

SBI Canada Bank

Coercive Tied Selling

As per Section 459.1 of the *Bank Act*, “A bank shall not impose undue pressure on, or coerce, a person to obtain a product or service from a particular person, including the bank and any of its affiliates, as a condition for obtaining another product or service from the bank”.

If you qualify for a product or service, no employee of SBI Canada Bank, hereinafter referred to as the “Bank” and “SBIC”, will unduly pressurize you to buy another unwanted product or service as a pre-condition for obtaining the product or service desired by you.

Examples of coercive tied selling

- a. Your (the “customer”) bank’s representative advises you that you qualify for a residential mortgage. However, the bank’s representative also tells you that the bank will approve your residential mortgage only on the condition that you would purchase a RRSP from the bank. You desire the residential mortgage, but you do not want to purchase the RRSP.
- b. The banks’ loan officer tells you that you qualify for Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC). However, the loan officer also tells you that he will approve the HELOC loan only if you invest the loan proceeds in bank’s non-redeemable GICs. You want the HELOC loan, but you do not want to invest in GICs. You wish to use the HELOC proceeds for buying a property.

The selling practice quoted in the above-mentioned examples is against the law. If a customer qualifies for a product or service, no employee of SBIC is allowed to excessively pressurize the customer to buy another unwanted product or service as a pre-condition for obtaining the desired product or service.

What is NOT coercive tied selling?

Many businesses look for selling practices to show interest in their customer’s business and appreciate customer’s loyalty. Some sales practices, like “preferential pricing” and “bundling of products and services”, may offer customers better prices or improved terms. These practices do not amount to coercive tied selling, as defined by the *Bank Act*.

- **Examples of Preferential Pricing**

- a. A customer buys a pair of shoes from a shoe store. The store offers the second pair at half the price and the third pair at quarter the price.

- b. A customer obtains internet services from a service provider. The service provider offers a discounted rate if the customer takes a “bundle package” that includes internet, cable, and phone.

Similarly, if a customer utilizes more of its products and services, a bank may offer them “preferential pricing” in the form of a higher interest rate on investments or a lower interest rate on loans or lower fee for product and services.

- **Examples of Bundling of Products and Services**

- a. “After approval” of a residential mortgage, a bank’s representative tells the customer that a lower interest rate could be offered if the customer transfers his GIC investments to the bank.
- b. “After approval” of a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC), a bank’s loan officer offers the customer a better rate if the customer places a part of the loan proceeds as non-redeemable GICs with the bank.

Both the above practices are acceptable. The approval of the residential mortgage and the approval of the HELOC loan were not conditional to buying any other product or service. The bank has offered better pricing only to encourage the customer to give more business to the bank. This practice will not amount to Coercive Tied Selling, as defined by the *Bank Act*.

SBIC may offer its customers bundled financial services or products so that the customers can take advantage of packaged prices that are less than the sum of the individual items. Bundling products is permitted because the customer has the choice of buying the items individually or in a package. This practice will not amount to Coercive Tied Selling, as defined by the *Bank Act*.

Example

A bank offers two types of accounts.

- A savings account that has no monthly fee but charges \$1.00 for each transaction. If desired by the client, an ABM card could be issued for an annual fee of \$20. Other services provided by the Bank are offered at their published rates.
- A premium saving account that charges a maintenance fee of \$25.00 but offers unlimited number of transactions, a debit card with no annual fee, and offers a discount on other products and services offered by the Bank.

Depending on the financial needs of the client, the account with maintenance fee might be more cost effective for the client.

Similarly, SBIC may require its clients to meet certain requirements and agree to certain term and conditions for obtaining credit products such as mortgages or personal loans. In such cases, the Bank will ensure that the eligibility requirements and the

terms and conditions would only be obligatory to the extent necessary for the Bank to manage its credit risk. As defined by the Bank Act, obligations required from borrowers for management of credit risk by a bank do not amount to coercive tied selling.

Complaint and Concerns

- a. If a customer believes or experiences that he is being unduly pressurized by an employee of SBIC for buying an unwanted product or service, the customer can raise his/her concerns or submit a complaint.
- b. SBI Canada Bank encourages its customers to raise their concerns about coercive tied selling with the concerned Branch or office where they conduct their business. The Branch Head is a senior functionary who is equipped to deal with most of the customer concerns.
- c. If the customer's concern regarding coercive tied selling is not resolved to the satisfaction of the customer at the Branch level, the customer can escalate the concern to Bank's Complaints Handling Officer at the following address:

Complaints Handling Officer

SBI Canada Bank

77 City Centre Drive, Suite# 106

Mississauga, L5B1M5

Phone: 905-896-6540 (Ex 6566)

Fax: 905-896-6545

Email: complaint_handling_officer@sbicanada.com

Toll free: 1-866-724-2669

- d) If despite the Bank's best efforts, the concern about coercive tied-selling remains unresolved to the satisfaction of the customer, the customer can contact the Ombudsman For Banking Services and Investments at the following address:

Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments (OBSI)

20 Queen Street West, Suite 2400

P.O. Box 8

Toronto, ON M5H 3R3

Phone (Toll-free): 1 888 451-4519

Phone (Greater Toronto Area): 416 287-2877

Teletypewriter (TTY): 1 855 TTY-OBSI (1 855 889-6274)

Fax (Toll-free): 1 888 422-2865

Fax (Greater Toronto Area): 416 225-4722

Email: ombudsman@obsi.ca

Website: obsi.ca

e) The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (FCAC)

If, after contacting the Bank, the customer remains concerned about a possible breach of legislation, the customer may also contact FCAC at the following address:

Financial Consumer Agency of Canada
427 Laurier Avenue West, 6th Floor
Ottawa ON K1R 1B9

Phone (English): 1-866-461-FCAC (3222)
Phone (French) : 1-866-461-ACFC (2232)
Teletypewriter (TTY): 1-866-914-6097 / 613-947-7771
Fax: 1 866 814 2224
Email: info@fcac-acsc.gc.ca
Website: www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca

=====XXX=====

If you have any suggestions or comments to improve the clarity of this document, please send your feedback at: suggestions@sbicanada.com