



Better Business Bureau®
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BBB issues alert concerning Investors Union LLC dba Annuity Service Center

Annuity Service sent out millions of postcards nationally to anyone who meets the "profile" of an annuity policyholder, particularly senior citizens. The postcard was intended to be a lead generation device. The company targeted individuals that may be longtime holders of annuities and offered to review their contracts with an agent located in the recipients' area.

The postcard that was mailed nationally stated, "This notice is to inform you that you *may have* an annuity that has reached the end of its surrender period." Laws in Ohio and North Carolina demanded specific disclaimers to appear on the cards. In September 2005, Annuity Service Center modified their postcards to include a disclosure statement that if the consumer does not have an annuity, he or she should disregard the mailer.

In a letter signed by Mr. Peter Bonnell on January 3, 2008, the BBB was informed that "Due to circumstances beyond the company's control, Investors Union, LLC and the Cold Solution™ marketing program have ceased operations."

The BBB has received a large number of complaints from consumers across the country alleging that Annuity Service Center's postcard is misleading and deceptive. The BBB also received complaints from independent agents that purchased the leads stating they did not receive the quality of leads they were promised.

The BBB also received numerous requests from various state Attorney General Offices and Department of Insurance requesting information on Investor Union, LLC.

- On August 28, 2006, the Ohio Department of Insurance issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing to Investors Union LLC to respond to allegations of using unfair and deceptive insurance trade practices in soliciting annuity business in Ohio. Investors Union LLC had until September 22, 2006, to request a hearing.
- In December 2005, the Kansas Department of Insurance issued a Cease and Desist Order for Investors Union LLC, for soliciting the sale of insurance without the necessary license and misleading advertising.
- In February 2006, the State of Utah Department of Insurance issued a Cease and Desist Order for Investors Union LLC to stop soliciting or advertising insurance or attempting to obtain leads for the sale of insurance to residents of the State of Utah.
- On August 14, 2006, the Missouri Department of Insurance announced it had ordered Investors Union LLC to prove that it was in compliance with the insurance laws in Missouri or be shut down. Investors Union LLC had 15 days to request a hearing to respond to the order. If the company elected not to request a hearing, the Missouri Department of Insurance would order Investor Union LLC to stop related business practices and pay a fine or forfeiture for its unlawful practices.
- On August 22, 2006, the Delaware Department of Insurance filed a complaint stating that the firm may be engaging in an unfair trade practice under Delaware law, and a hearing was set for September 13, 2006.

The BBB continues to receive complaints and the company continues to respond to them even after the company has ceased operations. Currently, **Annuity Service Center** has an unsatisfactory rating with the BBB due to a pattern of complaints. Although the company resolves the complaints, it has failed to correct the underlying reason for them. A copy of the company's report can be obtained online at <http://www.akronbbb.org> or by contacting our office at 330-253-4590.

Before doing business with any new company, the Better Business Bureau encourages consumers to check our reliability reports by calling 330.253.4590, or visit us online at www.akronbbb.org.