
PRESS RELEASE

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The consumer protection authority is investigating the terms and conditions of retirement homes

The National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP), in cooperation with government agencies, is reviewing the general terms and conditions (GTC) applied by companies operating retirement homes. The aim of the consumer protection authority is to identify whether the contracts contain terms that are unfair or unreasonably disadvantageous to consumers. During the inspection, particular attention is paid to the conditions for using the service, the amendment and termination of the contract, and the rules on liability.

Moving into a care home is typically a long-term decision for older people, which may also involve significant financial outlay. Providers usually set the terms and conditions in advance for a number of contracts, meaning that consumers have only limited influence over their content. It is important that, before entering into a contract, the parties concerned are able to understand clearly and in plain language what terms they are agreeing to, and what rights and obligations these entail for them.

The aim of the investigation is to determine whether the GTC meet the requirements for fair contract terms and do not create an unjustifiably one-sided situation to the detriment of consumers.

The NATCP and staff at government agencies also examine whether the business reserves the right to make unjustified unilateral changes to the contract or the service fee, whether it excludes or limits its own liability, and whether it provides the consumer with adequate opportunities to terminate the contract. Experts also ensure that the General Terms and Conditions do not stipulate an unreasonably short notice period for termination, nor do they restrict the consumer's right to enforce their rights through the courts or other legal means.

The NATCP attaches great importance to the protection of elderly consumers, particularly in life situations involving long-term decisions, such as moving into a retirement home. It is important that those moving into a retirement home are fully aware of their rights and the obligations they are undertaking when signing the contract, and that they are able to make their decision on the basis of clear and predictable contractual terms.

The NATCP regards it as a priority to ensure consistent and decisive consumer protection measures in its role as the national regulatory authority, particularly in situations where consumers require enhanced protection.

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National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection