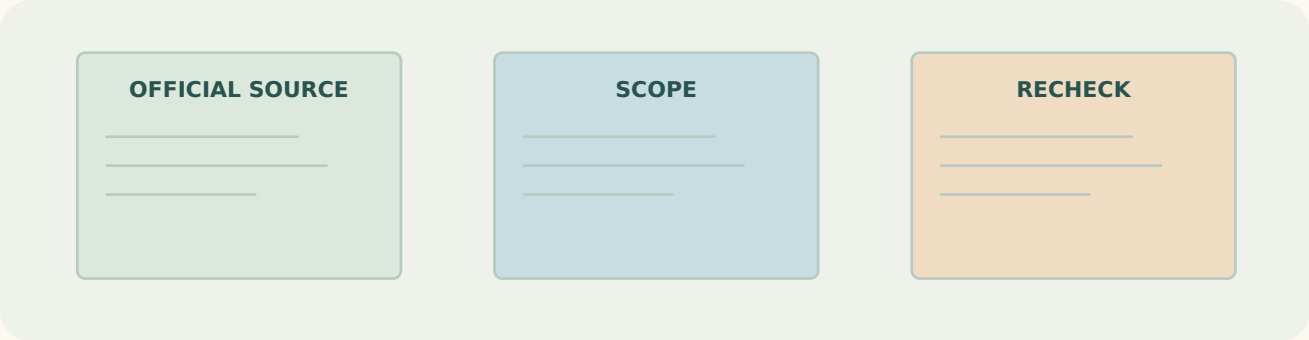
What remains unknown or does not match:

One safe question and the genuine public channel to ask:

My next choice (check / ask / apply later / decline / stop):

You do not need to submit an application, purchase a subscription or join a mailing list to complete this guide. It is enough to make one search more trustworthy and to keep the next decision yours.

Sources and verification boundary



These links identify **official source examples or consumer-safety guidance**, not live vacancies, actual employer endorsements or proof of eligibility. The official source examples were reviewed for this edition; portal access and vacancy details can change. Recheck at publication and before following any application instructions; portals and rules change. The book's worked examples and calculations are wholly fictional.

- **[S1] Government of Canada, Job Bank**, official public employment service: https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/ . Official job-search safety guidance: https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/findajob/resources/safety-tips .

- **[S2] United States Office of Personnel Management, USAJOBS**, federal-job search and search help: https://www.usajobs.gov/search/ and https://usajobshelp.opm.gov/hc/en-us/articles/52887809077267-How-to-search-more-efficiently-and-find-jobs-you-re-interested-in . Government jobs vary by hiring pathway and applicant eligibility.

Official sources continued



- **[S3] European Union, Europass**, search opportunities supplied via the EURES job mobility network: https://europass.europa.eu/en/find-jobs . Use only for the actual regions and applicant circumstances covered by the service.

- **[S4] U.S. Federal Trade Commission**, consumer advice about employment scams, advance fees and fake cheques: https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/job-scams .

- **[S5] Government of Canada, Job Bank**, job-search safety tips: https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/findajob/resources/safety-tips .