

THE CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMISSION

The Consumer Affairs Commission is dedicated to leading change in the society.... towards a population of knowledgeable, vigilant, assertive and discriminating Consumers.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION SERVICES



Resolution! Thank you CAC.

What is Meant by Complaint Resolution Services?

If anyone has a Consumer complaint against a Business or Government or whomever in Jamaica, the Consumer Affairs Commission (CAC) will attempt to resolve the matter, or have the matter resolved.

Why Does the CAC Offer This Service?

In a general sense, the CAC exists to provide a balance between Consumers and Businesses in the market economy. The Commission has observed that some Consumer Protection Laws are frequently ignored or breached by some businesses. In providing this service, the Commission seeks to prevent violation of consumer rights.

The CAC intervenes where businesses fail to settle disputes with consumers.

What Types of Complaints Are Usually Lodged With The Commission?

The Commission has found that the complaints against providers of goods and services are wide and varied. However, over the years, complaints in relation to Household Appliances and Equipment, and Furniture tend to be in the majority.

There are frequent reports of Appliances and Equipment, which begin to malfunction while they are relatively new. Other sources of problems are the terms and conditions of contracts and the failure of Businesses to honour these contracts.

How Does the Commission Deal With the Complaints Lodged With It?

IN DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT, THE COMMISSION

- ◆ Ascertains that the complaint has already been lodged with the business by the complainant
- ◆ Records all the details pertinent to the case as supplied by the complainant
- ◆ Obtains from the complainant all documents relevant to the case
- ◆ Sifts and assesses the information given
- ◆ Makes contact with the person or business complained against to obtain the facts of the case as seen “from the other side”
- ◆ Further sifts and assesses the information
- ◆ Intercedes on behalf of the consumer if he has been wronged
- ◆ Brings closure to the case usually by:
 - ◇ Obtaining redress on behalf of the consumer or
 - ◇ Referring the consumer to the legal system.

Is This a Long Drawn-out Process?

In general no.

The Commission recognises that its clients are usually persons who need compensation on a most urgent basis and tries to respond quickly.

The initial contact with the person or business complained against is usually made by telephone. However, other means are also used such as facsimile, e-mail, letters and visits.

What Methods Does the Commission Use?

The Commission applies Consumer Protection Laws in resolving complaints. Sometimes Consumers are actually at fault, sometimes Businesses make genuine errors and in some instances, Businesses are definitely at fault. In all of this, the objective is to ensure fair play, and the best value for money for the Consumer.

Where Do Other Consumer Protection Agencies Come Into the Picture?

The CAC liaises with other agencies, which administer Consumer Protection Legislation on behalf of Consumers.

It also deals with complaints against Utility Companies on behalf of Consumers.

Do Consumers Have the Right to Complain?

Yes. The consumer movement worldwide has identified eight basic Consumer Rights and these are upheld by Jamaica. The Consumer's Right to a fair settlement of just claims is one of the eight and the Consumer Affairs Commission's (CAC's) education programme encourages Consumers to exercise this right. When complaints are lodged with the Commission, it is frequently because the Consumer has been unable to obtain redress or compensation from the vendor.

Can a Consumer Lodge a Complaint Outside Normal Working Hours?

Yes, by calling the CAC's toll free number **1-888-991-4470** and leaving a message on the answering machine. An officer will return the call on the next working day.

Contact Us at:

Head Office

Tel: (876) 926-1650-2

Montego Bay Office

Tel: (876) 940-6154

**Jamaica Mutual Life Building
30 Market Street, Montego Bay, Jamaica**

.....