



CALL FOR ACTION THE CONSUMER ADVOCATE

June 2025 / Issue 18

CALL FOR ACTION 101

In this section of our newsletter, we will give you monthly updates on who Call for Action is and what it is that we do. We hope you enjoy this little glimpse inside of our world.

Have you ever wondered what happens when you submit a consumer complaint to Call for Action? When a new case is received it is reviewed by the Director and assigned to one of our 12 Consumer Advocates (CA). Often a case is assigned based on the expertise of the CA that will review the description of what happened and research the organization the complaint is against. Once that has been done, they call the consumer and have a detailed discussion of what happened and what outcome the consumer is hoping for. This also includes what the consumer has done to remedy the situation so far, how the transaction occurred, how payment was made, who they have communicated with at the organization and what roadblocks they have come up against. From there the Consumer and CA develop a plan that will assist the Consumer to get their issue resolved.

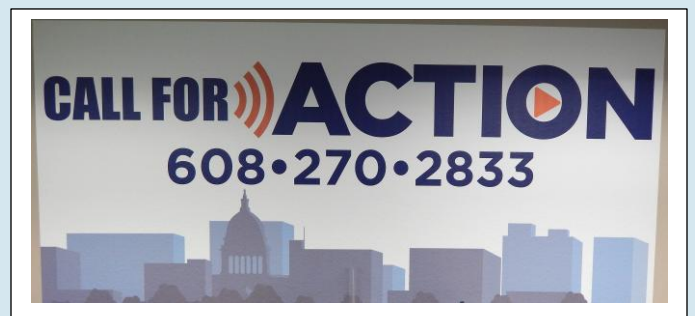
Sometimes all that is required is for Call for Action to look up information and share to help the consumer help themselves. But often, a resolution requires us to get involved directly as mediators between the organization and consumer. To be effective we need help from the consumer which may include sharing documentation, such as pictures or receipts, or providing additional information. There are also times when an organization will require the consumer to complete and sign a document stating they can talk with Call for Action about the consumer and the issue. Then there is typically some back and forth for a time before a resolution is made.

Often the resolution is in the consumer's favor. In fact, a favorable resolution occurs in up to 90% of all CFA cases.

Located in Madison at WISC-TV, CBS Channel 3 (Channel3000) and staffed by highly trained Consumer Advocates who are enthusiastic about educating and helping consumers. **Our phone lines are open to talk to one of us live on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Our phone number is (608) 270-2833.** Outside of those open phone hours you can call and leave a voicemail message or you can submit a consumer complaint online at <https://www.channel3000.com/call-for-action/>.

MAILING ADDRESS

WISC-TV / Call for Action
7025 Raymond Rd
Madison, WI 53719
Email: wisccfa@gmail.com



CALL FOR ACTION QUARTERLY SNAPSHOT (Jan – Mar)

	<u>NATIONALLY</u>	<u>LOCAL</u>
Cases Opened	2254	162
Cases Closed	2159	150
Successfully Solved	277	48
Partially Solved	301	17
Problem Solved Itself	166	17
No Solution Available	509	34
Not Valid Complaint	174	2
Caller Dropped	153	12
Quarterly \$\$\$ Amount Retrieved	\$976,897.00	\$74,218.32

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

My name is Michelle. I am in my fourth-year volunteering at Call for Action.

I moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, when I was 13 years old. Then later, married and my husband and I moved to Madison, Wisconsin, about 40 years ago. I am originally from Tennessee.

Before retiring in 2012, I worked for the Federal Government, and my job was heavily involved in taking and processing disability claims for children and adults. Yet stressful, it was extremely rewarding in the end with those who were approved and truly needed financial and medical assistance. Along with working, I also volunteered at the Salvation Army Women's Shelter a few days a week for several years, and I volunteered at an Academic Learning Center for children aged 5-13 years old twice a week. I also had to take care of my family, husband, and two sons.

After retirement, I continued to volunteer at the Academic Learning Center for a few more years (along with a few other volunteer titles) and, being the youngest in my family, I have spent and still spend a lot of time assisting my siblings with health issues, Medicare, insurance, etc.

Then along comes a grandson and a year and half later another grandson. So, I took a break from volunteering for a few years to assist with their early years. Well, I missed it! I love helping people so very much and it makes my soul feel good to give back. I was watching Channel3000 one day in 2021, and I saw an advertisement for volunteers for Call for Action, and I called right away. As you can see, my passion is to assist others and try to make sure everyone is treated fairly. That goes for the young, the old, and all that goes in between.

With whatever other free time I have, I also volunteer a few times a month with a non-profit organization making pizzas to sell in the stores and in the restaurant. I go to read at my grandson's school every few months. I am always busy and ready to help.

I am blessed to have the opportunity to help others who call in or file online consumer complaints. We get a wide variety of issues, and it warms my heart and puts a smile on my face to help in the best way that I can.

CALL FOR ACTION CONSUMER STORY

BUYER BEWARE - PET PURCHASE(S) GONE WRONG

Call For Action recently had a consumer reach out to us because they lost \$1,800.00 that they paid for a new puppy. Unfortunately, this case has not had a successful outcome in terms of getting money returned. At least not yet, we are still collaborating with the consumer.

