

consumers@attorneygeneral.gov

www.attorneygeneral.gov



Consumer Complaint Form

Bureau of Consumer Protection
15th Floor, Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

1-800-441-2555 – PA ONLY
1-717-787-9707

Required fields are marked with an asterisk*

Your information:

Are you a veteran? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Age Group:		
Are you on active duty? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 60-64	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older	
		<input type="checkbox"/> 35-59		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Dr.	Name*			
Address*				
City*		State*	Zip Code*	County*
Daytime Phone Number*	Home Phone Number*	Email Address		
()	()			

If completing this form on behalf of someone else, please complete the following information:

Are they a veteran? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Age Group:		
Are they on active duty? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 60-64	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older	
		<input type="checkbox"/> 35-59		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Dr.	Name*			
Address*				
City*		State*	Zip Code*	County*
Daytime Phone Number	Home Phone Number	Email Address		
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Who is the complaint against?

Business/Person Name*		Phone Number:		
		()		
Name of the individual of whom you complained				
Mailing Address				
City		State	Zip Code	County
Product or Service Purchased		Date of Purchase	Purchase Price	

What would you like the business to do to settle your complaint?

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CANNOT ACT AS YOUR PRIVATE ATTORNEY

As a law enforcement agency, the primary function of the Office of Attorney General is to represent the public at large by enforcing laws prohibiting fraudulent or deceptive trade practices that impact the public interest.

The Attorney General, through the Bureau of Consumer Protection (“Bureau”), provides a mediation service to consumers where an attempt may be made to mediate individual consumer complaints which fall within the Bureau’s jurisdiction. The information you provide will be used in an attempt to resolve your complaint and will be shared with the party(ies) against which the complaint is filed. Additionally, your complaint may be shared with or referred to other Governmental Law Enforcement or Regulatory Agencies.

NOTE: We cannot mediate a matter which is or has been the subject of legal action.

Your complaint will be kept on file and may be used to establish violations of PA law.

By signing below:

1. I certify that the information provided in my complaint, including my identity and any factual statements or allegations, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.
2. I certify that I have read and understand the informational sheet about the mediation process; and, further certify my understanding that the Bureau cannot provide individual legal representation to me.
3. I certify that I have authorized the Bureau to contact the party(ies) against which I have filed a complaint; and, that I further authorize the party(ies) against which I have filed a complaint to communicate with and provide information related to my complaint to the Bureau.
4. I certify that I have authorized the Bureau to transfer my complaint, and any or all attachments related to it, to another federal, state, local or other agency which may have jurisdiction over this matter.

YOUR SIGNATURE

DATE

Please include copies of all documents regarding your problem. Be sure to send COPIES, not originals.

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WHEN SHOULD YOU FILE A COMPLAINT

If you are unable to resolve a problem with a business (see, "Problem-Solving Tips", *below*), you may wish to file a complaint with the Office of Attorney General, Bureau of Consumer Protection ("Bureau"). You can download a complaint form from our website at www.attorneygeneral.gov or you can call our toll-free number, 1.800.441.2555, to have a form mailed to you.

The Bureau provides a mediation service to consumers where an attempt may be made to mediate individual complaints which fall within the Bureau's jurisdiction. The information you provide will be used in an attempt to resolve your complaint and will be shared with the party(ies) against which the complaint is filed. Additionally, your complaint may be shared with or referred to other governmental law enforcement or regulatory agencies.

NOTE: (1) Participation in the mediation process is voluntary and we cannot compel a business to cooperate; and (2) We cannot mediate a matter that is already or has been the subject of legal action.

When we receive your completed complaint form, it will be reviewed by our staff and, depending on the nature of the complaint, one of the following courses of action may be taken.

- We may refer your complaint to a local, state or federal agency, which has primary jurisdiction over the subject matter. If your complaint is referred to such an agency or organization, you will be notified by mail of its name and address, so you may follow up on your complaint.
- If your complaint falls with the Bureau's jurisdiction, we may attempt to initiate our voluntary mediation process with the business, in which case you will receive a letter with your file number and the name of the agent who will handle the mediation. Please keep your file number for future reference when contacting this office.

