

# Erie County Department of Public Advocacy



**Division of Consumer  
Protection  
*and*  
Bureau of Weights &  
Measures**

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## Division of Consumer Protection

### About

The Erie County Division of Consumer Protection was created to ensure that Erie County's residents have access to education, information, and resources regarding consumer protection. The office will investigate and mediate consumer complaints through voluntary mediation and educate Erie County consumers on the policies, best practices and their rights and responsibilities as consumers.

### File a Complaint

A complaint form can be submitted on our website.

[Erie.gov/CPcomplaint](http://Erie.gov/CPcomplaint)

A copy of the form is also available to download and can be mailed to our office.

### Follow us on social media!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ErieDCP/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ErieDCP>

### Additional Resources/ Information

- Identity Theft
- Do Not Call

### Known Scams

- Imposter/Grandparents Scam
- IRS Scam
- Online Dating/Romance Scam
- Phishing Emails
- Charity Scam
- Lottery/Prize Scam
- One Ring Call Scam



## **Consumer Protection References**

- New York State Attorney General | Buffalo Regional Office, Bureau of Consumer Frauds & Protection, (716) 853-8400
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1 (855) 411-2372
- Credit Reporting Agencies:
  - Experian, 1 (888) 397-3742
  - Equifax, 1 (800) 685-1111
  - Transunion, 1 (800) 888-4213
- Free Annual Credit Report, 1 (877) 322-8228
- Department of Social Security, 1 (800) 772-1213
- Do Not Call Registry, 1 (888) 382-1222 / TTY 1 (866) 290-4236
- Stop Credit Card and Insurance Offers:
  - Optoutprescreen.com or call 1-888-5-OPT-OUT (1-888-567-8688)
- Federal Communication Commission, 1 (888) 225-5322
- Federal Trade Commission, 1 (877) 382-4357
- Identity Theft Hotline, 1 (877) 438-4338
- Internal Revenue Service, 1 (800) 829-1040
- New York State Department of Financial Services, 1 (800) 342-3736
  - Bank related questions: 1 (877) 226-5697
  - Insurance related questions: 1 (800) 342-3736
- New York State Department of Human Rights, 1 (888) 392-3644
- New York State Department of Labor, (518) 457-9000 or 1 (888) 4-NYSDOL (888-469-7365)
- United States Postal Inspectors, 1 (877) 876-2455

## Bureau of Weights & Measures

### **Our Mission**

Ensure that equity prevails in the marketplace.



### **About**

The Bureau of Weights & Measures is committed to providing consumer protection. Regardless of industry any place where a consumer buys, sells or trades based on weights or measurement, the Bureau of Weights & Measures is there! The bureau is continuously training and procuring modern equipment to keep current with market trends.

The Weights & Measures Division inspects, tests, and certifies the accuracy of all commercial weighing and measuring devices, including gasoline and other fuel pumps or meters in Erie County. It is responsible for enforcing all applicable laws, rules, regulations and ordinances prescribed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the County of Erie. It ensures that buyers and sellers of commodities base their transactions upon accurate weights, measures or counts by confirming all commercial devices' accuracy and proper usage. It also checks that all commercial devices within the county are accurate and constructed to prevent fraud.

The bureau receives revenue from civil penalties assessed for violations of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law and Erie County Local Law 7 (1997). In 1989, the Bureau enacted a user fee system to help defray this Division's cost to the taxpayers. In 1997, this Division joined forces with New York State's Weights and Measures to test the octane of petroleum products within our county. The State fully reimburses the cost of this program. In 2019, Erie County passed the Consumer Protection Act of 2019 which created a Division of Consumer Protection and united the Bureau of Weights and Measures within the Department of Public Advocacy for Erie County.

## **Bureau of Weights & Measures**

### **Availability**

The Erie County Bureau of Weights & Measures is always on the job protecting consumers in many ways, often going unnoticed in the marketplace.

We are available during business hours to answer any consumer questions and investigate complaints. Complaints can be submitted online or sent in to the office via mail.

The online complaint form can be found at:

[Erie.gov/WMcomplaint](http://Erie.gov/WMcomplaint)

The staff consists of Deputy County Sealers and Scanner Accuracy Examiners who are constantly inspecting devices and businesses. The inspections they conduct ensure consumers are receiving the proper amount of goods and services at the appropriate prices.

### **Deputy County Sealers**

Ensure the accuracy of all devices that sell goods and services in both retail and commercial environments. These devices include:

- Scales
- Gas pumps
- Linear measuring devices
- Milk tanks
- Fuel delivery trucks
- Vehicle scales
- Asphalt/ grain hopper

Inspections are conducted at grocery stores, deli, pharmacies, scrap yards, quarries, farms, jewelry stores, gas stations, etc. In addition, Deputy County Sealers continuously check gas pumps, ATMs and any device that accepts credit cards for illegal skimming devices.

## **Bureau of Weights & Measures**

### **Scanner Accuracy Examiners**

- Ensure accuracy of prices consumers pay and enforce Local Law 7 of 1997.
- Conduct scanner accuracy audits; hold stores accountable to a high accuracy standard.
- Inspect stores for item pricing or shelf tags for all merchandise so the consumer knows the price they should be paying.
- Enforce the Super Refund Program, by providing justice for consumers who have been overcharged during sales transactions.

### **Super Refund Program**

Erie County Bureau of Weights & Measures enforces the provisions of Local Law 7 (1997). At all establishments which were granted a waiver from item pricing, the store is required to pay out a 'super refund' when a pricing error occurs. This is 10 times the amount of the error, not less than \$1 or more than \$10, plus the amount of the error. They are required to properly fill out Erie County's Price Discrepancy Report and give a copy to the consumer.

ANY retail store in Erie County, with or without a waiver from item pricing, **MUST** honor the lowest advertised price (shelf tag, sticker on the item, sign in the window, or printed ad) and refund the difference in price to the customer if there is a discrepancy.

### **Did you know?**

Weights & Measures enforce all consumer protection laws and have the ability to stop the use of seized devices and packages that deprive consumers of adequate amounts of goods or services delivered.

# Division of Consumer Protection

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Buffalo, NY 14202

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Website:

<https://www3.erie.gov/consumerprotection/>



# Bureau of Weights and Measures

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Website:

[https://www3.erie.gov/consumerprotection/  
weights-and-measures](https://www3.erie.gov/consumerprotection/weights-and-measures)