

AG Balderas secures \$1.7 million settlement for NM consumers

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SANTA FE – Attorney General Hector Balderas announced a \$1.7 million settlement with Livingston Hearing Aid Centers, a Texas-based hearing aid retailer with locations throughout New Mexico, on March 23.

Balderas’s Consumer and Environmental Protection Division led the effort to investigate Livingston’s business practices, resulting in an agreement that distributes \$1.4 million in restitution to hundreds of defrauded consumers and secures \$300,000 worth of free hearing aids and other assistance for at-risk populations throughout the state.

“This settlement serves as a warning to others that take advantage of our most vulnerable, especially those that are poor, elderly, or who do not speak English as a first language,” Balderas said. “Retailers engaging in deceptive business practices in New Mexico will not be tolerated.”

Balderas’s office alleges that Livingston charged hidden fees, refused to accept returns, ran deceptive advertising, and falsely inflated the manufacturer’s suggested retail price of its products, thereby deceiving consumers into believing they were getting much bigger discounts than they actually received.

As part of the agreement the company admits no wrongdoing, but has agreed to injunctive terms that prohibit Livingston from engaging in this behavior in the future.

Livingston will be mailing notices to consumers who may be entitled to refunds over the next

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few months. Consumers who have purchased hearing aids from Livingston in recent years are encouraged to reach out to the Livingston location they purchased from to ensure that their mailing address is up to date.