



## **Things You Should Know About...LEMON LAW**

Has this ever happened to you...

You buy a brand new car, but instead of hitting the open road in your new “dream machine,” the vehicle is constantly at the repair shop. If so, Illinois’ Lemon Law may be able to help.

### **Is My Vehicle a Lemon?**

In order to be covered by the Illinois Lemon Law, a vehicle must:

- have a nonconformity that both substantially impairs the use, market value or safety of the vehicle and is not repairable by the dealer or manufacturer in at least four attempts for the same repair, or
- be out of service for a total of 30 or more business days.

### **The Lemon Law DOES Cover:**

- New Cars (purchased or leased);
- Light Trucks and vans under 8,000 pounds;
- Recreational vehicles (excluding trailers);
- Vehicles in their first 12 months or 12,000 miles, whichever occurs first; and
- New vehicles purchased in Illinois.

### **The Lemon Law DOES NOT Cover:**

- Used Cars;
- Altered or modified vehicles; or
- Motorcycles and boats

### **How Does the Lemon Law Work?**

Manufacturers establish an Industry Third Party Dispute Resolution Program to evaluate your claim. You can find information about this program in your vehicle ownership manual. To initiate action under the Lemon Law, contact the designated manufacturer representative for your vehicle. This representative will forward the required information and forms to you.

### **Preserving Your Claim**

Lemon Law claims cannot be initiated directly through the dealer. Many consumers have lost their Lemon Law remedy because they waited longer than 12 months from the purchase date, the time period in which Lemon Law complaints must be filed, all the while believing they were proceeding under the Lemon Law through their dealer.

*Keep in mind - it is extremely important that you file with your designated representative before your right to do so has expired!*

## **Winning Your Claim**

If the Dispute Board rules in your favor, you can expect one of the following compensations:

- you will receive a replacement vehicle of like or similar value.
- the manufacturer will buy your vehicle back from you, less the value for miles driven.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the Dispute Board, you may bring a civil action to enforce your rights under this Act. The manufacturer, however, may not dispute the board's decision.

## **Other Options**

There are also other Federal and Illinois laws that deal with contracts and warranties for new products. Before deciding on a particular course of action, you are strongly urged to consult with a private attorney to discuss the various alternatives and determine the best course of action for your situation.

## **Remember- Keep Good Records!**

Keep all receipts and records concerning repairs to your vehicle. Note the purpose and date of all repairs along with the length of time your vehicle is in the shop. The records you keep will be important in winning your claim!

## **Office of the Illinois Attorney General**

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

Chicago  
(800) 386-5438

Springfield  
(800) 243-0618

Carbondale  
(800) 243-0607

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