

When things go Wrong



You are entitled to complain if you have:

- bought something that doesn't work properly;
- paid for a service that hasn't been done properly;
- been misled in relation to products and services; or
- bought goods that don't match the description.

How the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) can help you

Advisory staff from OCBA can tell you about your rights and responsibilities and those of the trader or contractor. You will also get advice on how you can negotiate with the trader or contractor to fix the problem. This service is free.

Before you lodge a complaint

Try and resolve the problem by talking directly to the trader or contractor. Have relevant documents handy, such as your receipts. Explain your problem and offer solutions that will satisfy you. Stay calm and keep an open mind when considering possible solutions.

If you aren't satisfied with the response you get from the trader or contractor, write to them, giving full details of the complaint. Ask for a written reply within a reasonable time (you must give the trader or contractor reasonable time to fix the problem). Keep copies of any letters you send and don't send any original documents - only send copies. Keep your own record of what happens and make written notes about what is said in all telephone calls. If you don't get a satisfactory response, call OCBA.

Lodging a complaint

OCBA generally doesn't handle complaints unless you have tried to resolve the matter first. Most of the disputes handled are to do with purchases of consumer products and services; for example, cars, domestic building services, household goods, credit and personal services such as arranging travel.

If you have no luck in fixing your problem, telephone or write to OCBA and briefly explain the problem and what you've done about it.

If OCBA can help, you will be sent a Request for Assistance form and this must be completed and returned along with copies of the relevant documents (for example, letters, receipts, contracts).

What if your problem can't be fixed?

Advisory staff from OCBA will offer you advice and other possible options if you want to take the matter further. If you decide on court action, seek independent legal advice first. OCBA can give you advice about fair trading issues but **cannot** provide legal advice.

I'm definitely getting a refund!

