

CONSUMER HANDBOOK





Introduction

This handbook has been developed by the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) to address frequently asked questions relating to consumers of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services and products in Qatar.

CRA is the Communications Regulator in the state of Qatar established by virtue of Emiri Decree (42) of 2014. The CRA regulates the Telecommunications and Information Technology sector, Postal sector, and Access to Digital Media.

CRA encourages and supports an open and competitive ICT Sector that provides advanced, innovative, and reliable communications services. Balancing the rights of consumers with the needs of service providers is at the heart of everything the CRA does.

It is important that consumers are aware of CRA regulatory measures so that they can effectively safeguard their rights and understand their responsibilities.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

You have the right to:

- Receive a clearly understandable contract in Arabic or English
- Receive accurate and understandable bills in a timely manner
- Receive SMS notifications related to your selected Credit Limit
- Be made aware of details on how to resolve your complaints fairly
- Be made aware of all necessary information on the terms of the service before you enter into a contract with a service provider
- Obtain information and details on the service providers complaint process if needed
- Refuse to pay any fee for service or equipment that you did not subscribe to or request
- Get customized assistance and services if you have special needs

You are obliged to:

- Read and understand your contract and terms of service carefully before signing up for a service
- Keep your personal data updated with your service provider (name, Qatari ID, email address)
- Know and understand how Credit limits work and select a suitable credit limit to avoid unexpectedly high bills
- Read and understand your bills and billing information carefully before making payment.
- Approach your service provider to resolve complaints before approaching CRA
- Not share your personal data (mobile number, Qatari ID, Full Name) unless you clearly understand how this information will be used, especially for direct marketing purposes

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How are consumers protected in the ICT market?

The CRA has put in place regulatory mechanisms, which ensures that consumers are protected from unfair practices, have access to safe, high quality products and services. The regulations dealing with such protection are:

- Telecommunication Law and By-law
- Telecoms Consumer Protection Policy
- Retail Tariff Instruction
- Spam and Premium Service Regulations
- Code on Advertising, Marketing and Branding
- CRA's formal Complaints Process
- Competition Policy



What can I do when I am not satisfied with a telecommunication product or service?

Step 1

First lodge your complaint with your service provider and get a reference number for the complaint.

- If you have a Mobile service disconnection and your complaint remains open/unresolved for 48 hours, or 72 hours in case of fixed line disconnection, move to the next step.
- If your complaint is not related to a service disconnection and remains unresolved for 30 calendar days* and / or you are dissatisfied with the resolution offered to you, move to the next step.
- If you applied for a new fixed line service and your service has not been delivered after 10 working days since the submission of your application, and your complaint is open with the service provider for 48 hours with no alternative solution provided; move to the next step
- If the service provider refused to lodge a complaint for you, move to the next step.
- If you are a special need customer and your complaint (Disconnection or any other issue) is remained unresolved for 48 hours, move to the next step.

Step 2

Lodge a complaint with CRA using one of the following methods:

- **Email:** consumervoice@cra.gov.qa
- **CRA Hotline :** (103) from Qatar
- **From Overseas:** 00974 44069938
- **Download Arsel – CRA Mobile App**
 - For IOS <https://goo.gl/WMmLuk>
 - For Android <https://goo.gl/bfokSD>
- **Online complaint's form on CRA website:** www.cra.gov.qa
- **Twitter official account:** @CRAqatar

What happens next? How can I track the status of my complaint?

The complaint will be immediately filed and the consumer will receive a dedicated tracking reference number to follow-up on the complaint through the resolution process. Consumers will have the option of lodging their complaint in Arabic or English.

Within one working day, the consumer will receive a follow-up call from a consumer protection agent to obtain all the necessary information needed to investigate and resolve the complaint. Depending on the complaint, a final resolution may take up to 10 days to resolve.

Who can make a complaint?

