

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



Saturday, 27 March 2021

AVOID HOLIDAY HEARTBREAK THIS EASTER LONG WEEKEND

The Andrews Labor Government is encouraging Victorians to holiday locally and do their research when booking travel and accommodation over the Easter break.

The warning comes after Consumer Affairs Victoria received more than 4,500 queries and complaints related to travel services and holiday accommodation during 2019-20.

One of these consumers, Emma, purchased what she thought was a 'two-for-one' deal on a cruise in late 2019, only to find she had actually paid for a voucher that could only be put towards a cruise if she paid additional costs.

Emma had to go through a solicitor to get her funds back and is hoping her situation can be used to warn others of the importance of reading the fine print and terms and conditions.

Avoid being disappointed when booking travel and accommodation by:

- Researching the accommodation or travel provider by reading reviews and comments on travel websites and blogs
- Booking with a business whose website displays clear information regarding booking cancellations, so you know the process if something does go wrong
- If possible, paying by credit card, or debit card using the 'credit' function. If consumers do not get what they paid for, they may be able to seek a chargeback from their bank.
- Taking out travel insurance to offer extra protection should you need to change or alter your booking due to an unforeseen circumstance, such as injury or illness.

Travel businesses should take care to make sure their promotional material is accurate, their terms and conditions are clear, and inform consumers of any increase in costs or changes as soon as possible.

Further information on how to protect yourself when booking travel and accommodation can be found at consumer.vic.gov.au/products-and-services/problem-with-a-service/booking-travel.

Anyone seeking assistance regarding accommodation or travel matters should contact Consumer Affairs Victoria via consumer.vic.gov.au/contact.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation Melissa Horne

"It's understandable that Victorians are eager to book trips away with family and friends in the lead up to Easter, but it's important to do your research before handing over your credit card details."

"Consumer Affairs Victoria has done an amazing job helping Victorians with advice on travel and accommodation throughout the pandemic, but it's up to everyone to take the time to understand exactly what they're paying for when booking trips away."

"The advice is simple – read the reviews, check websites to see what other travellers have to say, and always check the company's cancellation policy."