



# Programs and Services

For years, consumers have written to Pueblo, Colorado 81009 for timely, practical information they trust. Now they can get this great information in the format that best suits their needs—in print, over the phone, or on the web. The Federal Citizen Information Center provides the answers to questions about the federal government and everyday consumer issues whether citizens write, call or log on.

## **What is the Federal Citizen Information Center?**

For over 35 years, the Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC) of the U.S. General Services Administration has been a trusted one-stop source for answers to questions about consumer problems and government services. Consumers can get the information they need in three ways: by calling toll-free **1 (800) FED INFO**, through printed publications, or through information posted on FCIC's family of websites: **USA.gov**, **Pueblo.gsa.gov**, **Kids.gov**, and **ConsumerAction.gov**.

## **1 (800) FED INFO**

FCIC manages a toll-free National Contact Center with specially trained staff to answer questions in English and Spanish about all aspects of the federal government. The public can get help by calling toll-free **1 (800) FED INFO** (1-800-333-4636) between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Eastern Time to speak to a live agent. Recorded information on popular topics is available around the clock. You can also search our online database at **www.info.gov**.

## **USA.gov**

**USA.gov** is your first stop for government information, services, and transactions. This site pulls together more than 180 million federal, state, and local government web pages. Here, citizens can get easy-to-understand information and services from the government 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can also use an e-mail form to send questions and comments in English and Spanish for a response within two business days.

The public can use **USA.gov's** Citizen's Gateway to get government services online and to access information on such topics as Social Security, filing taxes, buying surplus federal property, and more. The Business and Nonprofit Gateway links to information on business and nonprofit opportunities, laws, and regulations. The Federal Employee Gateway links to resources and information geared toward federal employees. The Government-to-Government Gateway connects to important resources for federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

**GobiernoUSA.gov**) provides the general public with access to FCIC's online Spanish federal information resources.

## **Pueblo.gsa.gov**

At **Pueblo.gsa.gov**, consumers can order, read, print out, or save the current *Consumer Information Catalog* and the full text of all the publications listed in it. Consumers can access additional information on a wide range of subjects by clicking on different topic headings. Hundreds of publications, the latest product recalls and scams, updates of consumer news from various federal agencies, and a calendar of consumer-related events are also available. The public can also sign up for our FEDINFO E-newsletter from Pueblo. The e-newsletter delivers updates on consumer issues and free special offers from FCIC straight to consumers' e-mail inboxes.

## **Kids.gov**

**Kids.gov** is the official interagency children's portal to the U.S. government. The site features more than 400 kid-friendly links in one easy-to-find place. Links are organized by topic area and by whether they are a government agency, school, private, or commercial organization. The links are safe and age-appropriate. Kids can learn about everything from fighting crime and exploring the world to music and space. And the "Homework" section links them directly to the best reference and homework help sites on the Internet.

## Consumer Action Handbook

Published continuously since 1979, the *Consumer Action Handbook* is one of the most helpful and popular consumer resources. This 168-page guide is designed to help citizens find the best and most direct source for assistance with their consumer problems and questions. The *Handbook* offers tips on topics such as buying and leasing cars, protecting against fraud, and shopping from home. It also includes a sample complaint form that consumers can use as a guide for their own letter, fax, or e-mail. The *Handbook* has thousands of names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for Better Business Bureaus, corporate consumer contacts and state, county, and city government consumer protection offices. Citizens can access the *Handbook* online at **ConsumerAction.gov**. The website has easy-to-follow links to the most useful federal websites; state, local and county consumer agencies; consumer organizations; and corporations and trade associations with ongoing consumer programs. The *Consumer Action Handbook* is also available online in Spanish at **www.consumidor.gov**.

## Consumer Information Catalog

The Government Printing Office facility in Pueblo, Colorado, is the home of the *Consumer Information Catalog*. The *Catalog* is published four times a year and contains descriptive listings of about 200 free or low-cost federal publications. The publications are also available online at **Pueblo.gsa.gov**. Topics include health, federal benefits, money management, housing, employment, small business, education, food and nutrition, cars, travel, consumer protection and more. The *Catalog* is available through schools, libraries, consumer groups, federal offices with large numbers of visitors, Congressional offices and in response to individual requests.

## Resources in Spanish

The general public can access FCIC's Spanish resources online at **www.pueblo.gsa.gov/spanish**. This page links to nearly 200 federal Spanish-language websites, including **GobiernoUSA.gov**. The *Consumer Action Handbook* is also available online in Spanish at **www.consumidor.gov**.

## Information Development

The Federal Citizen Information Center is focused on answering citizens' questions about the federal government and everyday consumer issues. FCIC watches emerging consumer issues and topics and regularly reviews new information coming from federal agencies and consumer organizations. Whether it's new information to be posted on FCIC's websites or publications to be listed in the *Consumer Information Catalog*, criteria include timeliness, clarity, cost, and relevance to consumers' everyday needs.

When new issues need to be addressed, or earlier information updated, FCIC works with the appropriate federal agency to develop and provide new publications and to make sure that web articles and links are up-to-date. Publication suggestions from consumers are also welcomed and appreciated.

## Cooperative Publishing

Although the majority of publications listed in the *Consumer Information Catalog* are developed by federal agencies alone, some are produced jointly by government and private industry.

FCIC's criteria for cooperative publications provide that the publication must:

- receive the endorsement of the appropriate federal agency;
- clearly indicate that it is a joint government/industry effort;
- be an unbiased, objective presentation with clear labeling of industry or government positions whenever present;
- be free of advertising or promotional messages; and
- give permission for reprinting by educational and nonprofit groups.

## Delivering Information through the Media

The Federal Citizen Information Center works with the national media, such as *Family Circle*, the Associated Press and *Parade* to highlight consumer information in articles and feature stories.

FCIC develops unique press releases for specific consumer topics and tailors the media mailing list for each release to target appropriate media outlets. The releases are available in hard copy and in electronic form via FCIC's Media E-mail List.

Each year, the Federal Citizen Information Center produces public service advertising for television, radio and print media to make the public more aware of FCIC services. The TV and radio spots are available in 60, 30, 20, 15, and 10-second lengths. The TV spots are available on 3/4", 1", DVD, DVC-Pro, Beta SP tapes, and VHS. The radio spots are available on CDs. The eye-catching print ads come in 10 different sizes, ranging from one-half column inch to a full page. FCIC can satisfy any special printing or electronic requirements for print ads.

### For More Information

If you are interested in obtaining additional information or working with the Federal Citizen Information Center, please call **(202) 501-1794**.