



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BACP CHAMPIONS NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK

Outreach efforts promote consumer empowerment and commitment to upholding consumer rights.

CHICAGO –Today, the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) reaffirmed its commitment to educating consumers about their rights in the marketplace and announced its National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) outreach and education initiatives. This year, NCPW is observed from March 3rd to March 9th and is designed to share comprehensive information about consumer rights, as well as provide valuable guidance on identifying, reporting, and avoiding scams. It is an invaluable opportunity for consumers to enhance their understanding of consumer laws and acquire effective strategies to safeguard themselves against fraudulent activities. Learn more by visiting Chicago.gov/ConsumerProtection.

"BACP ensures consumers are informed and protected against unfair and deceptive acts in the marketplace during National Consumer Protection Week and the entire year," said BACP Commissioner Kenneth J. Meyer. "Due to our efforts, consumers gain the ability to make well-informed choices and, when needed, file a complaint they are a victim of fraud or scam."

BACP is a NCPW partner, which is sponsored by the [Federal Trade Commission](https://FederalTradeCommission.gov) (FTC). NCPW 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 for consumers. BACP consumer protection outreach efforts during NCPW include:

- **Promoting the BACP consumer protection campaign:** The [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.
- **Hosting webinars:** BACP will conduct webinars to provide in-depth information on various consumer protection topics, offering a platform for Q&A sessions. To learn more and register, visit Chicago.gov/BACPWebinars.
- **Partnering with consumer advocacy groups:** BACP will continue its collaboration with organizations like the FTC and the [Chicago Better Business Bureau](#) to amplify the reach of educational materials and initiatives.

- **Utilizing social media:** Throughout the week, BACP will share consumer protection tips on its social media platforms using #NCPW2024 to build awareness.
- **Promoting the BACP public passenger vehicle awareness:** The BACP Ride Smart Chicago campaign provides safety and consumer awareness information for passengers of taxicabs, ride-hail, and other public passenger vehicles. Visit Chicago.gov/RideSmart for tips, including how to spot licensed versus unlicensed taxicabs.
- **Encouraging consumers to use the Chi 311 system:** BACP calls on all Chicagoans to report consumer fraud by submitting a complaint via the City's 311 system (call 3-1-1, use the CHI311 mobile app, or visit 311.chicago.gov), which is the primary and most expeditious way that residents can request services from City departments and agencies.

In recognition of NCPW, BACP will hold educational webinars on pertinent consumer safety topics. To learn more and to register for a webinar, visit Chicago.gov/BACPWebinars.

- Friday, March 1st at 9:30 a.m., Cybersecurity Fundamentals: What You Need to Do to Protect Your Business presented by Score Chicago.
- Tuesday, March 5th at 10:00 a.m.: Avoid the Top Business and Consumer Scams Occurring in Northern Illinois presented by the Better Business Bureau (BBB) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).
- Wednesday, May 6th at 3:00 p.m.: City Inspections - Ask Questions, Get Answers presented by the City of Chicago.
- Thursday, March 7th at 10:00 a.m.: Scam Spotting 101: How to Stop a Fraudster in Their Tracks presented by the City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs & Consumer Protection.
- Friday, March 8th at 9:30 a.m.: Business Licensing Series: Shared Kitchen User presented by City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs & Consumer Protection.

In addition to these outreach efforts, BACP enforces Chicago's consumer protection laws. In 2023, BACP responded to nearly 1,500 complaints, the most common of which was towing, followed by home repair fraud, then motor vehicle repair fraud. In 2023, BACP retrieved over \$150,000 in restitution to complainants.

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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