



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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## **FCC ADOPTS RULES TO STRENGTHEN CONSUMER PROTECTIONS AGAINST UNWANTED TELEMARKETING “ROBOCALLS” TO WIRELINE AND WIRELESS PHONES**

Washington, D.C. – To further protect consumers from unwanted autodialed or prerecorded calls, often referred to as “robocalls,” the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today approved changes to its telemarketing rules. Unwanted telemarketing calls and texts were consistently in the top three consumer complaint categories at the FCC in 2011. Robocalls invade consumers’ privacy, and can, in the case of calls to wireless numbers, use up their minutes.

The Order adopted today helps put an end to these intrusions by empowering consumers with increased rights under the FCC’s telemarketing rules. The new rules reduce regulatory uncertainty with minimal burden on industry and maximize consistency with those of the Federal Trade Commission. Specifically, the rules protect consumers by:

- Requiring telemarketers to obtain prior express written consent from them, including by electronic means such as a website form, before placing a robocall to a consumer;
- Eliminating the “established business relationship” exemption to the requirement that telemarketing robocalls to residential wireline phones occur only with prior express consent from the consumer;
- Requiring telemarketers to provide an automated, interactive “opt-out” mechanism during each robocall so that consumers can immediately tell the telemarketer to stop calling; and,
- Strictly limiting the number of abandoned or “dead air” calls that telemarketers can make within each calling campaign.

The rules also ensure that informational calls, such as those related to school closings and flight changes, continue to be available to consumers who wish to receive them.

Action by the Commission February 15, 2012, by Report and Order (FCC 12-21). Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners McDowell and Clyburn. Separate statements issued by Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners McDowell and Clyburn.

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