



Safeguard
Properties

The Regulatory Environment and its Impact on Safeguard Vendors





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Objectives of this course:

- ❖ To increase your awareness of the highly regulated environment in which Safeguard and its vendors operate
- ❖ To discuss the following:
 - ❖ Proper consumer complaint reporting
 - ❖ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - ❖ Non-discrimination
 - ❖ Fair Debt Collections Practices (FDCPA)
 - ❖ Unfair Deceptive or Abusive Acts/Practice (UDAAP)
 - ❖ False Claims Act (FCA)
 - ❖ Information Security



The Regulatory Environment

Companies in the U.S., including Safeguard, are subject to rules and regulations that dictate their actions under a number of circumstances. A few instances of this can include:

- ❖ Resolving consumer concerns
- ❖ Operating with integrity and reporting things accurately to clients and government agencies
- ❖ Securing confidential information
- ❖ Hiring in a fair and equitable fashion
- ❖ Operating with honesty

To make sure that you and your company are always operating according to the rules while performing work for Safeguard and its clients, keep the following items in mind.



Consumer Complaints

All complaints that you receive while performing work for Safeguard must be reported to the customer service line at Ext. 2158. (Note: Please do not contact this line for work order questions, as they will be unable to assist.)

A complaint is defined as an occurrence when a customer, individual, or group expresses dissatisfaction with a client's products, services, and/or business practices -- whether verbally, in writing, or through client-sponsored social media outlets. This includes complaints against products and services that a third-party provider performs on the client's behalf.



Consumer Complaints

In short, a “Consumer Complaint” is any complaint regarding in-scope services Safeguard (and its vendors) provided, or should have provided. If you receive, or become aware of any complaint by any party relating to the work you are performing, work that has been done, work that has not been done, or any other issue directly related to a Safeguard-serviced property, ensure it is report to customer service who will track and resolve.



Consumer Complaints

All of these examples are tracked and reported to our clients:

- ❖ A mortgagor calls a vendor and alleges that the vendor's sub-contractors stole personal property.
- ❖ The neighbor of a property serviced by Safeguard sends an e-mail to a vendor indicating that the grass is overgrown at the property.
- ❖ The neighbor of a property serviced by Safeguard calls a vendor to indicate that vandalism has occurred at the property.
- ❖ A mortgagor e-mails a vendor indicating that she has been improperly locked out of her home.



ADA and Non-Discrimination

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has been in place since 1990. Its overall purpose is to make American society more accessible to people with disabilities. The ADA's protection applies primarily, but not exclusively, to individuals who meet the ADA's definition of disability:

An individual has a disability if he or she:

- ❖ Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his or her major life activities;
- ❖ Has a record of such an impairment; or
- ❖ Is regarded as having such an impairment.



To remain in compliance with the ADA and the guidelines set forth by Safeguard's clients, the following should be adhered to –

Do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of your activities or operations.



Service providers are legally required to refrain from deceptive or abusive acts or practices (referred to as the UDAAP.) In brief, this prohibits misrepresentations or omissions that affect choices made by consumers, because such misrepresentations are likely to cause consumer harm. To remain in compliance with this:

- ❖ Refer all bank program and loan agreement questions to the client.
- ❖ Never make false, deceptive, or misleading statements to the mortgagor.
- ❖ Never share confidential information.
- ❖ Always act with integrity.



The Fair Debt Collection Practice Act, sometimes known as the FDCPA, is a law that was created to protect consumer rights by preventing abusive practices in the collection of consumer debts, and provide a mechanism to consumers to disagree with, and obtain validation of, debt information.

As Safeguard is not in the business of debt collection, you should never represent your company as such while performing work for Safeguard.

- ❖ Refer all questions related to fees and collection back to the client.
- ❖ Refer all bank program and loan agreement questions to the client.
- ❖ Never make reference to debt collection.



