



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

Birgit Fladager
District Attorney

Assistant District Attorney
David P. Harris

Chief Deputies
Annette Rees
Marlisa Ferreira
Stephen R. Robinson
Jeffrey M. Laugero
Jeff Mangar

Bureau of Investigation
Chief Terry L. Seese

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: 3/13/2020

For More Information Contact:

Email address: consumerfraud@standa.org

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ISSUES CONSUMER ALERT ON PRICE GOUGING RELATED TO THE CORONAVIRUS DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office is working in collaboration with other County agencies to protect members of the community from being taken advantage of due to the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus. All citizens should be aware that, under Penal Code Section 396, price gouging is illegal in Stanislaus County due to the recently declared state of emergency by Governor Gavin Newsom.

District Attorney Birgit Fladager said: "The price gouging law protects people impacted by an emergency from illegal price gouging on supplies and services. We will review any complaint carefully in order to protect our citizens in this time of declared emergency."

California Penal Code Section 396 generally prohibits charging a price that exceeds, by more than 10 percent, the price of an item before a state or local declaration of emergency. This law applies to those who sell food, emergency supplies, medical supplies, gasoline, transportation, hotel accommodations, among other items and services. Violators of the price gouging statute are subject to criminal prosecution that can result in a one-year imprisonment in county jail and/or a fine of up to \$10,000. The Attorney General's Office and District Attorney's Office may enforce this statute.

There are many factors that go into evaluating whether the price gouging prohibitions have been violated. The fact that a price has increased or is greater than what other similar establishments charge is not the sole determining factor. Often there are legitimate reasons that may justify a price increase. Complaints can be made to the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office by emailing at consumerfraud@standa.org.

###

Office: 832 12th Street, Suite 300 Modesto, CA 95354 Mailing: PO BOX 442 Modesto, CA 95353
Telephone: (209) 525-5550 Fax: (209) 558-4027 www.stanislaus-da.org



<https://www.facebook.com/StanislausDistrictAttorney/>