**Source: www.fcc.gov**

# What is a robocall/text?

*Robocalls* are calls made with an autodialer or that contain a message made with a prerecorded or artificial voice.

*Robotexts* are text messages generated through autodialing. Under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA), these are considered a type of call and fall under all the robocall rules.  As text messages generally go to mobile phones, they require the called party's prior express consent if they are generated using autodialing.

Advances in technology have unfortunately allowed illegal and spoofed robocalls/texts to be made from anywhere in the world and more cheaply and easily than ever before. That is why it has become more of a problem, and a more difficult problem to solve.

# What are the rules for robocalls/texts?

Many robocalls are legal. The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) limits the use of autodialed calls or texts and prerecorded voice calls (all of which are sometimes called "robocalls"). The TCPA and the FCC's rules apply not only to commercial activities but also to political and campaign-related calls or texts. The rules and restrictions related to these calls vary based upon whether a call is delivered to a landline telephone, a cell phone, or certain protected telephone lines (e.g., emergency or toll-free lines, or lines serving hospitals or similar facilities).

All prerecorded voice message calls, campaign-related and otherwise, must include certain identification information:

* the identity of the business, individual, or other entity initiating the call (and if a business or corporate entity, the entity's official business name) must be stated clearly at the beginning of the message; and
* the telephone number of the calling party must be provided either during or after the message.

# What is caller ID spoofing?

Caller ID spoofing is when a caller deliberately falsifies the information transmitted to your caller ID display to disguise their identity. Under the Truth in Caller ID Act, FCC rules prohibit anyone from transmitting misleading or inaccurate caller ID information with the intent to defraud, cause harm or wrongly obtain anything of value. Anyone who is illegally spoofing can face penalties of up to $10,000 for each violation, but spoofing is not always illegal and the question can come down to how someone obtained a phone number.

# Robocalls/Robotexts Tips

* Don't answer calls or respond to texts from unknown numbers. If you answer such a call, hang up immediately.
* You may not be able to tell right away if an incoming call/text is spoofed. Be aware: Caller ID showing a "local" number does not necessarily mean it is a local caller/texter.
* If you answer the phone or respond to a text and the caller, recording, or texts message asks you to hit a button or send a specific response to stop getting the calls/texts, you should just hang up or stop texting. Scammers often use this trick to identify potential targets.
* You always have the opportunity to report an issue through formal and informal channels. In the case of robocalls/texts, this may include the FCC. For more information visit the FCC [website](https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/stop-unwanted-robocalls-and-texts).