

My name is Stephen Pettengill of Portland, Oregon. In September 2016, my girlfriend's father began having healthcare issues. We needed to help her father make decisions about moving to a senior community. We were weighing the advantages and disadvantages of dad staying in California, where he lives, or moving closer to us. Since I have a background in gerontology, I was tasked with the job of researching options in both areas. I also wanted to gather information about Veteran's benefits.

Like most of us, I began searching the internet for information. I found several listings of individual senior community websites. When I called some of the community phone numbers, instead of reaching the community, I was connected to an online finding service.

I responded to a listing that said, "194 Assisted Living Facilities Near Portland, Or." I entered my zip code, expecting to get a list of communities. Instead, a pop-up box told me someone would call me.

I then received a call from someone at a lead service; I think it was Caring.com I explained I was just gathering information. The representative asked several questions and told me she'd get back to me with a list of communities.

The representative did not explain the process or what would happen next. I did not, to my knowledge, sign an agreement or give permission to have my information shared.

Over the next few days I was inundated with emails and phone calls from senior living sales people. My contact information and details had been shared with them from the online finding service. I did not receive the promised list from the representative.

All I wanted was information. I expected a list so I could explore on my own. Instead, my time was infringed on by responding to calls and emails. I lost control of the process. I found this experience frustrating and deceitful – not helpful.

Finally, I wrote a cease and desist letter asking to be taken off the list. I asked to be released from any claim they had on my name or contact information. I was not interested in having them represent me.