



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Elisa Sledzinska

312.744.1973

Elisa.Sledzinska@cityofchicago.org

NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK RAISES AWARENESS OF CONSUMER RIGHTS AND PROVIDES RESOURCES FOR CONSUMERS IN CHICAGO

Outreach and education efforts inform consumers how to avoid fraud and deceptive business practices

CHICAGO – Today, the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) announced its National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) outreach and education efforts and reinforced its commitment to inform consumers of their rights and risks in the marketplace. This year, NCPW is observed March 5-11 and is designed to share information about consumer rights and help people learn to spot, report, and avoid scams. It is an opportunity for consumers to increase their knowledge of consumer laws and how to prevent falling prey to fraudsters.

“This National Consumer Protection Week, and all year long, BACP ensures consumers are informed and protected from unfair and deceptive practices in the marketplace,” said BACP Commissioner Kenneth J. Meyer. “Through our education efforts, consumers are empowered to make informed decisions and, if need to be, how to properly file a complaint.”

NCPW, sponsored by the [Federal Trade Commission](#), brings together public and private sector organizations that work to educate and protect people from frauds, scams, and other threats. The week helps increase knowledge and gives proper perspective about expectations as consumers. Throughout the week, BACP will share consumer protection tips on its social media platforms using #NCPW2023.

In recognition of NCPW, BACP will hold educational webinars on pertinent consumer safety topics:

- Wednesday, March 8th at 3:00 p.m., the Better Business Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission will present a webinar titled, “Avoid the Top Business and Consumer Scams Occurring in Northern Illinois.” Learn the top scams and how to protect yourself and your business by becoming a hard target and safer in avoiding scams. Learn more and register at Chicago.gov/BusinessEducation
- Friday, March 10th at 9:30 a.m., the City of Chicago Department of Assets, Information and Services-Information Security Organization will present a webinar titled “Cyber Security for Your Business.” This webinar will focus on cyber-attack resiliency methods including phishing tests, fraudulent email reporting features, and more essential cyber-attack defenses. Learn more and register at Chicago.gov/BusinessEducation.

As a resource for consumers, BACP's comprehensive [Be Informed. Be Protected. consumer protection campaign](#) provides Chicagoans with simplified tips and resources across a wide array of topics most relevant to consumers, including [home repair](#), [online shopping](#), using a [towing service](#) and [small business loans](#), and more. This campaign helps BACP carry out its mission to ensure a safe and vibrant marketplace for consumers.

Additionally, BACP provides information and services to people with limited English proficiency to advance equity and provide support to vulnerable populations. As such, each of BACP's consumer protection flyers are translated into Spanish, with select flyers additionally being translated into Mandarin, Polish, Korean and Arabic. It is BACP's goal to provide the most effective language assistance service and resources.

In addition to these outreach efforts, BACP enforces Chicago's consumer protection laws. In 2022, BACP responded to over 1,300 complaints, the most common of which was home repair fraud, followed by motor vehicle repair fraud. In 2022, BACP retrieved over \$160,000 in restitution to complainants.

BACP calls on all Chicagoans to report consumer fraud by submitting a complaint via the City's 311 system, which is the primary and most expeditious way that residents can request services from City departments and agencies. Consumers are encouraged to use the CHI 311 system (call 3-1-1, use the CHI311 mobile app, or visit 311.chicago.gov) to report fraud or other possible illegal practices by businesses or contractors located in Chicago.

BACP is tasked with protecting Chicagoans from acts of consumer fraud, unfair methods of competition and deceptive practices. This includes any conduct that violates the Municipal Code sections related to business operations or consumer protection, as well as anything that is an unlawful practice under the Illinois Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act.

Learn more about Chicago's Consumer Protection resources by visiting Chicago.gov/BACP or Chicago.gov/ConsumerProtection.

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