



Office of Fair Trading



Fair Trading Facts

Unhappy? How to resolve complaints

Bought something that's faulty? Paid for work to be done and not been given a fair deal? You have a right to complain if you are unhappy. By making a complaint you have a chance to improve your situation and the business involved gets to learn of your problem and improve their activities.

What to do: Firstly, resolving a complaint can take time and be a little scary sometimes. But follow our advice and your complaint should be resolved more quickly and effectively.

- When you make a complaint, get your facts right and always stay calm.
- Before you ring or return to the store, make some notes of what you want to say.
- Go back to the shop as soon as possible and take your receipt or other proof of purchase.
- If you are not satisfied put your complaint in writing.
- Address your letter to Customer Service or the General Manager giving full details and set a deadline for action.
- Keep copies of letters along with a diary of events and notes of any telephone calls.
- It can sometimes be helpful to include photographs of the problem or, if your complaint is particularly serious or involves technical issues, you may wish to get an independent expert to provide a written opinion to back up your complaint.

If you can't resolve the matter, get advice from your local Office of Fair Trading.

If you telephone the business: Make a note beforehand of what you want to say. Have receipts and any other documents handy. Get the name of the person you speak to. Write down the date and time and what is said. Follow up your call with a letter, particularly if your complaint is a serious one.

If you need to put it in writing: Describe the item or service.

- Say where and when you bought the item or when the service was done, and how much it cost.

- Explain what is wrong, any action you have already taken, who you spoke to and what happened.
- Say what you want done to remedy the situation – for example, a refund or repair, or exchange.
- Set a deadline for when you want the matter resolved.
- Consider using registered mail so you can be sure your letter was received.
- Keep copies of any letters you send. Do not send original documents, such as receipts and guarantees – send photocopies instead.

Tip: follow up with a reminder letter if you don't get a reply the first time.

What can the Office of Fair Trading do?

If you telephone the Office of Fair Trading, staff can provide you with tips on how to solve your problem.

You should attempt to resolve the matter yourself first.

If you want further help from the Office of Fair Trading to resolve the matter, you need to lodge a written complaint. In your complaint detail the problem, the firm's name and how you have tried to fix the problem.

Send photocopies of receipts and other important documents.

Office of Fair Trading staff can contact the seller on your behalf, and try to settle the matter.

Where there is evidence of a possible breach of legislation, Office Fair Trading staff can investigate and take action.

Remember: the law does not permit the Office of Fair Trading to make judgements or demand payments from traders.

When a dispute is unable to be resolved, you may consider seeking legal advice or lodging a claim with the Small Claims Tribunal.

For more information:

To lodge a complaint visit the Office of Fair Trading website, www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au or call 13 13 04.

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