

New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs

consumer *brief*

The **Division of Consumer Affairs** (Division), part of the Office of the Attorney General, is New Jersey's consumer protection agency.

The Division protects consumers by implementing the Consumer Fraud Act (CFA); investigating businesses, and when necessary, litigating against those who violate the CFA. The Division assists consumers who are defrauded in the marketplace, resolves consumers' complaints, and protects the public by licensing and regulating many types of businesses and over half a million people in over 100 professions and occupations. The Division is located at 124 Halsey Street, Newark, NJ 07102.

The Division has many specialized units. The following is a list and a brief description of the functions of some of these units, which can also be found at www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov.

OFFICE OF CONSUMER PROTECTION (OCP)

The **Office of Consumer Protection** (OCP) enforces the Consumer Fraud Act. OCP responds to consumer complaints about merchandise and services. Most complaints are about cars, home repair, credit/debt collection fraud and loan services.

The **Consumer Service Center** is the central clearinghouse for complaints and referrals. Consumers who call **973-504-6200** or **1-800-242-5846** will be connected to a representative trained to assist them with their complaint.

The **Charities Registration Section** registers and regulates professional fundraisers and organizations that solicit contributions. The Charities Registration Section can be reached at **973-504-6215** or by visiting the Division's website and clicking on Division Units > Charities Registration Section.

The **Cyber Fraud Unit** protects consumers who purchase goods and services online. If you have not received an item you've ordered or have a problem with the product or service you've purchased through the Internet, contact the Cyber Fraud Unit at **973-504-6200** or by visiting the Division's website and clicking on Division Units > Office of Consumer Protection > Cyber Fraud Unit.

The **Bureau of Kosher Enforcement** requires establishments that sell kosher food to post and to adhere the Bureau's standards. The Bureau can be reached at **973-273-8028** or by visiting the Division's website and clicking on Division Units > Office of Consumer Protection > Bureau of Kosher Enforcement.

The **Halal Food Enforcement Bureau** requires establishments that sell halal food to post and to adhere the Bureau's standards. New Jersey is one of the first states in the nation to ensure that consumers who buy halal foods have information to determine whether they are getting products prepared according to Islamic dietary guidelines. The Halal Food Enforcement Bureau can be reached at **973-273-8038** or by visiting the Division's website and clicking on Division Units > Office of Consumer Protection > Halal Enforcement Unit.

The **Lemon Law Unit** offers consumers a remedy when the car, motorcycle or motorized wheelchair that they bought, leased or registered, has defect(s) that substantially impair the use, value or safety of the vehicle. The Lemon Law Unit can be reached at **973-504-6226** or by visiting the Division's website and clicking on Division Units > Office of Consumer Protection > Lemon Law Unit.

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The **Regulated Business Section** registers home improvement contractors, public movers and warehousemen, and telemarketers. This unit also licenses:

- athletic/booking agencies,
- career consulting or counseling services
- headhunters
- temporary health care agencies
- nursing registries and home health care agencies
- prepaid computer job-matching services
- modeling and talent agencies
- ticket resellers and health spas

The Regulated Business Section can be reached at **973-504-6370** or by visiting the Division's website and clicking on Division Units › Regulated Business Section.

LEGALIZED GAMES OF CHANCE CONTROL COMMISSION

The **Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission** administers and enforces the bingo, raffle and amusement game licensing laws; coordinates uniform administration of the laws with municipal licensing authorities; registers organizations that wish to conduct bingos or raffles; monitors the use of proceeds from the games; and licenses amusement game operators, equipment providers, manufacturers and distributors. You may call **973-273-8000** or visit **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov** and click on Division Units › Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission.

BUREAU OF SECURITIES

The **Bureau of Securities** administers and enforces the State's securities law, registers securities sold in New Jersey, registers individuals and firms that sell securities or investment advice in the State and responds to investors' complaints. Investors are encouraged to check the registration status and disciplinary history of firms and individuals before they invest. Questions and complaints should be directed to the Bureau of Securities, 153 Halsey Street, P.O. Box 47029, Newark, NJ 07101 or you can call **973-504-3600** or visit **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov** and click on Division Units › Bureau of Securities.

OFFICE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

The **Office of Weights and Measures** works in conjunction with county and municipal offices to enforce New Jersey's weights and measures statutes. Every year, inspectors check every weighing and measuring device used in commercial transactions, including gas pumps, supermarket scales, unit price scanners, and meters used to measure oil deliveries. If you have a problem with a device, contact the New Jersey Office of Weights and Measures at 1261 Route 1 & 9 South, Avenel, NJ 07001 or call **732-815-4840** or visit **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov** and click on Division Units › Office of Weights & Measures.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

Part of the Division's mission is to educate consumers to prevent them from becoming victims of fraud. Special attention is given to our seniors, since they are often targeted by con artists. Through the Division's **Outreach Program**, resource material and free educational presentations are available to all New Jersey consumers. Please call **973-504-6317/6348** for more information.

PROFESSIONAL/OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING BOARDS/ COMMITTEES

The **Professional and Occupational Boards and Committees** within the Division license and supervise more than half a million individuals in over 100 occupations and professions. All boards and committees are located at 124 Halsey Street in Newark except for the Board of Medical Examiners, which is located at 140 East Front Street, 2nd Floor, Trenton, NJ 08625. Visit **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov** and click on Boards & Committees for more information.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE REGISTRY

The Division's **Prescription Drug Price Registry** allows consumers to check and compare prices of the most widely prescribed drugs offered by local pharmacies. Go to **www.njdrugprices.nj.gov** to compare prices.

N.J. PRESCRIPTION MONITORING PROGRAM

The **N.J. Prescription Monitoring Program** is a statewide database of prescription information on Controlled Dangerous Substances and Human Growth Hormone. The program is an important component of the Division's initiative to halt prescription drug abuse and diversion. For more information go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/pmp/**.

PROJECT MEDICINE DROP

The Division developed **Project Medicine Drop** to halt the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs. It allows consumers to dispose of unused medications anonymously, 365 days a year, at drop boxes located within participating police departments in all 21 counties. For more information go to: **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/meddrop/**.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Before filing a complaint, give the business or professional a chance to resolve the problem directly. If you still are not satisfied, go to **NJConsumerAffairs.gov** to file a complaint, or contact the Division at **800-242-5846** to request a complaint form.