The consumer, from out of state, was looking to buy a puppy and found exactly what they were looking for, in a soon to be born litter, at a Wisconsin based company called Chapel View Farm & Stable. The company website was beautiful and in conversation(s) with the company owner they fell in “puppy love” and paid \$900.00 down to hold their future puppy. The final payment of \$900.00 was due to be paid when the puppy was born and they made that payment as well. Initially all communication was timely and satisfactory, and they were elated when the owner even offered to deliver the puppy to them personally and for free. But soon after they started to find it difficult getting their calls returned and questions answered. They asked for pictures, names of the puppies' parents, accreditation, vet records, etc. In the end they have no puppy from this company and no refund of money. Through investigation, after the fact, the consumer learned that they are not the only consumer who has had problems with this breeder. There is a social media page dedicated to others who have been scammed by them and there were charges of abuse and suspicion of various frauds committed.

Call for Action is investigating as this was the third complaint against this organization that we have received in the past two years. We also found multiple complaints by consumers that were filed with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection as well as the Better Business Bureau who gives this organization an “F” rating.

Pet scams are not confined to this one organization. To protect yourself when buying a pet online, first thoroughly investigate the organization - look for complaints online, with consumer organizations, contact breed specific organizations and check social media. Always ask for and check references. Never buy from someone who only communicates by email. Inquire about certifications/registrations/licensing and verify those. Make sure the breeder supplies documentation on pedigree and health. Whenever possible, meet in person and if you cannot do that instead have a video meeting. Make payments only with secure methods where you could file a dispute, if necessary, such as a credit card, and use image lookup on your computer to be sure a picture you are sent is not something the company pulled off the internet. And most importantly if the breeder is rushing you or being consistently slow responding or not responding, if they push for payment with cash or money order consider that a BIG RED FLAG. It is so easy to fall in love with a potential new pet and there are some people who are going to try to take advantage of that.

CALL FOR ACTION CONSUMER CALENDAR

Here are consumer-related events:

October 8, 2025 CFA speaking at the West Madison and Madison South Central Lions.

October 30, 2025 CFA speaking at the Monona Senior Center

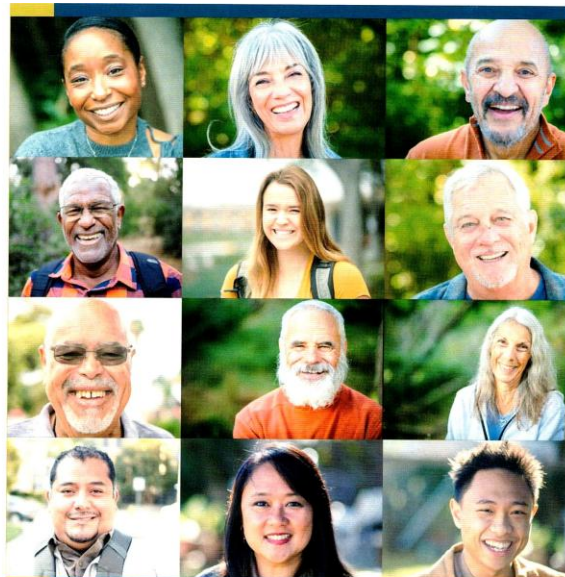
August 6, 2025 CFA speaking at the Stoughton Senior Center

CALL FOR ACTION HIGHLIGHTS OF A FEW LOCAL CASES

- Helped a consumer recover \$10,938 in back pay from the Social Security Administration for replacement of a check to a banking card.
- Helped a consumer obtain \$8,223.00 reimbursement from a national bank for money hacked from accounts several times.
- Saved a consumer \$6,000.00 of labor costs from a local auto dealership for the replacement of a new engine.
- Helped a consumer eliminate \$6,000.00 for charges made in error by their health insurance company.
- Helped a consumer obtain a \$5,121.00 reimbursement from a Debit Card company for money not credited to the consumer's account.

GREAT CONSUMER RESOURCE

Below is a sample of a helpful publication from the WI Dept of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The brochure discusses protection of Your Personal Identity, Phone and Internet, Home, Your Money, Your Purchases, Job Seekers, Travelers, Small Claims Court, and a list of Additional Resources. A digital version is available at: ConsumerGuide.wi.gov



Consumer Protection for Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is the state's primary consumer protection agency. Its Bureau of Consumer Protection has authority to regulate unfair business practices. The Bureau receives and responds to thousands of inquiries, and it reviews, examines, and investigates thousands of complaints every year.

This guide summarizes common consumer protection issues facing all Wisconsinites and advises consumers on how to avoid problems – and what to do if a problem occurs. From resolving issues with an auto mechanic or a home improvement contractor to avoiding potential scams and identity theft, the Bureau of Consumer Protection takes great pride in informing, educating, and protecting the public.

What the Bureau of Consumer Protection Does

- ▶ Regulates unfair and deceptive business practices to protect millions of Wisconsin consumers.
- ▶ Provides information, training, and resources for businesses to serve Wisconsin consumers better.
- ▶ Administers Wisconsin's telemarketing "Do Not Call" Law.
- ▶ Educates consumers on best practices to combat and avoid identity theft, and offers recovery services to identity theft victims.

Copies of this guide and additional materials about topics within this guide are available from:

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection
Bureau of Consumer Protection
2811 Agriculture Drive
PO Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708-8911
datcp.wi.gov

Contact Information:

Call our toll-free hotline at (800) 422-7128 or email us at DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

To file a complaint visit our website:

ConsumerProtection.wi.gov

A digital version of this guide can be found at:

ConsumerGuide.wi.gov