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National do not call registry ten years old

The National Do Not Call Registry was established ten years ago to allow consumers to limit the telemarketing calls received. The Registry is managed by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and is enforced by the FTC along with state law enforcement officials. Despite the Registry being around for 10 years, there are still some misconceptions and/or ignorance on the use of this Registry.

It is necessary to affirmatively register your telephone number to receive the benefits of the Registry. This can be done by telephone at 1-888-382-1222 or online at www.donotcall.gov. If registering by telephone, you must call from the telephone number that you are registering (for instance you cannot register your home phone number by calling from work). Also, if you live in certain types of communities, you may not be able to register by telephone as the Registry will not recognize the telephone number from which you are calling as yours. Only personal phone numbers can be registered, including cell phone numbers, not business telephone numbers or fax numbers.

If you register online at www.donotcall.gov, you can register up to three phone numbers at a time. Do not register for family and friends, just for yourself. You must have a valid email address to register online; you will receive an email from the FTC confirming that you have registered for the Do Not Call Registry. Your email address will not be shared. Your telephone number is registered the day following your registration, and telemarketers have 31 days to remove you from their lists. This service does not stop *all* potentially unwanted telephone calls, since political calls, charitable organizations and those who are performing surveys where nothing is being sold are exempt. Furthermore, if you have a business relationship with a vendor, they can call you unless you notify them in writing to remove your name from their list; you should keep a record of your request. Conversely, organizations from which you desire to receive calls need your express permission to exempt them from the list on the Registry.

Older persons in particular benefit from this service by limiting the number of telemarketing calls that might result in their purchasing unnecessary items due to failure to understand the import of the call or because loneliness prompts a response to a friendly voice. Everyone appreciates the lack of dinner time interruptions from attempts to sell you items or services. It will not stop all calls, as mentioned above, but can reduce the number of unwanted interruptions and salespeople who do not take "I am not interested" for an answer.

There is no deadline for registering, nor is your telephone number dropped from the list after any specific period of time. You can go online to www.donotcall.gov to determine if your number is still registered if you changed telephone providers or had a temporary disconnection. This service covers all telemarketing calls, even from overseas. If you do not want to register with the national registry, you can ask the specific company to put you on their do not call list. The FTC does not hire private companies to help people to register for this service; if you receive such a call, do not respond, as it is a scam.

For more information, go to the FTC Consumer Protection Information at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0108-national-do-not-call-registry>.