



**TOM CORBETT**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

www.attorneygeneral.gov

**Office Use Only**  
Complaint #

Investigator:

Code 1

Code 2

Bureau of Consumer Protection  
Administrative Office  
14th Floor Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
(717) 787-9707

YOUR NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

COUNTY

HOME PHONE NUMBER

BEST NUMBER TO CALL DURING THE DAY

NAME OF BUSINESS COMPLAINT IS AGAINST

NAME OF OWNER OR OTHER INDIVIDUAL TO WHOM YOU COMPLAINED

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

COUNTY

PHONE

PRODUCT(S) OR SERVICE(S) PURCHASED

DATE OF PURCHASE

PURCHASE PRICE

To what other agencies have you complained? \_\_\_\_\_

What action was taken? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you retained an attorney?  Yes  No

If yes, please provide your attorney's name, address and telephone number

Have you filed a legal action?  Yes  No

If yes, please state WHEN, WHERE and WHAT decision was made?

**Your Age:**

- 18-29
- 30-44
- 45-59
- 60 or older

**How did you find out about us:**

- Visited Office
- Attended County/ Senior Fair or Speaking Engagement
- State Legislator/ Agency
- News Story
- Internet
- Other- Please Specify:

*(This information will be used for Statistical & Enforcement Purposes Only)*

1-800-441-2555

Please explain your complaint. You may use additional sheets if necessary. Please print or type clearly. Try to be brief, but be sure to tell **WHAT** happened, **WHEN** it happened and **WHERE** it happened. Be specific about any oral statements the business made to you, **ESPECIALLY** those that influenced you to deal with the company. Describe events in the order in which they happened. Attach **COPIES** of all contracts, letters, receipts, canceled checks (front & back), advertisements or any other papers that relate to your complaint.

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**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE THE BUSINESS TO DO TO SETTLE YOUR COMPLAINT?**

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**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, provides a mediation service to consumers where an attempt may be made to mediate your individual consumer complaint if it falls within the jurisdiction of the office. Please be advised that the information you provide will be shared with the party against which you have filed a complaint. Additionally, your complaint may be shared with or referred to other Governmental Law Enforcement or Regulatory Agencies.

Your complaint will also be kept on file with our office and the information contained therein may be used to establish violations of Pennsylvania Law. Attached to this complaint form is an informational sheet which will help you in completion of the complaint form and also will explain in greater detail the mediation process.

By signing this complaint form, I authorize the Bureau of Consumer Protection to contact the party(ies) against which I have filed a complaint in an effort to reach an amicable resolution. 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 of Consumer Protection. I verify that I have read and understand the informational sheet about this process; and, that the information I am providing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

YOUR SIGNATURE

DATE



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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.

In order to expedite the processing and resolution of your complaint, it may be referred to a local consumer group or to another state or federal agency. When your complaint is referred, you will be notified by mail of the name and address of the referral agency or group, so that you may contact them for information concerning your complaint.

If your complaint is appropriate for this office, we will attempt to mediate your dispute through the services of our Consumer Mediation Unit, and you will be sent a letter with your complaint file number. Please keep your file number for future reference when contacting this office.

*Please note that, because of the volume of complaints received by the Bureau of Consumer Protection, it may take some time before we can thoroughly review your complaint. We ask for, and appreciate your patience during this time.*

If your complaint is suitable for mediation, an agent will contact both you and the business or individuals with whom you are having a dispute and attempt to mediate and resolve your problem. Please note that most contact is by letter.

When contacting this office, always do so in writing so your file may be kept up to date. It is not necessary to call and check the status of your complaint; you will be notified by mail when we receive information regarding your case. **TO HELP US HELP YOU, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM CALLING ONLY FOR "STATUS REPORTS."**

If mediation efforts are not successful, you may be advised to seek relief either through a private attorney or through small claims court. The Mediation Unit cannot act as your private legal counsel or offer legal advice. The Bureau of Consumer Protection represents the public at large by enforcing laws prohibiting fraudulent or deceptive trade practices.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP YOURSELF RIGHT NOW

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. We 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 claim with our office.

It is preferable that you try to resolve your own complaint before contacting the Bureau of Consumer Protection (BCP). Instruction to do so follows. However, if you have exhausted your efforts to resolve the problem without success, contact the Office of Attorney General immediately for assistance.

### 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 decide 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 back to where 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 another source of assistance.

Keep a record of your efforts and include notes about whom 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 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. Be reasonable;
- 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, i.e., the company's public relations representative or president. Many companies have toll-free telephone numbers, often printed on the product. Before phoning a company long distance, it might be worthwhile to see if the firm has an "800" number you can dial toll free. To find an 800 number contact "800" directory assistance at 1-800-555-1212. 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 directory.

Our office looks at establishing patterns of business practices. Even if you have resolved your complaint you can forward a statement regarding your experience with attached documents for our office to use for future reference.

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