


## CONSUMER PROTECTION AWARENESS

# BE ALERT THIS BLACK FRIDAY!

**Consumers in KwaZulu-Natal are urged to remain vigilant this Black Friday. As shoppers take advantage of the annual retail event, they should be cautious of grand promises, seemingly massive discounts, and the temptation to indulge in some serious retail therapy.**

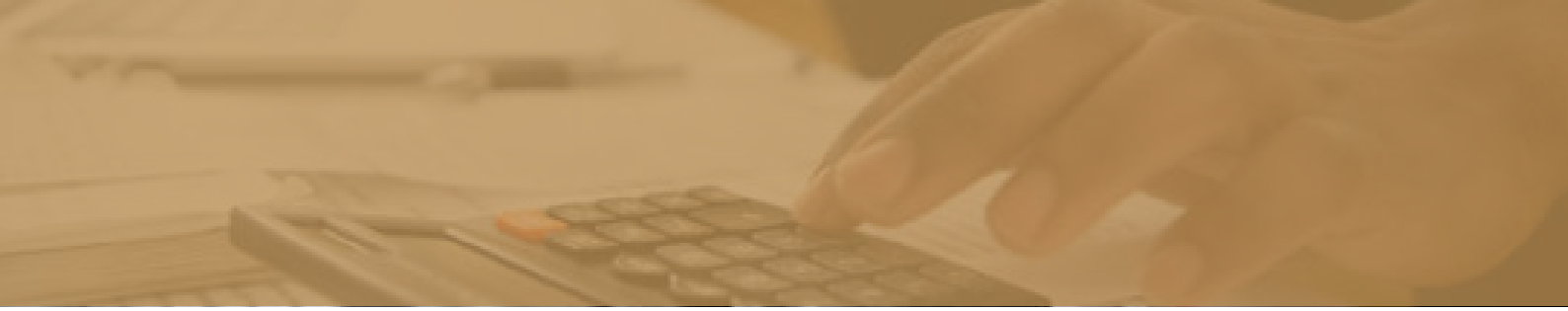
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KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ONE CONSTITUTION, ONE NATION · REFLECT. RENEW. RECOMMIT.

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# COMMON CONSUMER TRAPS TO WATCH OUT FOR

## SMART SHOPPING TIPS:

- Plan your shopping, do your homework/research, make a list in advance and stick to it.
- Ensure the prices are in fact cheaper; verify the prices of the items you intend purchasing beforehand and compare prices across the different retailers.
- Set a budget and stick to it. Do not go into debt to purchase items you don't really need.
- Keep proof of purchase and screenshots of deals.
- Review the store's return and refund policy prior purchasing.
- Shop from trusted retailers only.
- Report suspicious deals or scams immediately to the KwaZulu-Natal Consumer Protector's Office.

## COMMON BLACK FRIDAY SCAMS TO WATCH OUT FOR

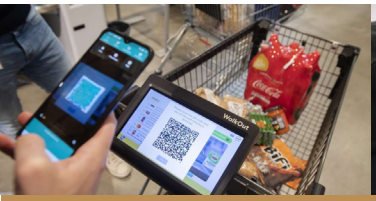
1. **Fake Online Stores**
   Fraudsters often create websites or social media pages that look like legitimate retailers but exist solely to steal your money or personal information.
   ***Tip: Always check the URL carefully, look for "https" and read reviews before buying.***

2. **Too-Good-To-Be-True Deals**
   If a deal looks unbelievably cheap, it probably is. Scammers often lure buyers with massive discounts on popular products that never arrive.
   ***Tip: Compare prices across multiple sites before purchasing.***

3. **Phishing Emails and Messages**
   Beware of emails or SMSes claiming you've "won a prize" or offering exclusive Black Friday deals that require you to click a suspicious link.
   ***Tip: Never share banking details or click/open links from unknown senders.***

4. **Social Media Giveaways**
   Fake giveaways promising free items or gift cards can lead to identity theft or malware.
   ***Tip: Verify official retailer's social media accounts before entering any online competitions.***

5. **Delivery and Courier Scams**
   Scammers may impersonate delivery companies asking you to pay an "extra fee" to release your parcel.
   ***Tip: Track your parcels using official retailer or courier channels only.***












# WATCH OUT FOR FAKE WEBSITES

Opportunists often create fake websites that imitate well-known brands and advertise seemingly irresistible Black Friday specials. These offers may appear to be excellent bargains, creating pressure on consumers to make quick purchasing decisions. Scammers frequently use urgency tactics, such as "this sale ends in 1 hour"" or "Limited stock available," to encourage impulsive buying. As a result, consumers may rush to secure the deal without verifying the legitimacy of the website. In an attempt to secure deal quickly, consumers may end up entering their personal and payment details, pay at checkout only to end up being scammed of their money. Much worse is that the scammers now also have all the victim's banking information and personal details which they can use to make fraudulent transactions and identity theft.

