



CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CASE warns consumers of spike in complaints received against Triple Lifestyle Marketing

The Consumers Association of Singapore ("CASE") would like to alert consumers to a spike in complaints received against Triple Lifestyle Marketing Pte Ltd ("Triple Lifestyle Marketing"), a direct seller of alkaline water systems. This is the second time that CASE is issuing an alert against Triple Lifestyle Marketing, following an earlier alert on 23 February 2021.

CASE received 139 complaints against Triple Lifestyle Marketing from 1 November 2021 to 31 March 2022. Consumers complained that the company was either unresponsive to requests for service appointments or did not show up for scheduled appointments despite the company's representations during the sales process that they would repair the water dispensers or water filtration systems if defects occurred.

Consumers who have contractual disputes with Triple Lifestyle Marketing may approach CASE for assistance.

About Triple Lifestyle Marketing

Triple Lifestyle Marketing sells long-term maintenance service packages for alkaline water systems via door-to-door sales. In most cases, the packages cost approximately \$3,000. Consumers can opt to pay the full package cost upfront or via monthly instalments.

In return for signing up for the long-term maintenance service packages, consumers receive a water dispenser, a water filtration system, and periodic water filter replacements for the term of the service agreement/maintenance package. As part of the service agreement, Triple Lifestyle Marketing is also required to repair the water dispenser or water filtration system if defects occur.

Complaints Received

The majority of complaints received since January 2020 against Triple Lifestyle Marketing involved instances where consumers alleged that Triple Lifestyle Marketing was either unresponsive to their repeated attempts to contact the latter to arrange for service requests for replacement of water filters or repair of faulty products, or did not show up for appointments. According to some consumers, Triple Lifestyle Marketing did not provide replacements after they had collected the faulty products. This was despite representations by Triple Lifestyle Marketing during the sales process that they would repair the water dispensers or water filtration systems if defects occurred.

Consumers also reported that Triple Lifestyle Marketing made other misleading claims during the sales process. For instance, consumers alleged that Triple Lifestyle Marketing told them that they can pay for

the packages via instalments, but subsequently charged them the full amount upfront. A few consumers complained that they received used water dispensers or water filter replacements.

In response to consumer complaints, CASE had issued a warning letter to Triple Lifestyle Marketing in July 2020 and asked Triple Lifestyle Marketing to enter into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (“VCA”) as provided for under the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act (“CPFTA”) to cease its unfair practices and compensate affected consumers. However, Triple Lifestyle Marketing did not sign the VCA.

CASE has since referred Triple Lifestyle Marketing to the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (“CCCS”) for investigation under the CPFTA.

Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act

Under the CPFTA, it is an unfair practice for a supplier to do or say anything, or omit to do or say anything, if as a result a consumer might reasonably be deceived or misled. In addition, it is an unfair practice for a supplier to represent that goods are new or unused if they are not, and to represent the availability of facilities for repair of goods or of spare parts for goods if that is not the case. Consumers who encounter such unfair practices have the right to seek recourse under the CPFTA, and may approach CASE for assistance.

Consumer Advice

Consumers are advised to take note of the following when transacting with direct selling companies (door-to-door sales):

- Do not feel pressured to make a purchase on the spot or allow salespeople into their residences if they are not comfortable.
- Do online research to verify the quality of the product and the track record of the company before making a purchase decision.
- Negotiate for shorter duration contract. If possible, negotiate for a trial period to assess the quality of the product and after sales service of the company.
- Ascertain details of the after sales service, such as notice period for service appointments and estimated time period for repair of faulty products. Put down these details in writing in case of disputes.
- If consumers do not wish to proceed with the purchase, they can cancel a direct sales contract within five days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays) after the contract is signed and they are informed of the right to cancel the contract in accordance with the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) (Cancellation of Contracts) Regulations 2019.
- Consumers are encouraged to patronise direct selling companies accredited under the CaseTrust-Direct Selling Association of Singapore (DSAS) joint accreditation scheme. These companies give consumers the right to cancel a contract within a 7-day cooling-off period without penalty, and to offer a full refund if payment has already been made.
- Consumers with unresolved disputes can approach CASE for assistance (hotline: 9795 8397, 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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