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DELL ENTERS AGREEMENT WITH WYOMING FOR DECEPTIVE FINANCING PRACTICES

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – Wyoming Attorney General Bruce A. Salzburg announced today that one of the world's largest computer companies, Dell, Inc., has agreed to pay $25,000 to Wyoming residents who experienced problems with the company's financing and customer service practices.

The Texas-based company was accused of failing to honor rebates or financing promotions, such as zero percent financing for the next 18 months, and charging consumers extraneous fees on incorrectly invoiced or damaged products.

This agreement is designed to provide some relief to Wyoming consumers who were wronged by Dell's practices. It also provides Dell with guidelines meant to promote clear communication with consumers and prompt resolution to customers' concerns.

As part of the settlement, Dell agreed to:

- Disclose in advertisements for promotional credit offers that the majority of consumers who apply won't qualify for the best annual percentage rate (APR), and

disclose the range of initial APRs that consumers who are not considered the "most qualified borrowers" are likely to receive.

- Explain how finance charges are calculated, disclose any penalties and inform the consumer whether subsequent purchases made using the credit account will be subject to the same or different financing terms.
- Mail rebates within the specified timeframe, or within 30 days if no date is specified.
- Implement written policies to ensure compliance with the settlement, including procedures that address issues, such as:
    - Communication between Dell and Dell Financial Services when a consumer returns a product purchased with credit.
    - Removing consumer accounts from collection agencies and providing accurate information to credit reporting bureaus.
- Substantiate any claims Dell makes about the quality of its customer service. Dell can use the term "award-winning" to describe its customer service only if the company received such an award within the past 18 months.

Wyoming's agreement is on the heels of a settlement between Dell and 34 attorneys general from other states. Terms of Wyoming's agreement mirror that of the multistate agreement announced January 12.

Wyoming consumers may be eligible for restitution if they made a purchase from Dell between April 1, 2005, and January 12, 2009 and experienced one or more of the following:

- a problem with a Dell financing offer
- a problem with a Dell rebate
- a problem with Dell financing
- a problem with a Dell repair, warranty, or servicing.

Consumers must file a claim with the Wyoming Attorney General's Office prior to April 13, 2009, and meet specific criteria outlined in the agreement in order to be considered for compensation.

Evaluation of claimant eligibility and distribution of Wyoming's $25,000 settlement will be overseen by the Wyoming Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. In the event that eligible claims exceed $25,000, a prorated distribution will be considered. If claims do not exceed $25,000, the balance will be deposited into the state's general fund.

For more information, please contact Wyoming Attorney General's Office at 307-777-5833 or visit the website http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/consumer.htm.

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