

A Message from
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL
KWAME RAOUL



Running a business is as challenging as it is fulfilling. When a business becomes a victim of a scam or fraudulent practices, the result is a waste of resources, time and energy that would otherwise be

directed toward your business goals.

The Office of the Attorney General will protect small businesses from fraud and will be available to help you work through situations that arise. Even the most watchful and diligent business could get caught up in telemarketing schemes, office supply scams or payment ripoffs by service providers, to give just a few examples. To respond to the dishonest forces, this office has cultivated experts in the Consumer Fraud Bureau, the Health Care Bureau and the Franchise Bureau to analyze fraud complaints and seek a resolution.

I invite businesses throughout the state to learn about the services available to small businesses in the Office of the Attorney General. Our knowledgeable, experienced staff ready to help.

Together we can create a climate of fairness and integrity that will benefit small businesses and by extension, Illinois business environment.

Kwame Raoul
Illinois Attorney General



KWAME RAOUL
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL

For more information or to request assistance, please contact the Office of Attorney General Kwame Raoul.

Consumer Fraud Hotlines

Chicago
1-800-386-5438
TTY: 1-800-964-3013

Springfield
1-800-243-0618
TTY: 1-877-844-5461

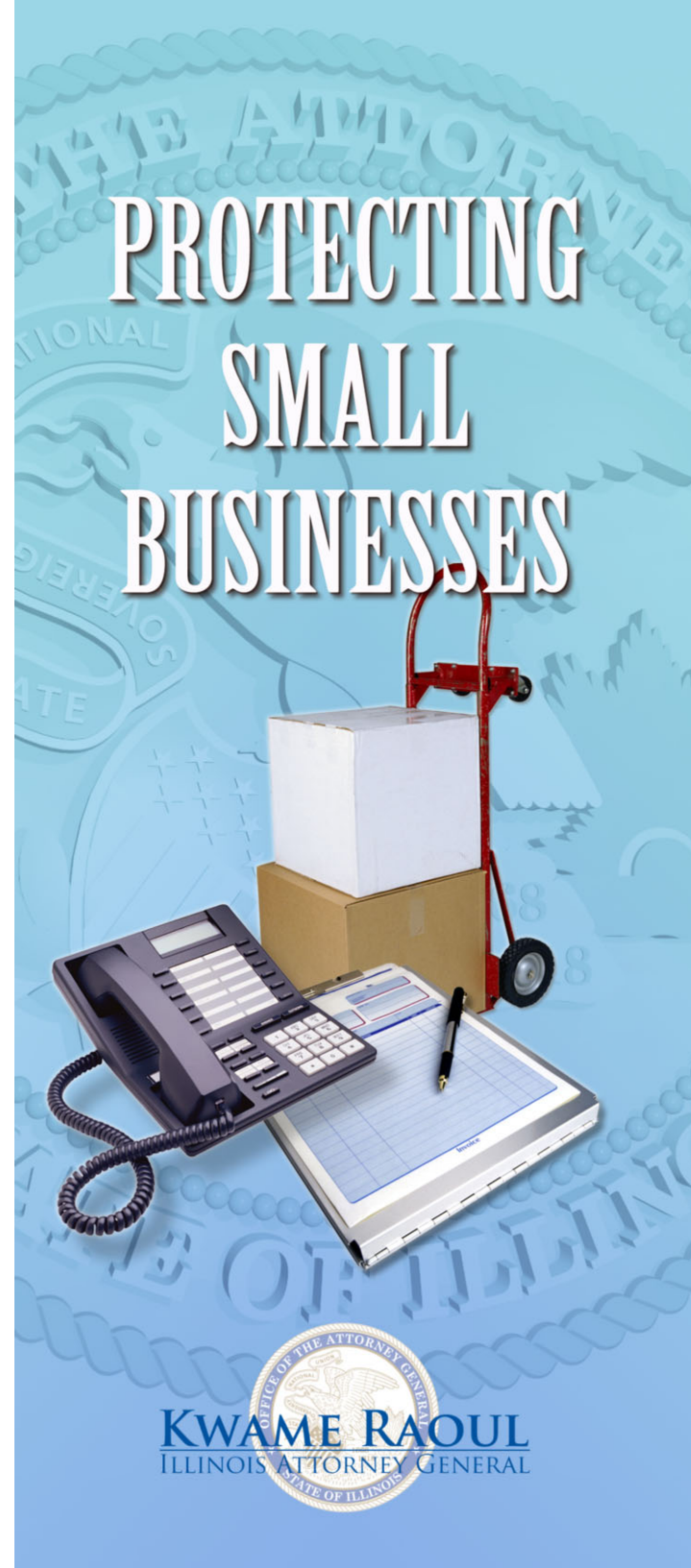
Carbondale
1-800-243-0607
TTY: 1-877-675-9339

Franchise Bureau
(217) 782-4465
TTY: 1-877-844-5461

Health Care Helpline
1-877-305-5145
TTY: 1-800-964-3013

www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

Printed by authority of the State of Illinois. 10/19
This material is available in alternate format upon request.



Several bureaus within the Attorney General's Office provide services that assist small businesses in Illinois.

Franchise Bureau

The Franchise Bureau registers and monitors franchisors and brokers who seek to sell franchises in Illinois. The goal of the bureau—and the Franchise Disclosure Act it administers—is to provide pre-sale disclosures and protection for prospective franchisees. The bureau provides information on the Franchise Disclosure Act, rules applicable to the offering of franchises, and business and financial histories of franchisors.

Health Care Bureau

Through mediation, the Health Care Bureau can help business owners and their employees resolve disputes with health insurance companies and health care providers, ensuring that plan participants receive the coverage to which they are entitled.

Consumer Fraud Bureau

The Consumer Fraud Bureau seeks to protect Illinois consumers and businesses from victimization by fraud, deception and unfair methods of competition. Through the Attorney General's mediation program, the bureau facilitates resolutions to disputes in which businesses or consumers feel they have been victimized in the marketplace.

Our goal is to break down the barriers that stand in the way of amicable resolutions. Through the mediation program, the parties to a dispute often avoid spending the significant amounts of time and money associated with litigation. As a result, the Attorney General's Office has saved Illinois businesses and consumers millions of dollars. Although the Attorney General's mediators are not judges and cannot make factual determinations with respect to a dispute, both businesses and consumers benefit from the mediation program.

Under Illinois law, small businesses are entitled to the same protections against fraud and deception as consumers. If a pattern of fraud is found, the Attorney General can take legal action against the perpetrators on behalf of the State of Illinois.

Tips to Protect Your Business

- Assign one person or department to handle incoming sales calls or solicitations and approve all purchases of office supplies.
- Instruct employees not to give out information regarding office machines and copiers, especially when responding to telephone solicitations.
- Check out unfamiliar companies and offers before placing an order.
- Keep a list of regularly used vendors as protection against schemers who claim the order is a "renewal."
- When you place an order, ask for written confirmation with all conditions clearly spelled out.
- Immediately notify the supplier in writing of unauthorized shipments or invoices. Clearly state that you did not place an order and will not accept delivery. If the goods have already been delivered, notify the company that you will not pay and that the goods are available for pickup. If the company claims to have a tape recording of the order, insist on hearing it. If they claim to have an invoice or other documentation, insist on seeing it.

WATCH OUT FOR:

Office Supply Scams

Collect Call Scams

Fraudulent Charitable Solicitations

Telephone Service "Slamming"

Phony Billing Schemes