

Exercise Your Rights When Joining a Health Club



Now that a new year is upon us, you may be thinking about losing weight and getting in shape. The Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation advises consumers to choose health clubs carefully and evaluate the pros and cons before signing a contract.

When selecting a health club, you should inspect the facilities, ask club members about the club, and check the club's reputation with the Better Business Bureau and Attorney General's Office.

Before signing a health club contract, read the fine print and ask the following questions:

- If the club goes out of business and I paid up front, how do I get my money back?
- Are the club's hours convenient for me to use it?
- How crowded is it when I will use it most?
- What are the instructors' qualifications?
- Does the club have CPR equipment and/or defibrillators and staff trained to use the equipment whenever the club is open?



What Happens If:

You Need to Cancel the Contract

If a health club that you recently joined is not the right fit for you, under Massachusetts law you can cancel a club contract within three days of signing. To cancel your contract, send by certified mail, return-receipt requested, or deliver in person a written notice of cancellation.

Your Health Club Closes

If your health club closes, there are some things you should do immediately:

- Contact your bank or credit card company to stop any automatic payments from being made; and
- If you paid in advance, you may be eligible to receive some of your money back. File a claim with the Attorney General's Office.

To file a complaint or a claim, contact the Attorney General's hotline at (617) 727-8400 or visit their web site at www.mass.gov/ag.

For more information about health club contracts, contact the Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation hotline at the number below or visit our web site at www.mass.gov/consumer.