

The Straits Times Forum

9 May 2020

Recourse for consumers who purchase defective goods online

We thank Mr Bob Leong Cheng Kong for his feedback ([Consumers need more protection for online purchases](#), May 5).

Consumers who receive defective goods or goods that do not conform to contract from a merchant in Singapore are protected by the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act.

Under this Act, a consumer may request repair or replacement of the defective or non-conforming goods.

If repair or replacement cannot be done within a reasonable timeframe and without causing significant inconvenience to the consumer, the consumer may then request a reduction in price or return the goods for a refund.

This applies to both bricks-and-mortar stores and online merchants operating in Singapore.

For consumers who purchased defective or non-conforming goods from merchants outside Singapore, they face a risk that the overseas merchant may not respond to their complaints. Merchants without a presence in Singapore are not obliged to comply with Singapore laws.

For consumers who paid for their purchases with a credit card, they may file a chargeback request within 120 days with their credit card-issuing banks. They may also file a chargeback request if the goods fail to arrive.

More details on the chargeback process can be found on the Consumers Association of Singapore (Case) website.

We encourage Mr Leong to get in touch with Case with information on his purchase (on its hotline: 6100-0315; or at www.case.org.sg/complaint_onlinecomplaint.aspx).

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President

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