



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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DA 21-39

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FCC SEEKS COMMENT ON HOW TO FACILITATE VOLUNTARY ADOPTION OF THE HOSPITAL ROBOCALL PROTECTION GROUP'S BEST PRACTICES TO COMBAT UNLAWFUL ROBOCALLS TO HOSPITALS

CG Docket No. 21-7

Comments Due: February 1, 2021

As required by the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act of 2019 (TRACED Act), the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) on June 25, 2020, established the Hospital Robocall Protection Group (HRPG) to issue best practices to help combat unlawful robocalls to hospitals.¹ Under the TRACED Act the HRPG was required, within 180 days of its establishment, to issue best practices recommendations regarding the following: (1) How voice service providers can better combat unlawful robocalls made to hospitals; (2) How hospitals can better protect themselves from such calls, including by using unlawful robocall mitigation techniques; and (3) How the Federal Government and State governments can help combat such calls.²

On December 14, 2020, the HRPG issued best practices for each of the above-referenced groups as required by the TRACED Act.³ Recognizing that efforts by any single entity will not adequately protect hospitals from illegal robocalls, the HRPG best practices focus on collective efforts and encourage a coordinated response among hospitals, phone companies, and government agencies, to mitigate the impact of these calls. The HRPG also divided its best practices into two categories, how unlawful robocalls to hospitals can be prevented, and how hospitals can respond to unlawful robocalls that have occurred and mitigate their impact. The complete text of the best practices can be found [here](#).

The TRACED Act now requires the Commission to conclude a proceeding no later than June 13, 2021, to “assess the extent to which the voluntary adoption of such best practices can be facilitated to protect hospitals and other institutions.”⁴ By this Public Notice, the Commission’s Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (Bureau) seeks comment on how the voluntary adoption of the best practices can be facilitated consistent with the Congressional directive.

Commenters are asked to comment on all aspects of the HRPG Best Practices, including whether the division of best practices into “prevention” and “mitigation” categories has any impact on the extent

¹ Pub. L., 116-105, 133 Stat 3274, § 14(a). The TRACED Act also required that the HRPG membership include a specified range of industry and government members. *See* TRACED Act, § 14(b).

² *See* TRACED Act, § 14(c).

³ *Id.*

⁴ TRACED Act § 14(d). Section 14(d) requires the Commission to complete the proceeding not later than 180 days of the issuance of the best practices. *Id.*

to which the voluntary adoption of the best practices can be facilitated. Interested parties should identify specific incentives that are most likely to lead to voluntary adoption. Finally, interested parties should also look upon the best practices both individually and as a group. Might some best practices be easier to adopt than others? By seeking comment in this fashion, the Commission hopes to draw upon a wide range of stakeholder perspectives to ensure that its Section 14(d) assessment is comprehensive.

Filing requirements. Interested parties may file comments on or before **February 1, 2021**. All filings should refer to CG Docket No. 21-7. Filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission. Comments may be filed by paper or by using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/>.
- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing.
 - Filings can be sent by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.
 - Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
 - U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 45 L Street, NE, Washington DC 20554.
- Effective March 19, 2020, and until further notice, the Commission no longer accepts any hand or messenger-delivered filings. This is a temporary measure taken to help protect the health and safety of individuals, and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.⁵

People with Disabilities: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (tty).

For further information, contact Aliza Katz, Attorney Advisor, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, (202) 418-1737 or Aliza.Katz@fcc.gov, or Gayle Teicher, Attorney Advisor, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, (202) 418-1515 or Gayle.Teicher@fcc.gov.

⁵ See *FCC Announces Closure of FCC Headquarters Open Window and Change in Hand-Delivery Policy*, Public Notice, 35 FCC Rcd 2788 (2020).