

When an 'Easy' Job Offer Leads to Crime

「簡単に稼げる仕事」と聞くと、少し魅力的に感じる人もいるかもしれません。しかし、その誘いの先に犯罪が隠れていることがあります。近年は、いわゆる「闇バイト」をきっかけに、若者だけでなく中高年の人まで犯罪に巻き込まれるケースが増えています。少しでも怪しいと感じたときに、立ち止まって相談できることが大切ですね。あなたは、仕事の募集が安全かどうかを見分けるために、どのような点に注意すべきだと思いますか。



(Image courtesy of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department)

1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

There has been a growing number of cases in which people become involved in crime after being recruited for illegal jobs disguised as easy, well-paid temporary work.

Anonymous and loosely organized criminal groups, known in Japan as tokuryu, are now targeting not only young people but also middle-aged and older adults. By exploiting subtle aspects of human psychology, these groups lure ordinary people into committing crimes.

In many of these schemes, people are recruited through social media with promises of earning large amounts of money in a short period of time. Those who respond may ultimately be drawn into crimes such as special fraud, theft, and robbery, becoming perpetrators themselves.

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Source: When an 'Easy' Job Offer Leads to Crime

1. Article

The threat became widely known throughout Japan following a series of large-scale robberies in 2022 and 2023, which were allegedly orchestrated by ringleaders who used the name "Luffy."

The Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department has been monitoring posts on X believed to be recruiting people for such illegal jobs and issuing warnings. From January through June of this year, it posted 34,225 replies, nearly seven times the 5,090 replies it posted during the same period the previous year.

In recent years, face-to-face [recruitment](#) has also become increasingly common. When the National Police Agency investigated juveniles who became "runners" for special fraud in 2025—people who physically collect cash or other valuables from victims—it found that 59.6% had become involved through an introduction from an acquaintance or someone they knew.

At the same time, people involved in these illegal jobs span a wide range of age groups. Among those protected by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department from October 2024 through the end of July this year, 6.1% were in their 40s and 13.6% were aged 50 or older. Combined, middle-aged and older people accounted for roughly one-fifth of the total.

"Rather than being people who are struggling financially, many seem to become involved because they are looking for an easy way to make money."

Masashi Okano, a senior official in the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department's community safety division, [identifies](#) this as a common [characteristic](#) among people involved in illegal jobs. However, cases in which police have intervened to protect people from such schemes also reveal increasingly sophisticated recruitment tactics.

In one case, a teenage boy was invited by an acquaintance who told him, "We're short-handed. I want you to help with some work." When he arrived at the meeting place, several men told him that the job involved "signing up for mobile phone contracts." He felt too scared to refuse.

The criminal group appears to have taken advantage of an existing personal relationship to create a situation in which the boy felt unable to say no.

"Many people realize that something is suspicious, but instead of turning around and leaving, they continue," Okano said. "They only seek help from the police or turn themselves in after they begin to fear for their own safety."

1. Article

He believes this happens because, while carrying out the crimes, "they come to trust the criminal group's assurances that they won't get caught more than they trust their own instincts."

The consequences of placing that kind of trust in a tokuryu group can be devastating. In the January 2023 robbery and murder of an elderly woman in Komae, Tokyo, carried out by a group associated with Luffy, several defendants who were arrested and indicted had become involved in the killing after repeatedly taking part in other criminal activities.

The statutory punishment for robbery resulting in death is either the death penalty or life imprisonment. Okano warns that people can be "gradually exploited and drawn deeper in, eventually becoming involved in serious crimes such as robbery."

The National Police Agency warns people to be cautious of phrases commonly used by these groups in recruitment advertisements, such as "high pay," "same-day, immediate payment," and "clean job."

Another characteristic is the use of coded language. For example, "R," which is believed to be derived from "Lupin," the fictional thief, is reportedly used as slang related to theft.

Okano also warns people to be wary if they are asked to use highly anonymous messaging apps such as Telegram, particularly after making initial contact through a job advertisement.

Police officers also give lectures at elementary schools to raise awareness of these schemes. "It is important to teach them about this at school while they are still young," Okano explained.

Since many people are also drawn into these schemes by acquaintances, he says it is important to foster an atmosphere in everyday conversations that gives the impression they would not be receptive to invitations to participate in such crimes.

Tokuryu groups often force people applying for illegal jobs to hand over personal information, including photographs of their faces, their parents' homes, and their romantic partners. They then use this information to threaten them and prevent them from leaving.

"If you get involved in a illegal job, even if you manage to start your life over, things will never return to the way they were before," Okano says. "We can also arrange patrols around your home, so we hope people come forward or request protection as early as possible."

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. involved 関与した

Several students were involved in a project to tutor elementary schoolchildren in English.

2. recruitment 募集

The IT company changed its recruitment process last year.

3. identify 特定する

The traffic safety office is trying to identify the cause of last week's train accident.

