

Media Release

The Hon Marlene Kairouz MP
Minister for Consumer Affairs,
Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Suburban Development



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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NO DISCOUNTING CONSUMER RIGHTS IN END OF YEAR SALES

With Victorians set to spend billions of dollars at end of financial year sales this month, consumers are being reminded that their rights don't belong in the bargain bin.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Marlene Kairouz advised shoppers that if there are problems with a product, they still have rights—regardless of whether a product is on sale or not.

Consumer Affairs Victoria received over 41,000 contacts regarding shopping problems in 2017–18, with 26 per cent of reports concerning product defects.

Consumer Affairs data shows the top products Victorians enquired about in 2017–18 were furniture and furnishings (2691 enquiries), clothing and footwear (2450), personal goods (1903) and electrical appliances and whitegoods (1833).

Bait advertising – where businesses advertise a sale item without stocking enough for the expected number of customers, instead referring customers to a more expensive item – is also unlawful.

Before shopping during this end of financial year sales period, consumers should:

- Check the returns policy before they buy, especially for 'change of mind'
- Use secure payment methods and be alert to potential scams if shopping online
- Remember they have the same rights buying from an Australian business online as they would in-store
- Photograph receipts and keep the originals in a safe place
- Ask the salesperson to clearly explain what an extended warranty provides over and above their existing legal rights.

Retailers are also being reminded that signs stating "no refund on sale items" are illegal under Australian Consumer Law.

But shoppers should not automatically expect a refund or exchange if they change their mind on an item they bought. It's up to each store to decide whether they offer a refund or exchange for change of mind.

For more information about shopping rights, visit consumer.vic.gov.au/shopping

Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Marlene Kairouz

"End of financial year sales are a great time to find a bargain, but a sale doesn't mean you're trading away your consumer rights."

"If you're buying up big this month, keep your receipts as a proof of purchase in case something goes wrong with your item – so you're not left out of pocket."

"Businesses also need to remember their obligations under the Australian Consumer Law this busy shopping period."

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