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FOR CONSUMERS

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

The first step in obtaining satisfaction is to contact the business and be sure they are aware of the problem and have been given the opportunity to remedy the situation. If you cannot resolve the problem by direct discussion with the business, you can call the Department toll free at 1-800-922-1594. You can obtain a complaint form, which should be filled out and returned to the Department along with copies of all contracts, receipts, warranties, guarantees, advertisements or other written agreements.

IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT

If you file a complaint with the Department, please remember the following:

- Fill out the complaint form as completely as possible
- Identify the name and current mailing and street address of the company against which you are complaining
- Include the account number (if available) of any account which you have with the business or company against which you are complaining
- Give a brief, complete and accurate statement of exactly what your problem or complaint is and how you would like it resolved.

FILING A COMPLAINT

Help us help you by providing the additional documents requested such as a copy of your contract, warranty, canceled checks, receipts, bill of sale or Buyer's Guide as appropriate.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

The Department cannot always resolve complaints to the satisfaction of the consumer; however, we will try to determine the obligation of the business based on these facts and advise you. Our complaint analysts are knowledgeable about consumer rights and have access to attorneys who provide legal guidance. The Department resolves a large number of complaints which require varying lengths of time to resolve. Your patience is appreciated and we will contact you as soon as possible.



South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs • 3600 Forest Drive Suite 300 Columbia SC 29204 • e-mail: scdca@dca.state.sc.us • 803.734.4200 or toll free statewide: 1.800.922.1594 • website: www.state.sc.us/consumer

COMPLAINT FORM		File No.	Date
Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____		BUSINESS COMPLAINT NUMBER _____ _____ _____	
1. Have you filed a complaint with any other consumer service agency? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Have you filed a complaint and resolution with a suggested office? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Is an attorney handling your complaint? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide the corresponding name, address and telephone number.			
NOTE: ATTACH FIVE COPIES OF CONTRACTS, RECEIPTS, WARRANTIES, CHECKS, BILL OF SALE, ETC. Please provide a complete description of your complaint.			
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STOP Do not attach this copy of your complaint.			
Date submitted to Company: _____ Date of your most recent contact: _____			
PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THIS COMPLAINT. THE SOUTH CAROLINA REFERENCE INFORMATION SERVICE DEPT. OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS WILL RELEASE A COPY OF YOUR COMPLAINT TO THE BUSINESS.			
_____ Name		_____ Agency Copy	

Complaint Filing Tips:

1 Your complaint will be given a number and assigned to a complaint analyst who will evaluate it to determine if the Department can assist you. Note: If your complaint falls within the jurisdiction of another agency, South Carolina law requires that we forward your complaint to that agency and you will be notified.

However, If you are represented by an attorney or if legal action has been taken, the Department cannot intercede or interfere in that process. **The Department does not have jurisdiction in business-to-business complaints or complaints between two individuals.**

2 Once an analyst determines that you have a complaint that can be handled by the Department, the business you are complaining against will be contacted in writing for a response or suggested resolution. Due to our limited staff and budgetary constraints, we are unable to handle complaints by telephoning the business.

3 Several letters will be sent to the business in an effort to obtain a reply; however, a card will be sent to you in approximately 30 days if we have not heard from the business. It has been our experience that businesses will often contact the consumer immediately with an offer of a goodwill resolution to the complaint. Please contact the Department if your complaint is resolved before you hear from us.

4 After a reply is received from the business, the analyst will compare the facts presented in your complaint and the facts given by the business. We encourage your participation in negotiating an amicable solution.

5 If the business does not respond to our letters, the analyst will evaluate the complaint to determine whether to call the business, recommend Department enforcement, refer the complaint to another state or close the file unsatisfied.