

# Consumer Protection

Consumer Protection is the act of safeguarding the public and buyers of goods and services against unfair practices in the marketplace.

## **Consumer Protection - Basic Rights**

Some of the basic rights of Consumers are listed below.

1. Right to basic needs
2. Right to safety
3. Right to information
4. Right to choose
5. Right to representation
6. Right to redress
7. Right to consumer education
8. Right to a healthy environment

## **Consumer Protection Bill, 2019**

Some of the important points concerning the Consumer Protection Bill are listed below.

1. Consumer Protection Bill 2019 was introduced by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
2. The Consumer Protection Bill was introduced and passed in Lok Sabha in July 2019.
3. The bill was passed in Rajya Sabha in August 2019.

## **Consumer Protection Bill 2019 - Highlights of the Bill**

Some of the highlights of the Consumer Protection Bill 2019 are mentioned below.

### **Consumer - Definition**

1. Any person who buys goods or services is a consumer and those buying it for resale or commercial purpose are not a consumer.
2. All modes of transaction i.e. offline and online comes under the ambit.

## **Consumer - Rights**

1. Right to protection against goods and services that can be dangerous to life and property.
2. Consumers have the right to information on various aspects of goods and services.
3. Consumers should have the right to redressal.
4. Consumers have the right to access goods at competitive prices.

## **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)**

1. CCPA will be set up by the Central Government.
2. CCPA has wide ranging powers from conducting enquiries into the violations of consumer rights, issuing orders for discontinuation of unfair trade practices, imposition of penalties on entities that flouted the laws etc.

## **Misleading Advertisements - Penalties**

1. For false advertisements a manufacturer will incur a fine of Rs 10 lakhs and imprisonment upto 2 years.

## **Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (CDRC)**

1. CDRC will be set up at National, State and District levels.
2. Consumers can file complaints with the CDRC if he/she has been cheated by the manufacturer, sellers of goods and services. If the complaint is on goods and services that are of value less than Rs 10 crore but more than Rs 1 crore, then complaint can be filed with State CDRC, and if the value is more than Rs 10 crores then complaint can be filed with National CDRC.

## **Consumer Protection Act 2019 - Replaced 1986 Act**

Some of the important measures introduced in the Consumer Protection Act 2019 are given below. These are some measures that are different compared to Consumer Protection Act 1986..

1. A new Central Regulator will be introduced. Accordingly Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) will be formed.
2. If advertisements are misleading strict penalties will be imposed.
3. New guidelines for e-commerce
4. New guidelines for electronic service providers.

5. In the present act, consumers can approach a consumer court and seek compensation for the harm caused by the product or service.
6. Pecuniary limits of a Jurisdiction has been raised at district, state and national levels.
7. Now Consumers can file complaints in the consumer courts located near the complainant. As per Consumer Protection Act of 1986, the complainant had to file complaints in consumer court where seller was located.

The above measures help in further safeguarding of consumer interests.