



UNITED STATES POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE

Screening Phone Calls



There are steps family members and caregivers can take to screen phone calls and limit victim exposure to solicitors.

- Help your loved one install an answering machine with a prominent Caller ID screen.
- Instruct them to let the machine pick up calls from unfamiliar or “Unknown,” “Private,” “No Caller ID,” and “Restricted” numbers.
- Give your loved one “permission” to hang up on sales and marketing calls.
- Get them on the “Do Not Call” list maintained by the Federal Trade Commission. It is recommended you call 1-888-382-1222 from the number you wish to register. Or you can register online at [DoNotCall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov) or [ncdoj.gov/protecting-consumers/telephones-telemarketing/telemarketing-do-not-call](https://www.ncdoj.gov/protecting-consumers/telephones-telemarketing/telemarketing-do-not-call).
- Call the phone company — both landline and cell phone service providers — and request that incoming and outgoing international calls be blocked.
- Change the phone number to a non-published number.
- Request the telephone account be password protected. This prevents scammers from changing the phone number.

Be wary or the scammer may re-engage their victim.

When a scammer can no longer reach someone they have victimized in the past, they may send a pre-paid phone via UPS, FedEx, or the U.S. Mail. Or they may send a courier — taxi driver, pizza delivery man, etc. — to your loved one’s residence with a pre-paid cell phone in hand. Discuss this possibility ahead of time with your family member and what to do if that happens.

Visit [uspis.gov](https://www.uspis.gov) for tips on how to protect your loved ones from fraud.