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# TRACED Act Offers Consumers Additional Protections Against Robocalls



Whether at home, work or on a cell phone, it's a scenario many Americans have found themselves in: answering a phone call only to find out it's from an unwanted robocaller. In fact, the number of unwanted robocalls in this country has skyrocketed in recent years. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ranks unwanted robocalls highest on their list of consumer complaints.<sup>1</sup>

## TRACED Act

Fortunately, consumers have won additional protections against unwanted robocalls under recent legislation signed by President Trump, the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence (TRACED) Act. One of the main goals of the TRACED Act is to establish rules to protect consumers from receiving calls from unauthenticated numbers. Provisions of the TRACED Act include:

- Requiring all carriers to implement new caller-ID technology at no additional charge to consumers
- Extending the statute of limitations for prosecuting illegal robocallers
- Allowing the FCC to go after first-time robocall offenders
- Increasing penalties for robocall violations
- Creating an interagency task force to study and improve the government prosecution of robocall violations
- Establishing a neutral consortium of carriers that will lead efforts to trace back the origin of robocalls

## Protecting yourself from unwanted robocalls

Unfortunately, even with these new protections, it will take some time for all of the TRACED Act provisions to fully take effect. In the meantime, here are some things you can do to protect yourself:

- Don't answer calls when you don't recognize the phone number. Instead, let them go to voicemail and check later to verify the caller.
- Consider signing up for a robocall blocking service. Many phone service providers now offer robocall blocking solutions at no additional charge. You can also download additional robocall protection for free or minimal cost through a third-party app.
- Register your phone number on the [National Do Not Call \(DNC\) Registry](#), which removes your number from the call lists used by legitimate telemarketing companies. Keep in mind that while registering with the DNC Registry will result in you getting fewer calls from legitimate telemarketers, the registry won't stop illegal robocallers from contacting you.

<sup>1</sup> Federal Communications Commission, Report on Robocalls, February 2019

*If you pick up an unwanted robocall, hang up right away. Avoid answering "yes" or "no" questions, providing personal information, or pressing a number to "opt out," since scammers often use these tricks to identify and target "live" respondents, resulting in additional calls.*

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