

Services for the Media

You want to keep up with the newest developments in areas that affect people's lives—health, children, homes, diets, finances. How do you get up-to-the-minute news?

You're working on a story about a government program or issue, or you want to interview a government spokesperson. How do you find the right place to call?

You've got very limited space, but you want to give your readers a source for more information. Where can you direct them?

The answer to all of these questions is the Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC). To get the help you need call FCIC's **Media Hotline** at **(202) 501-1794**. We're available between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. If we can't answer your questions immediately, we'll research them and call back promptly with your answers. And we'll do everything we can to meet your deadline!

FCIC also offers the following free media services:

- Access to all of the latest consumer news through FCIC's website and online press room;
- The quarterly *Consumer Information Catalog*;
- Review copies of any of the 200 Federal publications listed in the *Catalog*;
- A listing of the most popular publications in the *Catalog*;
- Counts of publication requests received as a result of major media mentions;
- "New for Consumers" releases for newspapers and magazines delivered electronically or in hardcopy; and
- Public service advertisements for print, television, and radio.

What Is the Federal Citizen Information Center?

The Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC) was established in February 2000 as the result of a merger of the Consumer Information Center (CIC) and the Federal Information Center (FIC). The merger combined the *Consumer Information Catalog*, Consumer Information Center's website (pueblo.gsa.gov), and the Pueblo publication distri-

bution program with the FIC nationwide toll-free telephone assistance center. The new FCIC now serves as a trusted, one-stop source for answers to questions about Federal agencies, programs, and services. At the National Contact Center, a specially trained staff answers questions in English and Spanish from the general public about all aspects of the Federal government or direct callers to an appropriate contact. The public can access the call center by calling toll-free **1 (800) FED INFO (1-800-333-4636)** between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. ET.

FCIC maintains close ties with more than 100 different Federal offices, agencies and departments, as well as many consumer and trade organizations. Call the FCIC media staff at **(202) 501-1794** and we can help you find the right contacts at these agencies and organizations quickly.

FCIC's Websites

A great way to keep up-to-date on the latest consumer news is through Federal Citizen Information Center's websites at **pueblo.gsa.gov**. You can access a library of "New for Consumers" press releases at and find all of the latest consumer information you need in our online press room. Additional features include updates of consumer news and notes from various Federal agencies, listings of the latest scams and product recalls, and a calendar of consumer-related events. Visitors can read, print out, or save the current *Catalog* and the full text of all the publications listed.

Consumeraction.gov features the full text of the *Consumer Action Handbook*. The *Handbook* offers tips on topics such as buying and leasing cars, protecting your privacy and yourself from fraud, and shopping from home. It also includes links to hundreds of other Federal websites; state, local and county consumer agencies; FCIC corporate publishing partners; consumer organizations; and corporations and trade associations with ongoing consumer programs.

FirstGov.gov is the “Front Door” to 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 for a response within two business days. The public can use **FirstGov.gov's** Citizen's Gateway to access information on such topics as Social Security, filing taxes, buying surplus Federal property, and more. The Business Gateway links to information on business opportunities, laws, and regulations. The Government Gateway connects to important resources for Federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

In addition, FCIC operates **kids.gov**, the children's portal of **Firstgov.gov**, linking kids to all the children's resources of the Federal 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.

Consumer Information Catalog

The *Consumer Information Catalog* is the way that many people learn about booklets available from Pueblo, Colorado 81009. The free *Catalog* is published quarterly, and it lists nearly 200 free and low-cost Federal booklets on everything from employment to health, money management to housing, food to getting Federal benefits.

Complimentary Review Copies of Booklets

Members of the media can order complimentary review copies of both free and sales publications. Our most requested publication is the *Consumer Action Handbook*. For a copy of the *Handbook*, the *Consumer Information Catalog*, or to request copies of specific publications, call the **Media Hotline** at (202) 501-1794 or fax (202) 501-4281.

“New for Consumers” Releases

FCIC regularly sends “New for Consumers” news releases to print, web and broadcast outlets. The releases give tips from publications listed on our website and in the quarterly *Catalog*. A “New for Consumers” release can be used to offer a publication to your audience, or the substantive information in the release can be incorporated into a column or feature story. Many Action Line columnists use these releases to answer readers' questions. For selected major articles in large circulation newspapers or magazines, FCIC can give your promotion a unique address and count the number of orders your story generates. You can choose to have hard copies of our “New for Consumers” releases mailed to you, or you can receive them electronically via FCIC's Media E-mail List.

Public Service Advertisements

Each year, the Federal Citizen Information Center produces public service advertising for television, radio, and print media. The PSAs motivate consumers to visit FCIC's various websites or to call for selected free information. The TV and radio spots are professionally produced to be entertaining as well as informative, usually with a humorous theme. They are available in 60, 30, 20, 15, and 10-second lengths. The TV spots are available on 3/4”, 1”, VHS, DVC Pro, and Beta SP formats. The radio spots are available on CDs. The eye-catching print ads come in multiple sizes, ranging from one-half column inch to a full page and are in black and white and color. FCIC can satisfy any special printing or electronic requirements for print ads.

Special Addresses for the Media

The Federal Citizen Information Center maintains a variety of special addresses to help speed the processing of orders received in Pueblo. The addresses given in the “New for Consumers” releases are set up especially for media-generated orders.

The addresses listed in the *Consumer Information Catalog* are for booklets ordered only by using the *Catalog* order form. If you plan to list one or more booklets from the *Catalog*, please call the **Media Hotline** at (202) 501-1794 to get the correct mailing address, telephone number, and/or website address for the online order form and to make sure FCIC's distribution facility in Pueblo has enough copies of the publication to meet your audience's needs.