Any person who uses any communication services provided by the licensed local service providers in the State of Qatar may file a complaint with the CRA. A complaint can be made on another person's behalf (such as on behalf of a family member) provided that they have the relevant authorization to lodge the complaint.

What information do I need when making a complaint?

To ensure that your complaint can be handled efficiently please include as much information as possible, such as:

- Your contact details (e.g. phone, email, residential / company address, etc.)
- The complaint "Reference Number" provided by your service provider;
- Your consent to disclose your complaint details to the service provider, if necessary
- Copies of any documents relating to your complaint (e.g. bills, advertisements, receipts, etc.)
- A full description, details of your complaint and any resolution offered to you by the service provider
- Your Qatari ID number as proof that you are the subscriber of the service related to the complaint



Do I have to pay for lodging a complaint with the CRA?

No, the complaints process with CRA is free of charge.

Why must I try to resolve complaints with my service provider first?

It is the obligation of licensed service providers in Qatar to provide quality customer service and resolve customer complaints in a reasonable and mutually acceptable timeframe (if a complaint remains unresolved, the consumer can lodge a complaint with CRA after 48 hours for Mobile service disconnection and after 30 calendar days for complaints that aren't related to a service disconnection).

Can CRA award compensation?

CRA can instruct a service provider to provide a refund to a customer as a resolution to a complaint; however the CRA has no power to award compensation.

I complained to my service provider but my complaints have been ignored. Can the CRA assist me?

Yes, the CRA can help you but you have to lodge a complaint through one of our complaint's channels. The CRA's Consumer Affairs team will contact you about your complaint in order to help you.

What should I do if I believe I have been misled by service provider advertising?

- Point out the statement or error and demand that the service provider match the claims made in the advertisement
- Lodge a complaint with your service provider so they give you a reference number for the complaint and investigation
- If you are not happy with the outcome of the complaint by the service provider you can report the misleading conduct of the service provider to the CRA for investigation and action

More information about the misleading advertising see the Code on Advertising, Marketing & Branding on the CRA website.

Does the CRA determine the prices for ICT services in the Qatar?

CRA does not determine the prices for ICT services but it evaluates prices provided by service providers against quality of service equivalent/ appropriate.



CONSUMER TIPS



Tips to avoid bill shock for Data Roaming charges:

- Turn off the automatic data checking and application updates. This will prevent your phone from downloading new data and consuming your data allowance in the background
- Go to the mobile phone settings and reset the network selection to the 'manual mode' setting to avoid automatic network switching
- If you leave the data roaming function on, set your phone to receive emails manually, not automatically. If your handset checks your emails every few minutes, you are likely to generate a high bill
- Don't download email attachments or large files such as photographs or videos which can be expensive
- International roaming services cost more. Before you travel ask your service provider about the costs of the services that you plan to use

Tips to avoid Scam calls:

- If you receive a call that you suspect is a scam hang up and block the number.
- Your service provider will never ask for personal information such as credit or debit card numbers over the phone

Tips to prevent/avoid receiving spam and scam messages:

- Do ask questions if you have any doubts or don't understand why a company needs to have your mobile number when you buy a service or product
- Do check incoming spam messages to see if there is an option to stop receiving future messages through an opt-out procedure
- Beware of scam messages, block them immediately and avoid giving any personal information

Tips to protect your privacy:

- Avoid saving passwords in your browser. It may make logging in faster, but also makes it easier for others to access your account
- Use strong passwords containing a combination of different characters and symbols and change them regularly to protect your accounts from unauthorized access
- Insure the safety of your personal information by adjusting your privacy settings on your social media accounts
- Do not give apps access to personal information such as web history
- Always download your apps from their original sources i.e. a genuine app store rather than a website

CONTACT US

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Consumer Complaints

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- Download Arsel – CRA Mobile App
 - For IOS <https://goo.gl/WMmLuk>
 - For Android <https://goo.gl/bfokSD>
- Online complaint's form on CRA website: www.cra.gov.qa
- Twitter official account: @CRAqatar



