

## Media Release FCCC Warns Against New Scam, Urges Caution During Diwali Season 29 October 2024

The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission is warning the Fijian public against a potential scam involving social media advertisements claiming to offer free online courses with certificates and pathways to high-paying jobs.

The misleading advertisements which uses the Fiji Government logo to fake legitimacy, are circulating on social media platforms, encouraging users to click on unverified links, potentially leading them to fraudulent sites which aim to collect personal information for nefarious purposes.

"Remain cautious and avoid sharing personal details with suspicious sources. As we have highlighted in the past, scammers have become increasingly sophisticated in the way that they target Fijians. Official information on government-sponsored programs is always communicated through verified channels," said FCCC CEO, Joel Abraham.

"These online education scams are cleverly disguised to exploit Fijians seeking to improve their skills. While we work towards the development of more robust anti-scam intervention and legislation for the future, we need people to exercise caution. Always scrutinise such offers and verify with credible sources. Remember, if it seems too good to be true, it probably is."

To protect yourself from falling victim to scams, FCCC advises the public to verify all offers by contacting official channels or visiting recognised educational institutions' websites. Avoid clicking on unsolicited links or providing personal information online, especially in response to unverified offers.

With the Diwali season underway, FCCC further urges Fijians to be on high alert for scams. This period often sees a rise in fraudulent activities, as scammers seek to exploit the excitement and increased online shopping during the celebrations. Be cautious of any unsolicited offers, discounts, or giveaways that require personal information or financial details. Scammers may use Diwali-themed messages to disguise their intentions, so please verify the authenticity of all offers before engaging.

If you believe you have been a victim of a scam or have encountered suspicious advertisements, please report them immediately to FCCC or relevant authorities, such as the Online Safety Commission or the Fiji Police's Cyber Crime Unit. As a member of the Global Anti-Scam Alliance (GASA), FCCC has access to advanced scam detection tools, and we can check any suspicious links via ScamAdviser. Report any suspicious links to <a href="mailto:scamwatch@fccc.gov.fi">scamwatch@fccc.gov.fi</a>.

For more information or to report suspicious activity, the public can contact the FCCC by calling 8921991, emailing <a href="mailto:helpdesk@fccc.gov.fi">helpdesk@fccc.gov.fi</a>, or through any of the channels at <a href="https://linktr.ee/fijianccc">https://linktr.ee/fijianccc</a>.

## **About FCCC**

The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission is an independent statutory authority committed to promoting competition and fair trading and regulating national infrastructure for the benefit of all Fijians.

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