



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

20TH DECEMBER, 2024

CONSUMERS MUST BE CAUTIOUS OF MISLEADING ONLINE TRADERS

Seasons' Greetings,

The festive season is finally here. This is the time when businesses strive for maximum promotional activities on sales of goods or services. Such promotional activities may sometimes result in misleading and deceptive conducts which negatively affect consumers.

The Competition and Fair Trading Commission (CFTC) would, therefore, like to advise consumers to be vigilant, particularly when transacting online, as some of the traders masquerade as legitimate businesses while they have intentions to effectively mislead or out rightly defraud consumers.

As per the spirit of Competition and Fair Trading Act (CFTA), the CFTC expects traders including those offering goods and services online, to ensure that they do so in a manner that is not misleading or deceptive in terms of representations of product conditions and pricing.

In order to protect themselves from such misconducts, consumers must exercise caution with unfamiliar suppliers as follows:

- **Social media ads** — Be careful of the items that have been advertised on social media. Some of them are “look-alike” sites that impersonate legitimate traders.
- **Verify company** — Before making a purchase, type the company's name into a search engine with terms like “review,” “complaint,” or “scam.”
- **Check URL** — Make sure the website uses encryption to protect your information during your transaction. Look for https at the beginning of the URL. The ‘s’ after http means the site is encrypted.

- **Review return policy** — Before you make any purchase, read the fine print on the return policy. Some stores may have short timeframes for returns that will expire before you even give the gift or charge large return shipping fees. Make sure you understand the policy prior to making a purchase and don't forget to keep your receipts.

In addition, consumers must take note of the following prior to purchasing any product:

- That it meets specific standards and must be certified
- That it is not faulty or damaged at the time of sale.
- That it is fit for purpose.
- That it matches the description given.

Should you happen to have purchased a product or service that doesn't meet the above, you have the right to ask for a refund, replacement, or repair which must be done within a reasonable time.

CFTC wishes to encourage consumers and the general public to report any suspected violation of the CFTA through its toll free line 2489 or send a WhatsApp message to 0987738749

For media enquiries on this statement, contact Innocent Helema on 0880725075 or email innocent.helema@cftc.mw

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Lloyds Vincent Nkhoma

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER