

How to file a complaint against a retail supplier

May 2021

Complaints against retail suppliers are made to the Public Service Commission (PSC), Consumer Affairs Division (PSC/CAD). The PSC licenses all retail suppliers, and CAD handles consumer complaints about retail suppliers. You must contact the retail supplier first to try to resolve your problem before you make a complaint to the PSC.

Possible examples as to why you may choose to file a complaint with PSC/CAD against a retail supplier:

- You have a dispute about a retail supplier amount on your bills.
- You were signed up without your knowledge.
- Someone who was not the account holder signed you up for a retail supplier.
- You believe that the retail supplier was deceptive in its marketing when you signed up.
- They did not clearly identify the retail supplier company or stated/implied that they had a relationship with your local utility.
- They do not have a license that is registered with the PSC.
- They did not give you a copy of the signed contract.
- They did not give you a Contract Summary or a Notice of Cancellation Form.
- The agent implied discounts or savings that are not reflected in the rate charged.

To file a complaint, you have 3 options:

- 1) File a complaint online at www.psc.state.md.us.
- 2) Download a PSC complaint form at www.psc.state.md.us and mail it with your documents.

Maryland Public Service Commission
6 St. Paul Street
16th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202

- 3) If you do not have a computer or access to one, call CAD at 410-767-028 or 1-800-492-0474 and ask them to mail you a complaint form.

When filling out the PSC/CAD complaint form:

- Before you file a complaint, make sure you have spoken with your retail supplier.
- Be clear about your complaint and why you are making the complaint.
- List both your local utility and supplier in the complaint.
- List out what actions you have already taken to try and resolve the issue with the retail supplier. Be specific and include any details about documents, dates, and people.
- Have a well-documented response from the retail supplier about your complaint. Who you spoke with, on what date, and what was said. Details matter.
- Contact your local utility and let them know what is going on so you do not get shut off for any disputed portion of the bill.

If you are having difficulty filling out the PSC complaint form contact OPC for guidance.

Checklist

- Contact the retail supplier and demand to be released from the contract immediately with no fees and a re-rate for any amounts charged over than the utility's default price.
- File a complaint with the Public Service Commission.
- Be specific about why you are making the complaint-the more details the better.
- In your complaint include copies of:
 - Your most recent utility bill
 - All marketing materials from the retail supplier
 - ALL documents your retail supplier gave to you when you signed up
 - Notes about your calls to the retail supplier-when, who you spoke with, what they said
 - Any other written communication with the retail supplier you

How to Make a Complaint Online

Go to www.psc.state.md.us and click "File an Online Complaint".

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Maryland Public Service Commission. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Maryland.gov, Online Services, State Agencies, Phone Directory, and Translate. Below this is a banner with the Maryland state seal and the text "A National Leader in Regulatory Excellence". The main navigation bar includes categories: Electricity, Telecommunications, Gas, Water, and Transportation. On the left side, there are links for About Us, Newsroom, Agendas & Calendars, Online Services, and Related Agencies and Organizations. In the center, there is a "CASE DECISIONS" section with a featured article titled "Revised BGE Pay It Forward (9646) Procedural Schedule". Below this, there are two columns of links: "Consumers" and "Regulated Industries". A green arrow points to the "File an Online Complaint" link in the "Consumers" column. On the right side, there is a search bar, an "Alerts" section, and "Featured Topics".

Choose to file a "General Complaint".

The screenshot shows the "Ready To File A Utility Dispute?" page. It is divided into two columns. The left column asks "Do you have a dispute with the following transportation companies?" and lists: passenger motor vehicle carriers (sedans, limousines, and buses), taxicab companies (PSC has jurisdiction for Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Charles County, Cumberland, and Hagerstown), and transportation network companies. Below this list, it says "File a 'Transportation Complaint'". The right column asks "Do you have a general dispute with the following third party supplier or utility companies?" and lists: Landline/ Intra-state telephone, Gas, Electric (excluding Choptank Electric Cooperative), Steam Heating, For-profit water/sewage, and Third party supplier. A green arrow points to the "General Complaint" link. At the bottom, there is a red warning: "YOU MUST CONTACT THE COMPANY BEFORE CONTACTING OUR OFFICE".

Read through the instructions before clicking “Continue”.

