



How to Resolve a Dispute

When it comes to dispute resolution, there are many choices. Here are 5 basic steps that can make your dispute resolution efforts more effective:

Step 1: Be prepared

Collect all the facts. This may include documents related to your issue, such as receipts, contracts, agreements, emails and notes you made. Make copies of everything and keep the originals.

Step 2: Speak to the right person

Contact the business. Ask to speak to customer service or someone with authority, such as a manager or owner.

Step 3: State your case and propose a solution

Clearly explain your problem and provide copies of your documents. Suggest a solution that you think is fair. But, do not dismiss other solutions, if offered. Take the time to think about any offers before accepting or rejecting them. Come back the next day, if needed.

Step 4: Get help

If no solution is reached, seek help. Examples of the organizations that might be able to help are:

Vehicle Sales Authority of BC – vehiclesalesauthority.com - accepts consumer complaints and provides dispute resolution for consumers who bought a vehicle for personal use from a licensed motor dealer

Mediate BC – <http://www.mediatebc.com/> - specializes in dispute resolution through mediation

Better Business Bureau - <http://mbc.bbb.org/> - resolves disputes by conciliation, mediation, and arbitration between their members and consumers

Consumer Protection BC – <http://www.consumerprotectionbc.ca/odr> - offers dispute resolution services for the travel, funeral and some other sectors

Step 5: Take legal action

Taking legal action is often a last resort. You will probably want to seek legal advice to consider the cost and benefit of going to Small Claims Court or the BC Supreme Court.

Helpful Tips

- ❖ When talking about your complaint, remain calm and professional. Do not let anger and emotions get involved. Maintain a positive relationship with everyone.
- ❖ Take time to consider all possible solutions. Do not jump to conclusions right away and be realistic about likely outcomes.
- ❖ Write everything down. Make notes of your conversations, the names of the people you spoke with, the dates and times of the meetings or conversations. Keep any documents you received.
 - ❖ If you do not feel comfortable confronting someone face to face, start by writing a complaint letter or email. A sample letter can be found at this link – http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/oca-bc.nsf/eng/h_ca02964.html#step6
- ❖ Helpful resources on consumer topics are available at Canadian Consumer Information Gateway available at this link - <http://www.consumerinformation.ca/>

Note: This fact sheet provides general information and is not intended to be legal advice.

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