

*Protecting Wisconsin Consumers for 75 Years*

## How to resolve a complaint

Most businesses depend upon satisfied customers to stay in business. Reputable firms will make an honest effort to resolve problems – but first you must let them know a problem exists.

Consumers who contact the business directly often achieve a satisfactory solution.

You need to inform the business of your dissatisfaction effectively and in a timely manner in order to get results. The faster you contact the business, the better your chances for a satisfactory settlement.

### Suggested steps & tips:

- Go to the seller first, taking the merchandise along if possible. Talk to the person who sold you the product or service. If this person cannot help you, ask to speak with a supervisor, then the store manager or owner until your matter is heard.
- Identify yourself. Be calm, courteous and friendly.

**Do not threaten.** Your attitude can make a world of difference in the outcome of your issue.

- Explain the problem clearly. Be specific and reasonable as to what you want – replacement, refund or repairs.
- Be prepared. Have copies of documents in order; contracts, warranties, receipts, advertisements, canceled checks, charge slips. Provide copies, but **keep originals.**
- Get names of everyone you talk to – clerk, manager, etc. Keep notes of what was said.
- Listen carefully to the person's explanation and what is being offered to you as a settlement. Remember you may have to compromise. Don't be put off if the seller becomes upset or difficult to work with.
- Understand you may have to write a letter to the business in order to have the right person hear your situation. Keep letters neat and to the point. A sample complaint letter is on the back to help guide you.
- Send copies of important documents, **do not send originals.**

- Give the business a deadline for their response, but be reasonable. In most cases, allow two to three weeks. Note the deadline date on your calendar.
- Provide the names of offices, agencies, or associations you intend to go to for help if your problem isn't solved.
- Remain calm.

Contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection to file a complaint if the business misses the deadline or offers an unsatisfactory response.

**Bureau of Consumer Protection  
2811 Agriculture Drive  
PO Box 8911  
Madison WI 53708-8911**

**E-MAIL:  
DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov**

**WEBSITE:  
datcp.wisconsin.gov**

**Toll-free in WI: (800) 422-7128**

**(608) 224-4976**

**FAX: (608) 224-4939**

**TTY: (608) 224-5058**

# Sample Complaint Letter

Your address  
Your city, state, zip code  
Date

Appropriate person  
Company name  
Street address  
City, state, zip code

Dear Company President:

- State your purchase ►
- Identify product or service ►
- Give date & how purchased ►
- Include all important details ►

I (purchased or repaired or contracted for) a (name of product or service with serial or model or contract number) on (date). I made this purchase at (give location, email or telephone number). (Include any other important details of the transaction).

- Clearly state the problem ►
- Give history of problem ►

Unfortunately, your product (or service) has not performed satisfactorily (or the service was inadequate) because (give history of the problem).

- List attempts you made ►

My (attempt or attempts) to resolve this by (calling, emailing, going to) and working with (name of person or persons) have not been successful.

- Send copies of documents ►

Therefore, to solve the problem, I would appreciate your (here state the specific action you want). Enclosed are copies (**NOT originals**) of my records (receipts, guarantees, warranties, canceled checks, contracts, model and serial numbers, prior contacts and any other documents).

- State a reasonable deadline ►
- Include how to be contacted ►

I am looking forward to your reply and resolution of my problem, and will wait three weeks before seeking third-party assistance. Contact me at the above address, by phone or email at (home, office numbers and email address here).

Sincerely,

*Your signature*

Print your name

**REMEMBER TO: Keep copies of your letters, printouts of emails and internet pages, originals of documents and a history log of phone contacts.**