Dispute Instructions

Complaints

The Commission's Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) offers free dispute resolution and mediation services to utility customer account holders and applicants for regulated utility service. The CAD is available to assist consumers with disputes concerning gas, electric, local telephone and certain water and sewer company disputes. CAD's function is to investigate disputes between consumers and utility companies based on applicable laws and utility tariffs, with the intention of assisting the parties in reaching a resolution. If a resolution cannot be achieved, the CAD will issue a series of findings that are binding on the utility and the utility account holder or service applicant if not appealed.

Please note that the Commission's CAD is a dispute resolution office it **is not** a consumer advocacy office.

Prior to contacting CAD, the utility account holder or applicant for regulated service is required by law to first submit their dispute or inquiry directly to the utility for investigation and response. Only after receiving the utility's response may a consumer dispute a utility determination. To do so, they may submit an inquiry to CAD within 7 days of receipt of the utility's determination. If the consumer contacts CAD prior to contacting the utility or before the utility has been given sufficient time to complete its investigation, the consumer will be referred back to the utility. Disputes may be filed orally or online. CAD may request that the consumer file their dispute in writing. Under those circumstances, the dispute is not filed until all information has been received.

Consumers are required to continue to make payment of all current and undisputed charges while the dispute is under investigation. Failure to make payment of the current and undisputed charges may result in disconnection of service.

Please note that by submitting a complaint you are allowing us to contact the company(ies) noted, and you are agreeing to allow the company(ies) to share with us information about your account. If you do not want us to have this information, please DO NOT file a complaint.

Continue . . .

Choose that you are filing as a “Residential” customer.

Online Dispute Form

Complaints

READ OUR [FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#) BEFORE FILING A DISPUTE

Please fill out the information in this dispute form. If you are not a customer of the utility, fill in your name in the second box. The Consumer Affairs Division will determine if they can accept a dispute that is filed by an individual who is not a customer with a utility.

You will be notified if additional information is needed to process the dispute.

Note: * indicates a required field.

LEA NUESTRAS PREGUNTAS FRECUENTES ANTES DE PRESENTAR UNA DISPUTA

Por favor de llenar la información en este formulario de disputa. Si no es cliente de la utilidad, escribe su nombre en la segunda caja. CAD determinará si pueden aceptar una disputa por una persona que no es un cliente con la utilidad.

Se le notificará si se necesita información adicional para procesar las disputa.

Nota: *indica un campo requerido.

Type of Customer:

Select
Select
Residential
Business

Bottom

OPC
OFFICE OF PEOPLE'S COUNSEL
State of Maryland

Fill out all account information. Make sure to fill each box. Read carefully.

Online Dispute Form
[Complaints](#)

READ OUR [FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#) BEFORE FILING A DISPUTE

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	Title	*Last Name	*First Name	MI	Suffix
Name as it appears on the bill:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Name if not customer:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Relationship to customer:	<input type="text"/>			Critical Medical Needs Program <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
*Service Address:	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>				
*City:	<input type="text"/>	*State:	<input type="text"/>	*ZIP Code:	<input type="text"/>
Mailing Address(if different):	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>				
City:	<input type="text"/>	State:	<input type="text"/>	ZIP Code:	<input type="text"/>
*Email:	<input type="text"/>				

Please enter all phone numbers in this format (999-999-9999).

State why you are making the complaint. Include LOTS of details and be specific about what the issue is and what you want to see happen to resolve the issue. Wait 4-6 weeks to hear from the PSC for a decision.

*Utility Name:	<input type="text"/>
*Acct number 1:	<input type="text"/>
Supplier Name 1:	<input type="text"/>
Supplier Acct Number 1:	<input type="text"/>
Please enter the date the company responded to your complaint:	<input type="text"/> (mm/dd/yyyy)
Amount of Dispute:	<input type="text"/> \$0 (Please only put current amount)
*Details Of Dispute:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
	1000 characters left

If your dispute concerns an electric and/or gas supplier enrolling your account without authorization (aka "slamming") or the supplier's solicitation, please answer the additional questions below:

Type of Solicitation: (Choose from Drop Down):

Enter date of Solicitation if known:

Type of Service Enrolled (Choose from Drop Down):

Enter date of Enrollment if known:

(You can obtain this information from your utility).

By clicking submit, I certify that the information provided above is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.