



PUBLIC INQUIRY UNIT
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January 16, 2025

The California Attorney General's Office has received a report alleging potential rental price gouging at your hotel or motel. Price gouging is a criminal offense, and we take reports about price gouging very seriously. Although we make no assumption as to the truth of the allegations, we are sending this letter to make you aware of the report, and to place you on notice of California's anti-price gouging laws.

The Governor has declared a state of emergency that has triggered the price gouging protections of Penal Code section 396 for hotel and motel accommodations. These protections generally prohibit raising the price of hotel and motel accommodations by more than 10 percent of the price charged prior to the emergency.

Violators of Section 396 are subject to criminal prosecution that can result in a one-year imprisonment in county jail and/or a fine of up to \$10,000. Violators are also subject to civil enforcement actions including civil penalties of up to \$5,000 per violation, injunctive relief, and mandatory restitution.

You should be aware that we do not directly represent the complaining consumer in this instance. Similarly, because we are prohibited by law from representing individuals, we cannot provide you with legal advice about how California's price gouging prohibitions affect you or your business. If you have questions that are not answered by reviewing the text of the order and statute, we recommend that you contact your own attorney.

Emergency declarations issued by the Governor are generally available on the Governor's website at <https://gov.ca.gov>.

For your reference, you can also find general information regarding price gouging during emergencies at <https://www.oag.ca.gov/consumers/pricegougingduringdisasters>.

Sincerely,
Public Inquiry Unit

For

ROB BONTA
Attorney General