



# Matchmaking Services: Before you sign up

This publication is intended to provide general information only and is not a substitute for legal advice.

## HOW IT WORKS

There are many different types of dating or matchmaking services, both free and paid, online or in person. These services may involve creating an online profile, gaining access to the profiles of other clients, and/or being assigned a representative (“matchmaker”) who is tasked with setting up a potential date based on a client’s criteria.

## THE LAW

There are no specific requirements under Alberta’s *Consumer Protection Act* for matchmaking services; however, the act provides protection against unfair business practices in general. As with all service agreements, it is important to read carefully before signing a contract or making an online payment. Visit the Service Alberta Unfair Practices web page for more details at <http://servicealberta.ca/unfair-practices.cfm>.

If you feel a matchmaking service has engaged in an unfair practice, file a complaint with Consumer Investigations at Service Alberta. Call 780-427-4088 in Edmonton and area or 1-877-427-4088 toll-free to speak to an Information Officer or visit the Service Alberta *File a Complaint* web page at <http://servicealberta.ca/File-a-consumer-complaint.cfm>.

## TIPS

To help ensure that a matchmaking business is following fair practices, it is important to do research.

**Read the contract carefully** —always make sure you understand what you are agreeing to. If you have any doubts or something is not clear, you may want to have a lawyer review the contract first.

**Refund policy** – check to see if there is a refund policy and what the conditions of a refund may be.

**Ensure that specific requirements are detailed in the contract** — for example, if you want a matchmaker to match you only with individuals above a certain age, ensure that is written into the contract.

**Protect your information** — never disclose any sensitive personal or financial information to a matchmaking service, online dating site or questionnaire.

**Only use secure websites** — before entering payment information, look for a lock icon in the address bar and a URL that begins with “https” to ensure the site is secure.

**Check references** — if possible, talk to people who have used the same matchmaking service you are considering.

**Read online reviews** – many businesses are reviewed online—it is important to read both good and bad reviews to get the best sense of what the service success rate might be.

# CONSUMER INFOSHEET

**Better Business Bureau** – verify that the business is in good standing with the Better Business Bureau and ask if any complaints have been made against the business.

Central and Northern Alberta

Edmonton: 780-482-2341

Toll-free: 1-800-232-7298

<https://www.bbb.org/edmonton/>

Southern Alberta and East Kootenays

Toll-free in Southern Alberta: 1-800-221-6690

<https://www.bbb.org/calgary>

**Service Alberta** – check the Service Alberta website under Enforcement and Investigations at <http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/enforcement-investigations.cfm> for any administrative actions (Director's Orders, Undertakings, Administrative Penalties) that may have been issued against a business.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### SERVICE ALBERTA CONSUMER CONTACT CENTRE

780-427-4088 in Edmonton or

Toll-free in Alberta at 1-877-427-4088

Service Alberta Unfair Practices

<http://servicealberta.ca/unfair-practices.cfm>

File a consumer complaint

<http://servicealberta.ca/File-a-consumer-complaint.cfm>