False Claims Act

The False Claims Act is a federal law that assesses liability on anyone who knowingly submits to the government false claims or billings.

What the False Claims Act means to you:

- ❖ Submitting incorrect or intentionally misleading information which may be used to obtain reimbursement from any government agency or sponsored entity (e.g., Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, HUD, VA) may result in fines or criminal penalties.
- ❖ Never submit work order results or reports that contain false, incomplete, or inaccurate information.
- ❖ If you have knowledge of any representative making false claims, immediately report the incident to Vendor Management or the Safeguard Hotline at 855-271-2686.



The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, sometimes called the SCRA, restricts foreclosures and rental evictions of service members and their dependents. The SCRA applies to all members of the United States military on active duty.

What the SCRA means to you

- ❖ You may become aware of property owners or tenants that are service members. You need to communicate this information to Safeguard so that we can inform our clients.
- ❖ Safeguard's obligation is to report the information to the client. Only our clients can determine if the protection provided by SCRA applies for a specific property.



Information Security

Information security is of critical importance to Safeguard and our clients. As a Safeguard vendor you must keep all information sent to you by Safeguard, or retrieved from Safeguard, confidential and secure. Ensure you and your staff follow these rules:

❖ Know your confidential data!

- ❖ Confidential data includes names, addresses, loan numbers and lenders, and should be protected.

❖ Protect your access!

- ❖ Make sure that you do not share your user id's or passwords with others. This applies to your own system passwords and accounts.

❖ Passwords for your systems!

- ❖ Use complex passwords w/alpha, numeric, special characters and a minimum of eight characters. Change them every 90 days. Use a password vault and do not write them down.

❖ Anti-Virus and Firewall programs.

- ❖ Use these programs and keep these programs updated with the latest virus definitions and firewall updates.

❖ Patching and Updates.

- ❖ Keep your computers and mobile device operating systems up to date, and don't forget to patch those mobile devices.



Information Security

- ❖ **Encrypt Your Drives**
 - ❖ Keep your system secured by encrypting your hard drives on computers and laptops. Programs include Bitlocker (included with Windows OS) and True Crypt.
- ❖ **Shred, Shred, Shred!**
 - ❖ Shred any and all paper documents that contain confidential data! It is recommended to use a confetti cut shredder.
- ❖ **Physical Security.**
 - ❖ Access to your business office or work area must be protected. This includes physical access to your systems and backup media.
- ❖ **Communication is sacred.**
 - ❖ Electronic communication, including emails, text messages, voice mail, and telephone conversations must be protected. Make sure the website you are visiting uses SSL (secure sockets layer) if you are transferring confidential data, or that your email uses TLS (transport layer security) to be secure.
 - ❖ If someone calls you and asks for information, you should first validate who they are before giving them that information.
- ❖ **Use common sense.**
 - ❖ When evaluating situations, ask yourself, “What is the worst that can happen?”, and then realize that it could happen. Our job is to decrease the risk of those unknowns that may cause an issue.

Report security breaches and data theft to Safeguard immediately.

Email security@safeguardproperties.com



Summary

Safeguard, and its vendors, operate in a highly regulated environment. For this reason, it's critical that you:

- ❖ Report all consumer complaints promptly to Safeguard.
- ❖ Always provide accurate updates and invoices reflective of the entirety of work completed at any property.
- ❖ Never accept, or offer, bribes or kickbacks.
- ❖ Report any form of fraud immediately.
- ❖ Keep all information provided by or retrieved from Safeguard secure and confidential.
- ❖ Avoid any reference to debts owed, or debt collection activity.

If you have any questions, or are unclear on how any of these items apply to you, please contact your VAM, Credentialer, or Vendor Management immediately.



Report any unethical behavior by a Safeguard vendor or staff by utilizing the following:

1-855-662-SAFE (1-855-662-7233)

[SAFEHOTLINE.COM](https://www.safehotline.com)

Company ID: **4523333536**