

## FILE A COMPLAINT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

City of El Paso

[www.elpasotexas.gov](http://www.elpasotexas.gov)

Code Compliance: 915-212-6048

City Planning and Inspection: 915-212-0104

Texas Legal Services Center Hotline:

800-622-2520

Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid:

888-988-9996

TX Dept. Licensing & Regulation:

800-803-9202

Adult Protective Services:

800-252-5400

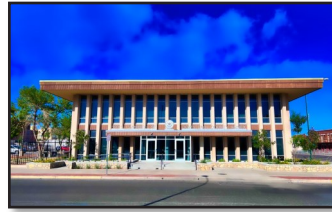


## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the El Paso County Attorney's office is to represent the County of El Paso and the State of Texas by providing high quality, cost-effective legal services in an ethical, professional and competent manner. We shall seek justice, secure the protection and safety of all people, and enhance the quality of life in our community. In doing so, we shall treat all people with dignity, respect, honesty and fairness.

## COUNTY ATTORNEY OFFICES

### Downtown



320 S. Campbell St., Suite 200  
El Paso, TX 79901  
(915) 273-3238  
M-F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

### Northwest Annex



435 E. Vinton Rd. Suite B  
Vinton, TX 79821  
(915) 886-1075  
M-F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

### Ysleta Annex



9521 Socorro Rd. Suite A-3  
El Paso, TX 79927  
(915) 858-2239  
M-F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm



## FRAUD AGAINST CONSUMERS



## Christina Sanchez El Paso County Attorney

El Paso County Attorney's Office  
County Downtown Annex  
320 S. Campbell St., Suite 200  
El Paso, Texas 79901  
Phone (915) 273-3238  
[CountyAttorney@epcountytexas.gov](mailto:CountyAttorney@epcountytexas.gov)  
[www.epcountytexas.com/CA](http://www.epcountytexas.com/CA)

## WHAT IS A DECEPTIVE BUSINESS PRACTICE (DBP)?

It is a criminal offense under the Texas Penal Code, §32.42. Offenders may be prosecuted if, in the course of business, the person intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or with criminal negligence:

- Delivers less than the purchased quantity of a property or service, or
- Makes a materially false or misleading statement about the property or service.

## WHAT CAN THE COUNTY ATTORNEY DO?

- Prosecute Deceptive Business Practice cases under the Texas Penal Code in cases of fraud or other specified misconduct.
- Advocate for the defendant to serve jail time.
- Require payment of restitution.
- Require the defendant to restore lost property to the consumer.
- Stop unlawful conduct.
- Prevent future offenses through aggressive prosecution.
- Educate the community on their rights as consumers.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

- **Request and sign a detailed, written contract that includes:**
  - ◇ Services to be performed; total agreed price and payment schedule; date of completion; any changes in writing with new price and signatures

## • Do your homework before hiring a contractor:

- ◇ Get more than one estimate and verify they can finish the work for the quoted price;
  - ◇ Consider hiring insured and bonded contractors, and ask to see proof of their bond or insurance policy;
  - ◇ Make a copy/photo of their ID;
  - ◇ Ask for and call references before you sign the contract;
  - ◇ Check with City Planning & Inspections to determine whether a city permit is needed;
  - ◇ If a permit is required, ask the contractor to obtain a permit. This will ensure the contractor is bonded and insured;
  - ◇ Plumbers, electricians and HVAC technicians must be licensed by TDLR;
  - ◇ Search for complaints filed against the company or contractor on the El Paso Better Business Bureau's website or call the County Attorney's Office, Criminal Unit;
  - ◇ Check online to see if others recommend the contractor or if there are complaints about them;
  - ◇ Check the Attorney General's website for cases against the contractor;
- NEVER make full payment before the service is complete;
  - Get signed receipts for all payments made;
  - Note the license plate number of the contractor's vehicle;
  - Document every communication you have with the contractor;
  - If you have to pay someone else to complete the work, take photos of the unfinished work and save all documents and contact information for both contractors.

## HOW TO REPORT A DECEPTIVE BUSINESS PRACTICE

### • Make a report with law enforcement:

El Paso Police Dept.	915-832-4400
El Paso Sheriff's Office	915-546-2280
Horizon City Police Dept.	915-852-1047
Clint Police Dept.	915-851-1600
Socorro Police Dept.	915-858-6983
Vinton Police Dept.	915-886-2724
Anthony Police Dept.	915-886-3838



- Request an incident number after making the report
- Follow-up on your complaint with law enforcement
- Provide law enforcement with copies of any evidence:
  - Contracts or estimates, payment receipts, photos of what work has been done, texts, emails, calls
- Call the County Attorney's Office Criminal Unit at 915-546-2050 to see if a case was received.

## FILE A COMPLAINT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

**Better Business Bureau (BBB):** 915-577-0191  
[www.bbb.org/elpaso](http://www.bbb.org/elpaso)

**Texas Attorney General:** 800-621-0508  
[www.texasattorneygeneral.gov](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov)