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3 On Your Side: Work At Home Jobs

PHILADELPHIA (CBS 3) — While work-at-home propositions have been around for years, they're more popular than ever and the complaints are surging too! 3-On Your Side's Jim Donovan tells us what you need to know so you can work without ever walking out your door.

The rising price of gas and commuting convinced nurse Rhonda Leshner to dump her job in favor of one that would keep her at home. There were a lot of offers to choose from and she jumped at two.

According to Rhonda, "they had you send in money and you were supposed to get a packet."

But she says the packets were a waste and the jobs weren't what she expected.

The Better Business Bureau says complaints about work at-home offers nearly doubled between the first and second quarter of this year and the bureau is warning about a new type of scheme where people pay up front to get information about rebate processing jobs.

"They may buy software, they may buy training materials, what the individual is required then to do in most cases is sell ads to bring other people into the scheme," says Steve Cox of the Better Business Bureau.

Despite the problems with some 'offers', there are legitimate jobs out there. Some involve providing virtual customer service.

Robyn Freedman Spizman is the co-author of "Will Work From Home - Earn The Cash Without The Commute."

She says, "You can take incoming calls for a large company or even a small company and help field those customer service concerns."

For companies like Working Solutions, Arise and Alpine Access.

After getting burned initially, Rhonda did her homework and landed a customer service position

with Alpine.

She says, "I work from anywhere from 25 hours to 30 hours a week and I get to choose my schedule."

If you are a skilled professional, freelance sites like Elance and Odesk can match you up with clients who need your services.

Robyn says they're available if "you're a graphic designer, you are a pr pro, you're a talented designer or you're a Web site developer."

While Rhonda couldn't do that as a nurse, she still is happy that she finally found a new job she loves with the perks she needs.

According to Rhonda, "the benefits have been great because I'm not spending money on gas and I'm not having to commute anywhere."

When it comes to work-at-home offers, avoid any that ask you to pay up front, make promises of quick cash or use buzzwords like "free and easy" or "make money in your spare time."