ROY COOPER
ATTORNEY GENERAL

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

CONSUMER PROTECTION
(919) 716-6000
(877) 566-7226
TOLL FREE IN NC

# INSTRUCTIONS

## About the Consumer Protection Division of Attorney General Roy Cooper

- The Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's Office enforces North Carolina's consumer protection laws, including North Carolina's Price Gouging Statute, which are aimed at preventing unfair or deceptive trade practices.

- One means we use to learn about such practices is through "consumer complaints" filed with the office. Thank you for taking the time to complete the complaint form.

## About the North Carolina Price Gouging Statute

- During a declared state of disaster, state of emergency, or gubernatorial finding of abnormal market disruption, it is a violation of the statute for a business to charge a price that is *unreasonably excessive* for merchandise or services which are consumed or used as a direct result of the emergency or consumed or used to protect or preserve life, health, safety, or economic well being.

- The statute empowers the Attorney General to investigate potential violations of this statute. In determining whether or not a price is unreasonably excessive, the statute requires that additional costs to the business of providing goods or services during the state of disaster be taken into account.

- In addition, the law provides individual consumers a private right of action to go to court and seek redress.

## The Review Process

- All allegations of price gouging will be reviewed by our staff to determine appropriate action. In most cases the complaint will be forwarded to the business with a request for specific information regarding its pricing for the product or service in the months prior to the disaster, its post-disaster pricing, and any factors related to the disaster that have impacted its post-disaster pricing. Based on the response we receive, we will determine whether further action is necessary.

- Because of the typically high volume of complaints received by this office in the aftermath of disasters, we may not be able to provide consumers a written response regarding our findings in each individual case. Please be assured, however, that we rely on information provided by consumers across the state to help us determine our enforcement priorities, and we appreciate our residents taking the time to provide relevant information to us.

## Important Information

- This office does not have the authority to give private legal advice or provide private legal representation to individual consumers.

- When you submit your complaint, please ensure that you include legible COPIES of all supporting documents (advertisements, receipts, etc.) you may have related to pre-disaster and post-disaster prices. Please do NOT send originals.

- Documents provided to this office may be public record.

**PRICE GOUGING COMPLAINT**

**Mail to:**

**Consumer Protection**
**Attorney General's Office**
**9001 Mail Service Center**
**Raleigh, NC 27699-9001**
**Fax: (919) 716-6050**

**Name** _____

**Address** _____

**City, State, Zip** _____

**Phone: Day** _____ **Evening:** _____

**COMPLAINT AGAINST**

**Name** _____

**Address** _____

**City, State, Zip** _____

**Phone** _____ **County:** _____

**Product/Service (type, brand, size, description, and model number)**

_____

_____

**Pre-disaster Price** _____ **As of when** _____

**Post-disaster Price** _____ **As of when** _____

**How do you know the pre-disaster price?** _____

_____

**Explanation given by business for the post-disaster price:** _____

_____

_____

**Please enclose a copy of your receipt of other relevant documentation.**

_____ _____

**Signature** **Date**