4. characteristic 特徴

Patience and honesty are important characteristics of a good teacher.

5. consequence 結果

The captain of the ship had to accept the consequences of her decision.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why are people attracted to illegal or fake jobs?
2. What are runners, and how are they recruited?
3. What do Masashi Okano and the National Police Agency recommend doing to avoid getting trapped by these scams?
4. Why do you think people sometimes continue with a job even when they suspect it is illegal?
5. What other kinds of scams are there? How can you avoid them?

4. 「断れない」「捕まらない」…中高年層も加担 トクリュウ巧妙、一般人引きずり込む

近年、「闇バイト」を入り口に犯罪に手を染める例が増えている。匿名・流動型犯罪グループ（トクリュウ）が手ぐすね引いて待つのは若年層に限らず、中高年層が関与する事件も少なくない。

「断れない」「捕まらない」…。トクリュウは微妙な人間心理を捉えながら、一般人を犯罪に引きずり込んでいく。

闇バイトはSNSなどで「短時間で高収入が得られる」などと誘い込み、特殊詐欺や窃盗、強盗などの実行犯に仕立て上げる犯罪行為だ。令和4、5年に発生した「ルフィ」と称する指示役らによる広域強盗事件を皮切りに、その脅威は全国的に知れ渡った。

犯罪グループはあらゆる手段で一般人を取り込もうとしており、長らく、闇バイトの実行役を調達する手段として悪用されているのがSNSだ。そのため、警視庁はX（旧ツイッター）の闇バイト募集とみられる投稿にリプライ（返答）し、注意喚起を進めているが、今年1～6月のリプライ件数は3万4225件。前年同期の5090件から7倍近くに増えた。

近年、勧誘手法は対面によるものも多くなっている。警察庁が7年中に特殊詐欺の受け子（被害者から現金などを受け取る実行犯）になった少年を調査したところ、59.6%が「知人等からの紹介」が関与のきっかけだった。一方で年齢層は幅広く、警視庁が6年10月～今年7月末に保護した闇バイト関与者の年齢層を見ると、40代は全体の6.1%、50代以上が13.6%で、中高年が全体の約2割を占めた。

「全くお金がないというよりは、安直に稼ごうというところから入る者が多い」。警視庁生活安全総務課の岡野雅史管理官は闇バイト関与者の特徴をこう分析するが、警視庁が保護した事例からは巧妙な手口もうかがえた。

ある10代男性は「人手が足りない。仕事を手伝ってほしい」と知人から誘われ、待ち合わせ場所に行くと、複数の男たちから「携帯電話の契約」と仕事内容を明かされ、「怖くて断れなかった」。犯罪グループが人的関係を利用し、断れない環境を作り出したとみられる。

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出典：「断れない」「捕まらない」…中高年層も加担 トクリュウ巧妙、一般人引きずり込む

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4. 「断れない」「捕まらない」…中高年層も加担 トクリュウ巧妙、一般人引きずり込む

「不審だと気付いてもそのまま引き返さず、突っ走ってしまい、身の危険を感じてから警察に出頭・相談する者が多い」と岡野管理官は語る。犯行のさなかには「自分の感覚よりも、『やっても捕まらない』という犯行グループ側の感覚を信じるようになってしまう」からだと分析する。

そのようにしてトクリュウを信じた末路は悲惨だ。ルフィグループが5年1月に東京都狛江市内で起こした高齢女性への強盗致死事件でも、逮捕・起訴された複数の被告は別の事件への関与を重ねるうちに人命を奪う事件に手を染めることとなった。強盗致死の法定刑は死刑か無期懲役。岡野管理官は「ずるずる使われ、エスカレートして強盗などの重大事件に関与させられる」と警告する。

アルバイト募集情報の怪しさに気付くポイントはどこにあるのか。警察庁は「高額」「即日即金」「ホワイト案件」などのキーワードへの注意を呼び掛ける。窃盗を示す「ルパン」に由来するとみられる「R」など隠語も特徴の一つだ。「テレグラム」などの匿名性の高い通信アプリの使用を求められた場合も警戒すべきだと岡野管理官は話す。

警察は小学校などで注意喚起の講話を実施している。岡野管理官は「小さいうちから学校で教えることが重要だ」と意義を説く。友人や知人から闇バイトに取り込まれる例も多く、「普段の会話の中で、『こいつに犯罪の話はできない』という雰囲気をつくることも重要だ」とする。

トクリュウは闇バイトの応募者に自身の顔や実家、交際相手の画像をはじめとした個人情報の共有を強要し、離脱防止の脅し道具に使うことが多い。岡野管理官は「闇バイトに関われば、人生をやり直しても元には戻らない。自宅へのパトロールなども行うので、できるだけ早いうちに出頭や保護要請をしてほしい」と訴えている。

出典：「断れない」「捕まらない」…中高年層も加担 トクリュウ巧妙、一般人引きずり込む

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