

**558.71 Civil liabilities.**

1. A contract purchaser injured by a violation of section 558.70 may within one year of the execution of the contract bring an equitable action in the district court of record where the real estate is located to obtain relief as follows:

a. The court may rescind a contract that remains in existence at the time the action is commenced, and award restitution to the contract purchaser determined in accordance with the standards for damages specified in paragraph "b".

b. If the contract has been terminated by any means prior to commencement of the action, the contract purchaser may recover a money judgment against the original contract seller for a sum equal to all amounts the contract purchaser paid to the contract seller, plus the reasonable value of any improvements to the real estate made by the contract purchaser, plus any other proximately caused or incidental damages, less the fair rental value of the real estate for the period of time the contract purchaser was in possession of the real estate. For the purposes of this paragraph, the fair rental value of the real estate shall be based on the fair rental value of the real estate as of the date the real estate installment sales contract was executed by all parties to the contract.

2. A contract purchaser alleging a violation of section 558.70 bears the burden of establishing such violation by a preponderance of the evidence.

3. An order of rescision or a money judgment awarded shall not affect any rights or responsibilities arising from any conveyance or encumbrance made by either the contract purchaser or the contract seller prior to the filing of a lis pendens in the action in which such relief is sought, unless it is established by clear and convincing evidence that the recipient of such conveyance or encumbrance had prior knowledge that the contract was executed in violation of the requirements of section 558.70.

4. In an action in which a contract purchaser obtains relief under this section, the court shall also award to such contract purchaser reasonable attorney fees incurred in bringing the action.

2002 Acts, ch 1136, §2, 6