## ADDITIONAL SIGNS TO HELP SPOT FAKE WEBSITES



**Be on the lookout for the following red flags when shopping online:**

- Misspellings or variations in the brand or company name
- Unusual or suspicious domain endings (for example, domains that do not match the official website)
- Poor website design and functionality
- Low-quality graphics and images
- Missing, limited, or unverifiable contact details

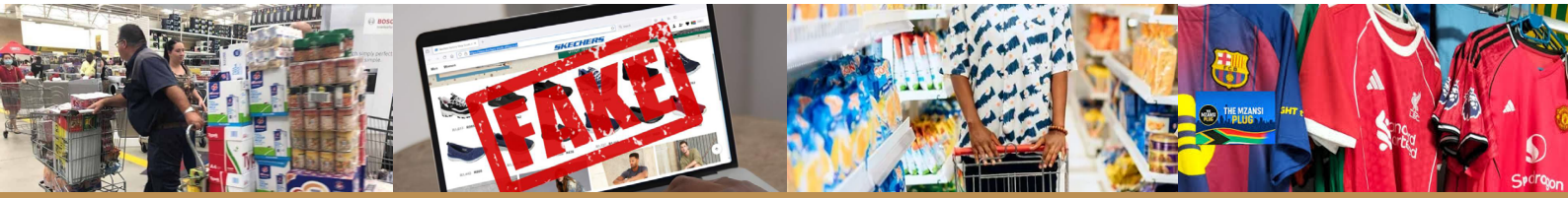
***If you notice one or more of these warning signs, exercise caution and verify the website's authenticity before making a purchase or sharing personal information.***

# PRACTICAL SAFEGUARDS

- Never share passwords or OTPs
- Never click on unverified links
- Use official banking apps
- Enable transaction alerts
- Use nullity verification methods
- Review account activity regularly.



# STAY ALERT





# REPORT FROM TREND ANALYSIS

## WARRANTIES ON ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

An analysis of complaints received by the Complaints Handling Unit has revealed an increase in complaints relating to television sets purchased during Black Friday. These complaints involve various forms of physical damage, such as cracked screens, LCD panel damage, and other similar defects discovered after purchase.

Consumers are reminded that a retailer's liability for physical damage to a television generally ends once the product is removed from the store. It is therefore important that consumers take appropriate precautions when transporting and installing these products.

To minimise the risk of damage and potential disputes, consumers are strongly encouraged to make use of professional delivery and installation services. Where a television is damaged while in the care of a delivery or installation company, that service provider may be held liable for the loss or damage, depending on the circumstances.

Where consumers elect to transport and install the television themselves, they assume responsibility for any physical damage that may occur during transportation, handling, or installation. In such i stances, it may not be possible to hold the retailer liable for the damage.

While professional delivery and installation services may result in additional costs, these services provide consumers with added protection and peace of mind by reducing the risk of damage and claifying liability should damage occur.

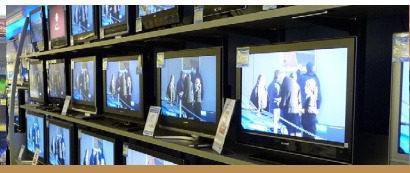
Consumers are therefore encouraged to carefully consider these options when purchasing large and fragile electronic items such as televisions.

