



@CCoFiji



Consumer Council of Fiji



www.consumersfiji.org



Mobile App

30 October 2026

PRESS RELEASE

Traders Cautioned Against “Bait” Advertising

Traders are being warned against advertising specials without ensuring that products are available at the advertised locations throughout the promotional period.

The warning follows consumer complaints and findings from the Council’s market surveillance, which identified instances of advertised products being unavailable during promotions.

In one case, a supermarket advertised discounted food items as available at all its stores for the duration of the promotion. However, a customer who visited a store on the second day was told that the particular item was out of stock, while the other advertised item had been unavailable since the first day, with staff advising that fresh stock would arrive later that week.

In another case, Council officers visited a selected branch during the advertised promotional period to check a heavily discounted nebulizer offer. They were told that the nebulizer, along with other advertised products, was still “on its way”.

Advertising specials that shoppers cannot access can mislead consumers and raise serious concerns about bait advertising. When products are unavailable, particularly from the outset of a promotion, shoppers may waste time and incur unnecessary travel costs after making a trip specifically for an advertised offer.

With families budgeting for Diwali, traders are being urged to ensure that advertised specials are supported by adequate stock and that any restrictions on availability are clearly communicated. Consumers are also encouraged to confirm stock availability before travelling to take advantage of promotional offers.

“Consumers are entitled to expect that a product advertised at a special price is actually available in the stores and during the period stated in the advertisement,” said Council CEO Ms Seema Shandil. “Advertising a discount to draw customers in, when the product is not available in reasonable quantities or not available at all, is misleading. It also disadvantages honest traders who stock what they advertise.”

Consumers can protect themselves by calling the branch before travelling to confirm availability. Shoppers should keep a copy or screenshot of the advertisement, note the date, store and what they were told, and retain their receipt where a purchase was made. Where an

Head Office

Level 5 Vanua House
Victoria Parade GPO, Suva
Phone: 3300792/3310183
CEO: 3305864
Fax: 3300115
Email: complaints@consumersfiji.org

Lautoka/West

Suite 4 Popular Building
Vidilo Street
P.O. Box 5396, Lautoka
Phone: 6664987
Email: consumerlkt@connect.com.fj

Labasa/North

Shop 2, Mudaliar Investment
Sangam Avenue Street
P.O. Box 64, Labasa
Phone: 8812559
Email: colbs@connect.com.fj



@CCoFiji



Consumer Council of Fiji



www.consumersfiji.org



Mobile App

advertised product is not available, consumers should ask the retailer whether stock will be replenished and when, and whether an alternative or substitute can be offered at the advertised price.

“Traders should be truthful and diligent in their marketing practices. If a product is no longer available, or out of stock, the advertisement should be removed promptly or proper disclosures should be given beforehand. Consumers should not have to chase a special that is no longer there,” Ms Shandil said.

The Council will continue to monitor promotions, including during the festive season, and will refer matters to relevant authorities where warranted.

Consumers who encounter advertised products that are unavailable, misleading promotions or other unfair trading practices should contact the Council on the National Consumer Helpline on 155 or at complaints@consumersfiji.org, providing details of the advertisement, the store and the date.

Head Office

Level 5 Vanua House
Victoria Parade GPO, Suva
Phone: 3300792/3310183
CEO: 3305864
Fax: 3300115
Email: complaints@consumersfiji.org

Lautoka/West

Suite 4 Popular Building
Vidilo Street
P.O. Box 5396, Lautoka
Phone: 6664987
Email: consumerlwk@connect.com.fj

Labasa/North

Shop 2, Mudaliar Investment
Sangam Avenue Street
P.O. Box 64, Labasa
Phone: 8812559
Email: colbs@connect.com.fj