



**Australian
Competition &
Consumer
Commission**

To service or not to service: vehicles under warranty

If you are an independent repairer, a customer might ask you if they'll be voiding their warranty if you service their car. This article should help you answer their question.

The answer depends on the type of warranty.

Warranties offered by vehicle manufacturers

Vehicle manufacturers may offer warranties against defects, commonly called **manufacturer's warranties**, and also **extended warranties**.

A manufacturer's warranty is where the vehicle manufacturer promises consumers that:

- the vehicle will be free from defects for a certain period of time
- defects will entitle the consumer to repair, replacement, refund or other compensation.

Extended warranties extend the coverage provided in the original manufacturer's warranty.

The manufacturer's warranty may set out requirements that consumers must comply with. For example, it may require the consumer to ensure any servicing is carried out:

- by qualified staff
- according to the manufacturer's specification
- using appropriate quality parts where required.

Provided you service the vehicle in accordance with any such requirements, the warranty will remain valid. If the manufacturer's warranty states that the vehicle can only be serviced by an authorised dealer, this is likely to raise concerns under the Competition and Consumer Act.

The service logbook or manufacturer's warranty documents for some vehicles appear to require that the servicer:

- is an 'authorised dealer' or 'authorised service department'
- stamps the logbook with an authorised dealer's stamp, and/or
- fits only genuine manufacturer's parts.

Even if the logbook or manufacturer's warranty documents contain these requirements, you can sign or stamp the relevant page of the customer's service logbook—once you have completed the service—without affecting the manufacturer's warranty.

Warranties offered by dealers

Motor vehicle dealers sometimes offer their own extended warranties on new vehicles. These usually kick in at the completion of the manufacturer's warranty (discussed above).

A common requirement of these warranties is that the vehicle must be serviced by the dealer offering the warranty. If this is a requirement of a dealer's extended warranty, an independent repairer will void the warranty if they service the vehicle.

For more information, contact the ACCC Small business helpline on 1300 302 021 or visit www.accc.gov.au.