NOTE: Because of the volume of complaints the Bureau receives, it may take some time before we review and process your complaint. We ask for and appreciate your patience during this time.

NOTE: In order to document your complaint file and keep it up-to-date, we request communications from you and the business to be in writing.

- You will be notified by mail when we receive information regarding your case.
TO HELP US HELP YOU, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM CALLING FOR "STATUS REPORTS."

If mediation efforts are not successful, you may be advised to seek relief either through a private attorney or through Magisterial District Court. The Bureau cannot provide you with private legal counsel or offer legal advice. The Bureau represents the public at large in its enforcement of the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law ("Consumer Protection Law"). The Consumer Protection Law *does* provide individual consumers with the ability to bring a private action, citing unfair and deceptive business practices.

PROBLEM-SOLVING TIPS

It is helpful for you to try to resolve your own complaint before contacting the Bureau. However, if you have exhausted your efforts to resolve the problem without success, contact the Office of Attorney General promptly for assistance.

NOTE: If your claim involves a dispute of charges placed on your credit card, or billing statement or if a merchant has promised to reverse or credit your charge card but has failed to do so, you must act quickly to preserve your right to challenge a charge. Under the Federal Fair Credit Billing Act, your credit card company must receive a written dispute notice from you within 60 days after the first bill containing the disputed charge was mailed to you. ***The Bureau cannot dispute this charge for you.*** Look at the back of your credit card statement for specific information regarding the procedure for filing your dispute. You must file your dispute with your credit card company, a complaint to the merchant or company that made

the charge is not sufficient. Even if you file a credit card dispute, you can still file a complaint with our office.

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

Before you complain to a company, be sure to identify the problem, what (if anything) you have already done to resolve the problem and what you think is a fair settlement. For example, do you want your money back? Would you like the product repaired? Do you want the product exchanged?

GATHER RECORDS

Start a file about your complaint. Include copies of sales receipts, repair orders, warranties, canceled checks, and contracts which will back up your complaint and help the company solve your problem.

Go to the place you made the purchase. Contact the person who sold you the item or performed the service. Calmly and accurately explain the problem and what action you would like taken. If that person is not helpful, ask for the supervisor or manager and restate your case. A large percentage of consumer problems are resolved at this level. Chances are, yours will be too.

Allow each person you contact time to resolve your problem before contacting someone else.

Keep a record of your efforts and include the names of those you spoke with and what was done about the problem. Save copies of any letters you send to the company, as well as letters sent to you.

WRITING A COMPLAINT LETTER

The letter should include your name, address, home and work telephone numbers, and the account number, if appropriate.

Make your letter brief and to the point. Specify all the important facts about your purchase, including the date and place you made the purchase and any information you can give about the product, such as the serial or model number. If you are writing to complain about a service you received, describe the service and who performed it.

State exactly what you want done about the problem and how long you are willing to wait to resolve it. Have reasonable expectations.

Include copies of all documents regarding your problem. Be sure to send COPIES, not originals.

Don't write an angry, sarcastic, or threatening letter. The person reading your letter probably was not responsible for your problem, but may be very helpful in resolving it.

Type your letter if possible. If it is handwritten, make sure it is neat and easy to read.

Keep a copy of all correspondence to and from the company, as well as a copy of your complaint.

OTHER ASSISTANCE

If you are not satisfied with the response, don't give up. If the company operates nationally or the product is a national brand, call or write a letter to the person responsible for consumer complaints at the company's headquarters, e.g., the company's public relations representative or president. Many companies have toll-free telephone numbers, often printed on the product. Before telephoning a company long distance, check to see if the firm has a toll-free number.

If you have questions concerning the specific application or interpretation of the law, you should consult a private attorney. If you do not have an attorney, you can call your county lawyer referral service or your county bar association. Other agencies may be accessed through the blue pages of your telephone director.

The Bureau is charged with identifying patterns of business practices which may violate the Consumer Protection Law. Even if you have resolved your complaint, you can forward a statement regarding your experience, with attached documents, for the Bureau's reference.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. We hope we can be of assistance to you.