



Consumer rights

If you run a business which requires you to go into people's homes to carry out work, there are several simple but important aspects of consumer law which you need to know about.

There are also straightforward, common-sense things that are not a requirement of the law, but which will help boost the profile and reputation of your business.



Contracts

There are five key elements that must be included in all consumer contracts:

1. A description of the product or services you will provide.
2. Your full business name and address.
3. Full pricing information
4. Information about your after-sales care and complaints-handling procedures.
5. Cancellation information.

There are three main types of contract:

- » **On-premises contracts:** These are contracts signed on your business premises.
- » **Off-premises contracts:** These are contracts signed away from your premises, for example in a customer's home.
- » **Distance contracts:** These are contracts that are entered into over the phone or via the internet, without the trader and the customer having met in person.



Cancellations

Understanding what rights consumers have to cancel a contract is really important, as failure to do so can may result in you not being paid for work you have carried out.

Consumers who enter into off-premises contracts have additional rights, including the right to a 14-day cancellation period.

A 14-day cancellation period applies to off-premises contracts and begins from the day after the signing of a contract.



Complaints

There are five key elements to an effective complaint-handling process:

1. Acknowledge the complaint; even if you can't offer an immediate solution, it's important that the customer knows their voice has been heard.
2. Identify the problem as promptly as possible.
3. Look for resolution and inform the customer of what that resolution is going to be.
4. Record the complaint and how you dealt with it.
5. Follow up with the customer to make sure that they're satisfied.

Further information

Kent County Council's Trading Standards Business Advice Team can offer help and support to Kent-based businesses, including advice on contracts, cancellations and Complaints.

www.kent.gov.uk/tschecked