



# REPORT PRICE GOUGING

As the state of California and San Diego County continue to respond to the ongoing threat posed by COVID-19, the San Diego County District Attorney's Office is warning businesses and scammers not to take advantage of consumers by price gouging. **During a declared state of emergency, it is illegal for a business to increase its prices for essential goods or services by more than 10 percent, unless they can show their own costs have been increased.**

## LEGAL CONSEQUENCES



Violations of the price gouging statute are subject to criminal prosecution that can result in **one-year imprisonment** in county jail and/or a **fine of up to \$10,000**. Violations are also subject to civil enforcement actions including **civil penalties of up to \$5,000 per violation**, injunctive relief and mandatory restitution.

## PROTECTED PRODUCTS



The law applies to several products and necessities including: **food and drink** (including food and drink for animals); **emergency supplies** such as water, flashlights, radios, batteries, candles, blankets, soaps, diapers, toiletries; and **medical supplies** such as prescription and nonprescription medications, bandages, gauze, isopropyl alcohol, and antibacterial products.

## HOTELS AND MOTELS



It is also a **misdemeanor** for a hotel or motel to increase regular rates by more than **10 percent** during a declared emergency and for the **30 days** following the state of emergency.

Report suspected price gouging to the  
**District Attorney's  
Consumer Protection Unit  
(619) 531-3507**

Report online price gouging on:  
**<https://oag.ca.gov/report>**

More resources at:

[www.SanDiegoDA.com](http://www.SanDiegoDA.com)  
[www.DAnewsCenter.com](http://www.DAnewsCenter.com)

