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## **State orders Eugene pawnbroker to cease illegal operations**

*Business was unlicensed, charged higher-than-allowed interest rates*

(Eugene) — The Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) issued an administrative enforcement order against a Eugene pawnbroker to cease and desist violating Oregon pawnbroker laws. The department issued the order against Your Place, on Franklin Boulevard in Eugene, for operating without a license, charging higher-than-allowed interest rates, and for refusing inspections by state and local law enforcement.

Oregon law requires that pawnbrokers obtain a license before engaging in business in the state. According to the Secretary of State's Oregon Corporations Division, three other businesses besides Your Place list the same Franklin Boulevard address as their primary place of business: B&E Consignments Inc., Fast Cash International Inc., and Barkley's International; none of these businesses are licensed pawnbrokers.

In addition to operating without a license, the order alleges that Your Place was charging its clients interest rates ranging from 171 percent to more than 1,333 percent per year. By law, Oregon pawnbrokers are allowed to charge a maximum interest rate of 36 percent per year.

Pawnbrokers also are required to allow local law enforcement or state examiners to conduct routine inspections without obtaining a court order or search warrant. These inspections, especially important when a business is handling firearms, allow stolen property to be readily identified and returned to the rightful owner. The order alleges that Your Place deals in firearms and, on multiple occasions, has refused to allow inspections by the Lane County Sheriff, the Eugene Police Department, and examiners from the department's Division of Finance and Corporate Securities.

"We prefer to work with businesses to help bring them into compliance with our laws," said David Tatman, DFCS administrator. "However, when a business refuses to comply or cooperate with the law, it is our duty to take action."

"We appreciate the cooperation and assistance of the Lane County Sheriff and the Eugene Police Department in helping us investigate the activities of this illegal pawnshop," Tatman said. "Their assistance protects consumers who use pawnbroker services as well as the businesses that are licensed, inspected, or examined and that are trying to provide a needed service in the community."

The Department of Consumer and Business Services is Oregon's largest business regulatory and consumer protection agency and is responsible for enforcing the Oregon Pawnbrokers Act. A

list of licensed pawnbrokers can be found at  
[http://www.cbs.state.or.us/dfcs/pb/pawnbrokers\\_by\\_city.html](http://www.cbs.state.or.us/dfcs/pb/pawnbrokers_by_city.html).

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