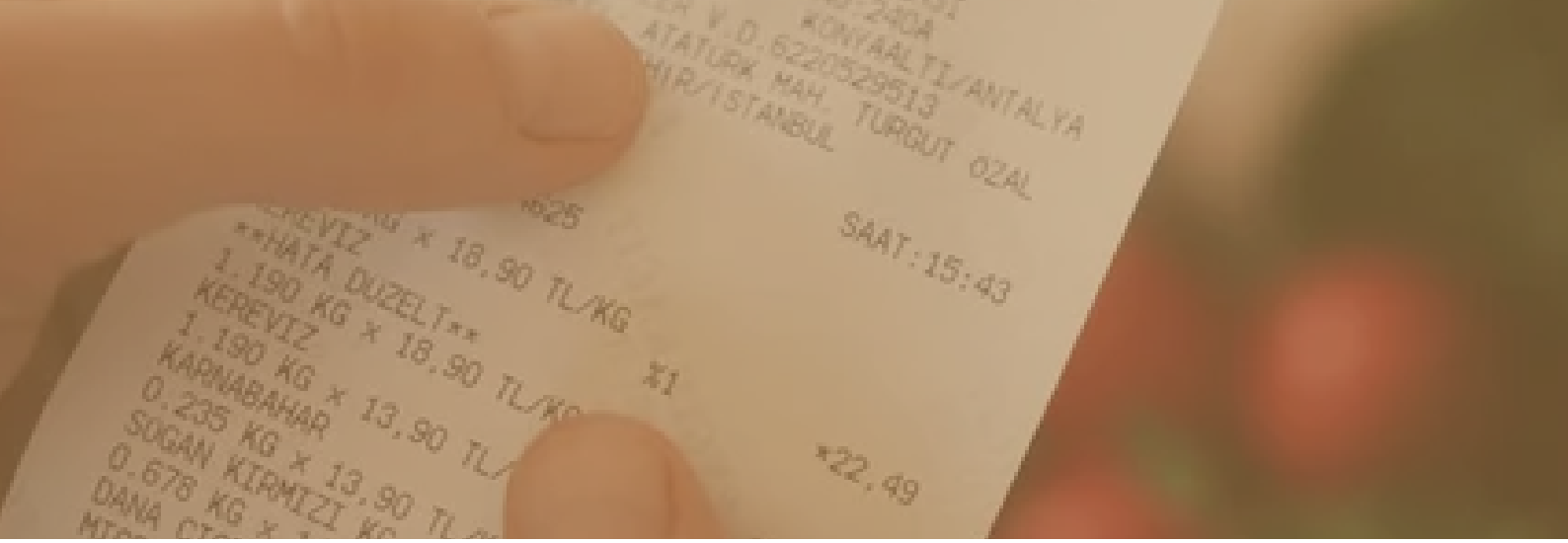
## BE AWARE OF THE DURATION OF THE WARRANTEE

Complaints received have shown that consumers often purchase electrical appliances at discounted prices during Black Friday sales. However, many of these items are not put into immediate use and are instead stored for future use, sometimes for periods exceeding 12 or 24 months.

Consumers are urged to pay close attention to the terms and conditions of product warranties. It is important to note that a warranty becomes effective from the date of purchase, not from the date the item is first opened or used.





Therefore, if a product is only opened and used more than 24 months after it was purchased, the warranty may have already expired. In such cases, the supplier may no longer be liable for repairs, replacement, or a refund if the item is found to be defective, as the original warranty period would have lapsed.

To protect against potential losses, consumers are advised to consider purchasing an extended warranty, particularly when buying items that are not intended for immediate use.

## REMEMBER TO REGISTER YOUR MANUFACTURES WARRANTEE

To enjoy full benefits of the manufactures warrantee ensure that you scan the QR Code provided on the box/package and upload all the necessary details including your proof of purchase.





Purchase Receipt

Receipt Number: [Receipt Number]
Receipt Date: [Date + Time]

SELLER
[Company Name]
[Company Address Line 1]
[Company Address Line 2]
VAT Nr: [VAT Number]

CUSTOMER
[Customer Name]
[Customer Address Line 1]
[Customer Address Line 2]

NOTES

| DESCRIPTION | QUANTITY | UNIT PRICE | SUBTOTAL | VAT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Purchased Products or Services | 3 | 1,500.00 | 4,500.00 | 675.00 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Subtotal | R4,500.00 |
| VAT (15%) | R675.00 |
| **Total** | **R5,175.00** |

Salesperson

Signature

THANK YOU FOR THE PURCHASE!






# HOW TO LODGE A CONSUMER COMPLAINT

If you are experiencing problems with a retailer, or service provider who do not want to assist you with a consumer complaint. You can contact our office. The Office of the Consumer Protector – KZN. Just go directly to our online complaint's portal.

## ***kznconsumeraffairs.gov.za***

### Please remember the following:

* Lodge the complaint as soon as possible
* Ensure you have all supporting documents,such as (proof of purchase, invoices, contracts, etc.)
* If the complaint relates to a motor vehicle, please ensure to provide the make and model, kilometer readings (at date of purchase and when the problems started) and vehicle registration numbers.
* When writing your complaint statement, provide a detailed description of the product or service, and what the defect/problem is. Give details of the timelines when informing the retailer of the problem, and their actions to try and resolve the issue.

The complaint will be directed to the relevant District wherein you (the consumer resides), and the Adviser handling your case will contact you, and advise as to progress on a regular basis.







***Scan the QR code to access the Office of the Consumer Protector – KZN portal.***

## CONTACT

**Address:**

270 Jabu Ndlovu Street
Pietermaritzburg
3201

**Telephone / Fax**

Tel: 033 264 2500
Fax: 033 264 2672
**Email**: info@kzndtea.go.za