

NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSUMER AFFAIRS PROVIDES ANSWERS ABOUT DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

Columbia, SC.....The Federal Trade Commission's Do Not Call registry provides consumers an opportunity to block unsolicited telemarketing calls. Registration is free and relatively simple, but details about the registry have left consumers with many questions. To answer these questions, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs is providing the following information.

BASICS ABOUT REGISTRY REGISTRATION:

- You may register online at www.donotcall.gov or toll-free at 1.888.382.1222.
- Registration is free, but must be renewed every five years.
- Individuals may register up to three personal phone numbers but must call from the number they wish to register.
- Upon receiving an e-mail confirmation, individuals will be asked to click on a link within 72 hours of their initial registration to complete the process.
- Phone numbers are placed on the "do-not-call" registry by the next day.
- Numbers are also shared with telemarketers who have 31 days to add the numbers to their "do-not-call" list.
- E-mail addresses are simply used for verification purposes, but are not given to telemarketers.
- The registry does not ban all telemarketing calls but does ban prerecorded sales pitches. The company must connect the receiver with a "real person" when the phone is answered.

About the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs:

Established by the Consumer Protection code in 1974, The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs represents the interests of South Carolina Consumers.

Our mission is to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, mediation, enforcement and education.

For more information, visit www.sccoconsumer.gov.

CALLER ID REQUIRED FOR TELEMARKETERS:

Regardless of whether or not a consumer's number is registered on the Do Not Call registry, telemarketers must comply with the Telemarketing Sales Rule (TSR). Under this rule, telemarketers are required to display at least their phone number on the consumer's phone when they call. Where the technology and capabilities are available, the telemarketer must also display the name of their organization or the organization they are representing.

REGISTERING CELL PHONE NUMBERS:

Individuals may register their cell phone number on the Do Not Call registry. Most telemarketing calls to cell phones, however, are already prohibited because automatic dialers cannot be used with cell phones. Since the majority of telemarketers depend on this device to make their calls, individuals do not often receive unsolicited telemarketing calls on their cell phone.

COMPANY EXEMPTIONS:

- The registry does not prohibit calls before 8 a.m. and after 9 p.m.
- The registry does not prohibit calls from companies with whom the consumer has a business relationship. A "business relationship" is established by a purchase, an inquiry, or an application. The "relationship" is active for 18 months after the most recent transaction.
- Individual companies may be exempt if requested by the consumer.
- Charity organizations, political organizations, and telephone surveyors are exempt.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- **Can I verify my registration?** Yes. Go online at www.donotcall.gov or call toll-free at 1.888.328.1222.
- **Can I delete my phone number from the registry?** Yes. Call toll-free at 1.888.382.1222.
- **Can I register my work number?** No. The Do Not Call registry is for personal numbers only, not business or fax numbers.
- **Do I need to register again if I move?** Yes. You need to register your new number, but you do not need to remove your old number.
- **Do I need to register again if my area code changes?** No. Changes in area codes are made automatically during the 90-day Permissive Dialing Period when both the old and new area codes are effective.

For more information, contact the SCDCA Public Information Division at 803.734.4190, toll-free at 1.800.922.1594 or online at www.sccoconsumer.gov.

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