

Consumer Affairs imposes first sanctions for "false sales" in the middle of the summer sales campaign

90,000 euros in fines against two online retail operators for misleading sales and proceedings opened against six other companies with proposed fines of more than half a million euros.

Madrid, 9 August 2024. The Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and Agenda 2030 has imposed penalties amounting to 90,000 euros on two large online retail operators for offering misleading sales during the last "[Black Friday](#)" campaign, which consists of offering significant sales during the last weekend of November. In addition, the Ministry has opened proceedings against six other large operators for also offering misleading sales in their online sales, with a proposed penalty of more than half a million euros. The fraudulent practice carried out by the companies consisted of raising the price of different products before Black Friday and then lowering them to their original price, which, according to the Ministry, is an infringement of article 20 of the Law on the Regulation of Retail Trade.

These sanctions follow the investigation carried out by the Directorate General for Consumer Affairs -part of the Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and Agenda 2030- that monitored more than 1,000 products daily using the European Commission's "Price Reduction Tool". Among the conclusions obtained, 60% of the companies investigated committed this fraudulent practice and that fraud was performed in more than 20% of the products analysed.

The Ministry points out that the Law on the Regulation of Retail Trade establishes that, when an item is offered, the previous price must be shown and that this price must be the lowest price that would have been applied to that item in the previous thirty days, so that the consumer can make a correct comparison of the price of the item without and with a discount. For this reason, and on the basis of this regulation, as well as Article 47 of the General Law for the Defence of Consumers and Users, Consumer Affairs considers that "false discounts" are unfair practices that can be classified as serious infringements and carry fines of up to €100,000, an amount that can be exceeded up to four to six times the illicit profit obtained.

In addition to the investigation carried out during the last "Black Friday", the Directorate General for Consumer Affairs continues to monitor new products during the current summer sales campaign with the same objective: to detect new "false sales" and in the event that new irregularities are detected, to initiate the necessary actions and impose the appropriate sanctions in order to ensure compliance with the regulations and the protection of consumers' rights.

Source of information: [Ministerio de Derechos sociales, Consumo y Agenda 2030](#)