



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 16 December 2008

'It's not You, It's Us' – Introduction Agency Breaks More than Hearts

Consumer Action Law Centre has today launched legal action on behalf of a client, a vulnerable Victorian man with an acquired brain injury. Our client seeks a refund of more than \$10,000 paid to an introductory agency that has been permanently restrained from carrying on an introduction business in Queensland.

Consumer Action solicitor, Jillian Williams, said there was a history of complaints about introduction agents, TLC Consulting, and this was not the first time Consumer Action has had to take legal action against TLC for taking advantage of a Victorian consumer.

"Our client was contacted by TLC after completing a so-called free compatibility test advertised in his local newspaper," said Ms Williams.

"Despite advising of his acquired brain injury in this test, in its unsolicited phone call TLC offered our client unlimited introductions for 6 months for a fee of \$660."

"We are instructed that TLC then made a number of phone calls to our client over the next two weeks offering to 'upgrade' his services and our client paid TLC the amounts of \$890, \$3,500, \$2,000 and \$3,000 pushing the total amount paid to over \$10,000."

"One of the upgrades promised was an 'Exclusive Makeover Package' including a trip to the Gold Coast to receive, our client instructs, was professional image consultancy, a free professional photograph, a taped video interview for emailing to potential introductions, a shopping trip with consultants and a life skills course. Our client flew to the Gold Coast for the package but says he received none of these services."

Ms Williams said that Consumer Action's claim in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal alleges that TLC Consulting is not a registered introduction agent in Victoria and has breached various requirements of the Victorian *Introduction Agents Act*.

"Our claim also alleges that TLC Consulting engaged in misleading and deceptive conduct and unconscionable conduct in taking advantage of someone with an acquired brain injury, particularly as our client informed TLC from the start about his condition."

"We are also seeking a refund for our client based on apparent breaches of telephone marketing laws."

"TLC has now been stopped from offering services to Queensland consumers and we think that Victorian consumers deserve the same protection from a company that appears to take advantage not only of vulnerable people's loneliness but also any disabilities they may have."

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