

How to complain effectively

Before escalating your complaint to the National Consumer Commissioner or relevant ombudsman use the following checklist to ensure you have first exhausted all other avenues to solve the problem.

- The golden rule of complaining is to always remain polite and maintain the moral high ground even if staff are rude to you or don't take you seriously.
- Keep a record of costs incurred during the complaint process as in certain circumstances you may be entitled to claim this from the supplier/service provider.
- When complaining always write down in a safe place the name of the staff member you have spoken to telephonically or in person.
- Make a note of the date and time of every call or visit you have made to the supplier/service provider in your efforts to resolve the complaint.

- Ask the staff member for a reference number for your query or complaint.
- When sales or service staff cannot resolve the complaint to your satisfaction escalate the matter first verbally and then in writing via, post, fax or e-mail to the local manager.
- If the local manager is unable to resolve the complaint escalate it to the regional manager, failing which, raise the matter in writing with the company's national head office.
- When writing a complaint letter include as much detail as possible regarding the product/service fault and list the names of staff you have approached for assistance.
- If your complaint is not handled in a satisfactory manner in a reasonable time period approach an alternate dispute resolution agent for help. This could be a consumer journalist, an NGO, an ombudsman or the commissioner's office.



Consumer Protection Act

The Consumer Protection Act replaces provisions from the five following Acts:

- Consumer Affairs (Unfair Business Practices) Act of 1988
- Trade Practices Act of 1976
- Sale and Service Matters Act of 1964
- Price Control Act of 1964
- Merchandise Marks Act of 1941 (Section 2-13 and 16-17)

Who to contact

Contact the National Consumer Commission

DTI customer contact centre: 0861 843 384 or (012) 394 143/ 1558 /1076
E-mail: contactus@thedti.gov.za

Write to:

The DTI, National Consumer Commission, Consumer Complaints,
Private Bag X84, Pretoria 0001

Website: www.thedti.gov.za

Download complaint forms complaint forms at
[http://www.dti.gov.za/ccrd/complaint forms.html](http://www.dti.gov.za/ccrd/complaint%20forms.html)

National Consumer Tribunal

Contact Centre: (012) 663 5615

E-mail: Registry@thenct.org.za

Website: www.thenct.org.za

Ombudsman and regulatory bodies

FIVE Ombudsman offices and two regulatory bodies in the financial services sector share the call centre number, 0860 OMBUDS (0860 662 837), where you can contact: The Credit Ombudsman, The Banking Ombudsman, The Long term Insurance Ombudsman, The Short Term Insurance Ombudsman, The Financial Services Board, The FAIS Ombudsman and the National Credit Regulator.

WHERE DO YOU GO WHEN YOU NEED TO COMPLAIN?

Consumer Affairs Offices

These are government agencies that offer a free service.

KwaZulu-Natal

Tel: 031 310-5300
Fax: 031 310-5416

Free State

Tel: 051 400-9611/4852
Fax: 051 400-9606

Northern Cape

Tel: 053 830-4800
Fax: 053 830-4828

Mpumalanga

Tel: 013 752-3761
Fax: 013 752-3729

Eastern Cape

Tel: 045 808-4000
Fax: 045 838-3981

North West

Tel: 018 387-7820
Fax: 018 392-5660

Limpopo

Tel: 015 293-8529
Fax: 015 291-1336

Gauteng

Tel: 011 355 8000/6/7
Fax: 011 355-8019

Western Cape

Tel: 021 483-5133
Fax: 021 483-5872
Toll Free: 0800-007-081

These organisations and associations can also help answer your questions and hear your complaints:

Furniture retailers

The Furniture Traders Association
011 789-6770

Building companies

The National Home Builders
Registration Council 011 348-5700

Financial advisors

Ombud for Financial Services Providers
0800 20 20/0800 11 04 43

Banks

The Banking Adjudicator
0860 800 900

Credit providers/bureaus

The National Credit Regulator
0860 627 627

Unfair competition

Competition Commission
012 349-3200

Medical schemes

Council for Medical Schemes
Share call: 0861 123 267

Consumer complaints

DTI – Office of Consumer Protection
0861 843 384

National Energy Regulator

(NERSA)
Tel: 012 401-4600
Fax: 012 401-4700

Blacklisting

Credit Information Ombud
0861 662 837

Motor vehicles

Motor Industry Adjudicator
012 348-9311/011 789-2542

Tourism Grading Council

Tel: 011 783-0383/ 011 384-7600
Fax: 011 783-0485

Telecommunications

Independent Communications Authority of SA
011 566 3000/3001