

CMA statement on sales and pricing practices during Coronavirus outbreak

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) wants to ensure that traders do not exploit the current situation to take advantage of people.

It will consider any evidence that companies may have broken competition or consumer protection law, for example by charging excessive prices or making misleading claims about the efficacy of protective equipment. And it will take direct enforcement action in appropriate cases.

In addition, the CMA will assess whether it should advise Government to consider taking direct action to regulate prices.

CMA Chairman Lord Tyrie said:

“We will do whatever we can to act against rip-offs and misleading claims, using any or all of our tools; and where we can’t act, we’ll advise government on further steps they could take, if necessary.”

CMA Chief Executive Andrea Coscelli said:

“We urge retailers to behave responsibly throughout the coronavirus outbreak and not to make misleading claims or charge vastly inflated prices. We also remind members of the public that these obligations may apply to them too if they resell goods, for example on online marketplaces.”