

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986
www.wvago.gov **consumer@wvago.gov**

DEAR CONSUMER:

The Consumer Protection Division is an office of the West Virginia Attorney General established to help protect consumers who may have been victims of unlawful practices in the purchase of goods and services. The first step in seeking our help is to fill out the enclosed Consumer Complaint form and return it to the following address:

Office of the West Virginia Attorney General
Consumer Protection/Antitrust Division
PO Box 1789
Charleston, WV 25326-1789

Before filling out the complaint form, please read this letter carefully so you will have a better understanding of what our office does and what type of information must be included in your Consumer Complaint form.

HOW DOES OUR OFFICE HELP TO RESOLVE YOUR COMPLAINT? After your complaint is received, we first decide whether it can be resolved through our voluntary mediation process. These complaints are assigned to a mediator who contacts the business and requests a written response to the complaint. Many complaints are resolved successfully when the business makes a favorable response or when the consumer and business reach a compromise.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MEDIATION DOES NOT RESULT IN A SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF YOUR COMPLAINT? When mediation is unsuccessful, your file is reviewed by one of our staff lawyers. If the business has not violated any Consumer Protection laws, we may not take any further action. We will notify you of our decision and provide some additional information on what steps you may take to pursue the complaint on your own. We are not able to act as your private lawyer if mediation is unsuccessful. You may want to consult with your own lawyer or take action in magistrate court. If you do not know an attorney, you may be able to locate an attorney through the Lawyer Referral Service of the West Virginia State Bar, found at www.wvlawyerreferral.org. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may qualify for assistance through the legal aid program that serves your county.

HOW DO WE ENFORCE LAWS PROTECTING CONSUMERS? Our office represents the State of West Virginia and consumers in general. If we believe that the business may be violating state consumer laws or is engaging in a broader pattern of unlawful practices, we may start an official investigation. After an investigation, we decide whether further legal action is needed to force the business to comply with West Virginia law. In some instances we may file a lawsuit in an effort to halt the illegal activities and obtain refunds of money wrongfully taken from consumers.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this complaint form and for mailing it to our office. Your complaint will help us to enforce West Virginia law and to prevent future victims of unlawful and deceptive acts and practices. We hope that your complaint will be successfully resolved.

Sincerely yours,

CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION

PLEASE CONTINUE TO THE OTHER SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON FILLING OUT YOUR COMPLAINT

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING A COMPLAINT

- (A) Complete all pages of the attached Consumer Complaint form, use additional paper if necessary. Answer all questions fully, correctly and truthfully. Please print clearly in ink or type.
- (B) Please send COPIES – front and back – of all documents or other papers that may relate to your complaint. DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS. Examples of papers you should copy and send are: contracts, financial disclosure statements, payment receipts, credit card receipts or statements, canceled checks, sales slips, order blanks, warranties, repair records or estimates, letters between you and the business, and any papers you have signed.
- (C) When describing your complaint, please explain all the important events in the order in which they occurred. Please provide dates whenever possible. Tell us the facts about your complaint rather than your feelings about what happened. If you need additional space to tell what happened, please continue on a separate page and attach it to your complaint.
- (D) Return or mail the completed Consumer Complaint form and copies of your papers to:

Office of the West Virginia Attorney General
Consumer Protection Division
PO Box 1789
Charleston, WV 25326-1789

- (E) If you have any further questions about how to file your complaint:

Toll Free: 1-800-368-8808

Telephone: 304-558-8986

E-Mail: consumer@wvago.gov

Find us on the web at: <http://www.wvago.gov>