



## Consumer Affairs Branch:

Helping Customers with  
Utility Bills and Service Issues

### What is the Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB)?

The California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC) Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) helps consumers with billing and service issues for privately owned California utilities that provide energy, water, and telecommunications services. CAB also assists consumers with resolving Lifeline program application denials. CAB has a dedicated team of Consumer Affairs Representatives who are ready to assist you by answering your questions and helping you resolve disputes or complaints against utility providers that are subject to CPUC authority.

### Three Steps for Resolving an Issue with a Utility



#### Call Your Utility

Before contacting CAB, we recommend that you give your utility provider an opportunity to resolve your complaint directly by contacting their customer service department. When calling your utility, keep a record of the representative’s name, the date of the call, and what was discussed.



#### If Your Utility Does Not Resolve Your Issue

If your utility is unable to resolve your dispute, or if you are dissatisfied with the resolution, you can contact CAB for assistance. A Consumer Affairs Representative will need some information to assist you, such as:

- The name the account is billed to
- Your name, if different from the account holder’s name
- The account number (especially if it is an energy account)
- Your service address
- A description of the dispute

You can contact CAB about your issue via phone by calling (800) 649-7570. Depending on the issue, CAB may be able to connect you with a special office at your utility to facilitate a resolution.



#### What to Do Next

If CAB was not able to resolve your issue over the phone, you can submit a written complaint to receive further assistance. Complaints can be submitted online, via fax, or via mail.



**ONLINE:** Please fill out and submit an online complaint form at [bit.ly/CPUCcomplaintform](https://bit.ly/CPUCcomplaintform)



**FAX:** You may fax a written complaint to (415) 703-1158



**MAIL:** You may send a written letter to:  
Consumer Affairs Branch  
505 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94102



California Public  
Utilities Commission

Consumer Affairs Branch  
505 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94102

1-800-649-7570  
M – F 8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
[consumer-affairs@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:consumer-affairs@cpuc.ca.gov)

## How Long Will It Take for My Issue to Be Resolved?

After completing a review of the complaint, CAB will contact you in writing to inform you of their conclusions. You should expect the review to take approximately 45 days.

I got my LifeLine application denial overturned by the CAB case worker, and she fixed a \$164 overcharge on my bill!

*LifeLine Customer*



## What **Can** and **Can't** the Consumer Affairs Branch Help Me With?

### ✔ Issues that CAB **CAN** help you with include:

- High bills or payment arrangements
- Abusive marketing
- Disconnection due to non-payment
- New service installations
- Service outages
- Application denials for the California LifeLine Program

### ✘ Issues that CAB **CANNOT** directly help you with include:

- Questions and complaints about municipal utilities such as SMUD, EBMUD, LADWP
- Questions and complaints about transportation companies, including Uber and Lyft
- Federal, city, or county surcharges and taxes
- Rebates
- Issues related to cable and Internet providers

I was so grateful for the professional and kind assistance.

*Verizon Customer*

Although CAB may not be able to help you with these issues, the CPUC will do its best to refer you to someone who can.

You can find additional details about areas not regulated by the CPUC by visiting [www.cpuc.ca.gov/Helpful\\_Resources](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Helpful_Resources).

