



CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

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30 July 2021

Company Alert – 99 Reno Pte Ltd

The Consumers Association of Singapore (“CASE”) would like to alert consumers to complaints received against renovation contractor 99 Reno Pte Ltd (“99 Reno”). From 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, CASE received 30 consumer complaints against 99 Reno. The majority of complaints pertain to consumers who made prepayments for their projects but experienced repeated delays in renovation works or a delay in the commencement of works. CASE had attempted to resolve the complaints with 99 Reno, but was unsuccessful. The company also did not respond to a warning letter issued by CASE.

Consumers who are engaging home renovation contractors are advised not to make large sums of prepayments upfront, and to negotiate for a progressive payment schedule in accordance with the key project milestones. Consumers are encouraged to patronise [CaseTrust accredited renovation contractors](#) and to use [CASE’s model agreement on home renovation](#).

About 99 Reno

99 Reno provides renovation services such as fabrication and installation, masonry, carpentry, plumbing and electrical works. The current registered office address of 99 Reno is 808 French Road, #07-163, Kitchener Complex, Singapore 200808. Its former registered office address was 178 Toa Payoh Central, #01-212, Singapore 310178.

Under 99 Reno’s standard terms and conditions, 30 percent of the total renovation cost should be paid upon confirmation of the work, and another 30 percent when the project commences. A further 30 percent is paid progressively, while the final 10 percent is paid upon completion of the project.

Complaints Received

In general, consumers complained that they had made prepayments and installment payments to 99 Reno, but their renovation works were repeatedly delayed and did not meet the agreed completion milestones. In many cases, renovation work such as installation of kitchen cabinets, carpentry work and electrical works were left incomplete. Some consumers reported that 99 Reno had collected prepayments for their projects, but did not start work. Consumers also reported that the company cited the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”), manpower shortage and cashflow issues as reasons for the delay in renovation works. 99 Reno also allegedly was unable to provide a firm date for completing the works.

Despite the delays and uncompleted works for existing projects, 99 Reno continued to take on new projects and collect deposits from consumers. In addition, the company also asked existing customers to pay the full contract sum before they will restart the renovation work. This practice is a deviation from

their standard terms and conditions. According to consumers, the cost of the renovation projects ranged from \$6,000 to \$54,000.

Engagement with 99 Reno

In response to consumer complaints, CASE had issued a warning letter to 99 Reno on potential breaches of the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act (“CPFTA”), and asked the company to provide evidence to substantiate the reasons cited for the delays. CASE also advised the company to resolve the outstanding consumer complaints. To date, the company has not responded to the warning letter.

Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act

Under the CPFTA, it is an unfair practice for a supplier to accept payment for the supply of goods or services when the supplier knows or ought to know that it will not be able to supply the goods or services within the period specified by the supplier at or before the time at which the payment or other consideration is accepted¹.

CASE will monitor 99 Reno closely, and will not hesitate to take the necessary action provided for under the CPFTA, which may include referring the matter to the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (“CCCS”) to take action to protect the interests of consumers.

Consumer Advice

Consumers are advised to take note of the following when engaging home renovation contractors:

- Compare quotations from different contractors, and do thorough research on the credibility and track record of the contractor before signing the contract. Insist on a written contract to protect your interests. Consumers are encouraged to use [CASE’s model agreement on home renovation](#)
- Negotiate for the deposit to be as low as possible and negotiate for a progressive payment according to the project milestones. The typical milestones and amounts are as follows: 10 percent upon confirmation, 80 percent on a progressive payment basis as each stage of the renovation work is complete, and final 10 percent upon satisfactory completion of all works and rectification of issues.
- Document outstanding defects by taking photos. Consumers should ensure outstanding defects are fully rectified before making full payment. The photos can also be used as supporting evidence in case of disputes.
- Patronise CaseTrust accredited renovation contractors. CaseTrust accredited renovation contractors are required to protect a customer's deposit via the purchase of a deposit performance bond. The bond safeguards deposits against business closure, winding up and/or liquidation before the renovation is completed. They are also required to adopt the [CaseTrust Standard Renovation Contract](#), which contains various clauses that safeguard consumers’ interests, and ensures accountability for project deliverables. In addition, CaseTrust accredited renovation contractors have in place proper and clearly defined dispute resolution mechanisms in case consumers wish to raise disputes. The list of CaseTrust accredited renovation contractors can be found here: (<https://app.case.org.sg/casetrust.plx?rm=results>)
- Housing and Development Board (HDB) flat owners are advised to engage a contractor from HDB’s directory of renovation contractors to carry out their renovation works. The listed contractors are

¹ Example 21a of the Second Schedule of the CPFTA

required to abide by HDB's terms and ensure that the renovation work is conducted safely and does not cause damage to the property. The directory can be found here: <https://services2.hdb.gov.sg/webapp/BN31AWERRCMobile/BN31PListingContractor.jsp>

- Consumers with unresolved disputes can approach CASE for assistance (hotline: 6100 0315, website: www.case.org.sg).
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About the Consumers Association of Singapore:

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) is an independent, non-profit organisation that is committed towards protecting consumers' interest through information and education, and promoting an environment of fair and ethical trade practices. One of its key achievements is in advocating for the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act (CPFTA) which came into effect on 1 March 2004.

For more information, please visit the CASE website at <http://www.case.org.sg> or follow us on:

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