



DATCP's Top Ten Consumer Complaints of 2022

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MADISON, Wis. – As Wisconsin's primary consumer protection agency, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) receives tens of thousands of requests for assistance and resources each year. In 2022, DATCP worked to resolve more than 11,000 consumer complaints, successfully reached settlements in several investigations, and returned millions of dollars to Wisconsin consumers.

"DATCP's Consumer Protection team is an essential resource for both consumers and businesses in our state," said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. "I am proud of the hardworking team who process and investigate consumer complaints, mediate resolutions to complex consumer issues, and provide valuable education, information, and training to Wisconsin consumers on scams, identity theft, and more."

DATCP's top ten complaint categories in 2022 were:

1. Landlord/Tenant Issues

Landlord/tenant issues were the number one complaint filed with DATCP in 2022. Consumers filed 1,912 complaints when disputes between landlords and tenants could not be resolved between parties, a slight increase from 2021. Issues included security deposit returns, eviction, unauthorized entry, mold damage, inadequate disclosures, and unsatisfactory service. Additionally, DATCP received more than 6,000 contacts to the Consumer Protection Hotline about landlord/tenant issues and over 50,000 visits to landlord/tenant consumer resources found on its website, including the Landlord and Tenant Guide.

2. Telemarketing

DATCP received 1,651 telemarketing complaints in 2022, a decrease from 2021. The complaints include issues related to robocalls, phishing and spoofing, imposter scams, harassment, and Wisconsin Do Not Call Registry violations. DATCP will continue educating consumers on how to spot scams and fraud, minimize unwanted messages, and protect their information.

3. Home Improvement

Home improvement concerns accounted for 1,216 complaints in 2022, more than double the volume received in 2021. The top issues consumers reported to DATCP include failure to provide services and materials, failure to honor warranties, failure to properly disclose lien waivers, deceptive and misleading representations, poor workmanship, improper installation, billing disputes, and incorrect charges.

4. Telecommunications

DATCP received 655 complaints regarding telecommunications services in 2022, up slightly from the previous year. Consumers reported issues including billing disputes, unfair termination of service, deceptive and misleading representations, refund/adjustment policies, and failure to cancel services when requested.

5. Identity Theft

With 513 complaints of identity theft in 2022, DATCP received a third of the complaints that it received the preceding year. When a consumer reports identity theft, DATCP helps victims to recover and secure their identity against further fraud. DATCP also proactively educates consumers across the state on how to avoid being a victim of identity theft. In 2022, outreach

specialists presented on identity theft, as well as other important consumer protection topics, to thousands of individuals across Wisconsin.

6. Medical Services

Complaints related to medical services increased 60% with consumers filing 440 complaints in 2022. Issues reported by consumers include billing disputes, deceptive and misleading representations, and unsatisfactory service. In 2022, new federal consumer protection laws went into effect against “surprise billing,” when an insured patient unknowingly receives care from an out-of-network provider and subsequently receives an unexpected medical bill.

7. Travel

This category covers a variety of issues including motor vehicle rentals, airlines, hotels/motels, and travel company service bundling. DATCP received 224 travel complaints in 2022. Billing disputes, refund/adjustment policy adherence, failure to return deposits and payment, and unsatisfactory service were commonly reported by consumers.

8. Health and Medical Products

New to DATCP’s top ten in 2022 is health and medical products, with 217 complaints involving billings disputes, delivery failure, refund/adjustment policy concerns, and more. DATCP will continue to monitor this complaint category.

9. Furniture/Home Furnishings

Also new to the top ten consumer complaints list is furniture/home furnishings, receiving 189 complaints. Specific issues that consumers reported include failure to provide services or deliver goods, failure to honor vendor policies, deceptive and misleading representations, and refund/adjustment policy concerns.

10. Auto Sales (New & Used)

The tenth consumer complaint category in 2022 was both new and used auto sales, about which DATCP received 184 complaints. Common among these complaints were reports of inadequate disclosures as well as deceptive and misleading representations in direct mail flyers.

During 2022, DATCP reached settlements in several investigations related to the Top Ten. You can find those previous press releases here:

- Telemarketing: [Attorney General Kaul, DATCP Announce Settlement of Enforcement Action Against Extended Vehicle Warranty Telemarketer](#)
- Telecommunications: [AG Kaul, Secretary Romanski Secure \\$15 Million Agreement with Frontier Communications](#)
- Medical Services: [DATCP Addresses Misleading COVID-19 Test Advertisements](#)
- Motor Vehicle Sales: [AG Kaul, DATCP Announce Settlement With Direct-Mail Marketer of Extended Vehicle Warranty Products](#)

For additional information and consumer protection resources or to file a complaint, visit DATCP’s Consumer Protection webpage at [ConsumerProtection.wi.gov](https://www.datcp.wi.gov). If you have questions or believe you are a victim of a scam, report it by contacting DATCP’s Consumer Protection Hotline by phone at (800) 422-7128 or email at DATCPHotline@wi.gov.

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Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
CONSUMER COMPLAINT STATISTICS
2022

<u>RANK IN 2022</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u># OF COMPLAINTS</u>
1	Landlord/Tenant	1,912
2	Telemarketing	1,651
3	Home Improvement	1,216
4	Telecommunications	655
5	Identity Theft	513
6	Medical Services	440
7	Travel	224
8	Health & Medical Products	217
9	Furniture/Home Furnishings	189
10	Auto Sales (New & Used)	184

Total number of Trade and Consumer Protection consumer complaints received in 2022:
11,384