



# Anticompetitive Practices

[Home](#) / [Enforcement](#)

## Enforcement

[Cases and Proceedings](#)

[Premerger Notification Program](#)

[Merger Review](#)

**[Anticompetitive Practices](#)**

[Rulemaking](#)

[Statutes](#)

[Competition and Consumer Protection Guidance Documents](#)

[Warning Letters](#)

[Consumer Sentinel Network](#)

[Criminal Liaison Unit](#)

[FTC Refund Programs](#)

[Notices of Penalty Offenses](#)

[Competition Matters Blog](#)

The FTC takes action to stop and prevent unfair business practices that are likely to reduce competition and lead to higher prices, reduced quality or levels of service, or less innovation. Anticompetitive practices include activities like [price fixing](#), group boycotts, and exclusionary exclusive dealing contracts or trade association rules, and are generally grouped into two types:

- agreements between competitors, also referred to as horizontal conduct
- monopolization, also referred to as single firm conduct

The FTC generally pursues anticompetitive conduct as violations of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, which bans “unfair methods of competition” and “unfair or deceptive acts or practices.”

Horizontal Conduct	Single Firm Conduct
<p>It is illegal for businesses to act together in ways that can limit competition, lead to higher prices, or hinder other businesses from entering the market. The FTC challenges unreasonable horizontal restraints of trade. Such agreements may be considered unreasonable when competitors interact to such a degree that they are no longer acting independently, or when collaborating gives competitors the ability to wield market power together. Certain acts are considered so harmful to competition that they are almost always illegal. These include arrangements to fix prices, divide markets, or rig bids.</p> <p>For more information, check out <a href="#">Dealings with Competitors</a>.</p>	<p>It is unlawful for a company to monopolize or attempt to monopolize trade, meaning a firm with market power cannot act to maintain or acquire a dominant position by excluding competitors or preventing new entry. It is important to note that it is not illegal for a company to have a monopoly, to charge “high prices,” or to try to achieve a monopoly position by aggressive methods. A company violates the law only if it tries to maintain or acquire a monopoly through unreasonable methods.</p> <p>To learn more, read <a href="#">Single Firm Conduct</a>.</p>

## Search Cases

Use our [Advanced Search page](#) to find a specific antitrust case. To see all antitrust cases, select “Competition” in the mission field. To see a specific type of competition case, select from the list of available topics in the competition topics field.

## Competition Statutes

The primary statutes governing the FTC’s competition mission include:

- [FTC Act](#)
- Sherman Act
  - [Section 1](#) [↗](#)
  - [Section 2](#) [↗](#)
- [Clayton Act](#)

## Guidelines

- [Antitrust Guidelines for Collaborations Among Competitors](#) [↗](#)
- [Statements of Antitrust Enforcement Policy in Health Care](#) [↗](#)
- [Antitrust Guidelines for the Licensing of Intellectual Property](#) [↗](#)
- [Guides for Advertising Allowances and other Merchandising Payments and Services – “Fred Meyer Guides”](#)

## Competition Advisory Opinions

The FTC provides guidance concerning proposed conduct in the form of advisory opinions. The process starts with a request for advice from the party proposing the conduct. Many advisory opinions are rendered by Bureau of Competition staff, and often involve issues in the health care field. Commission advisory opinions are voted on by the Commission and are intended to address substantial or novel questions of fact or law, or subjects of significant interest.

FTC staff provides [practical guidance](#) for those who may want to request an advisory opinion. You also can review all previous [advisory opinions](#), and filter them using the “Antitrust/Competition” tag.



### Enforcement

- [Cases and Proceedings](#)
- [Premerger Notification Program](#)
- [Merger Review](#)
- [Anticompetitive Practices](#)**
- [Rulemaking](#)
- [Statutes](#)
- [Competition and Consumer Protection Guidance Documents](#)
- [Warning Letters](#)
- [Consumer Sentinel Network](#)
- [Criminal Liaison Unit](#)
- [FTC Refund Programs](#)
- [Notices of Penalty Offenses](#)
- [Competition Matters Blog](#)

### Policy

- [Advocacy and Research](#)
- [Advisory Opinions](#)
- [Cooperation Agreements](#)
- [Federal Register Notices](#)
- [Reports](#)
- [Public Comments](#)
- [Studies](#)
- [Testimony](#)
- [Policy Statements](#)
- [International](#)
- [Office of Technology Blog](#)

### Advice and Guidance

- [Consumer Advice](#)
- [Military Consumer](#)
- [Consumer.gov](#)
- [Business Guidance](#)
- [Competition Guidance](#)
- [Bulk Publications](#)

### News and Events

- [News](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Features](#)
- [Topics](#)
- [Data and Visualizations](#)
- [Contests](#)
- [Stay Connected](#)

### About the FTC

- [Mission](#)
- [History](#)
- [Commissioners and Staff](#)
- [Bureaus and Offices](#)
- [Budget and Strategy](#)
- [Office of Inspector General](#)
- [Careers at the FTC](#)
- [Contact](#)