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 or 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 for tips on how to protect your loved ones from fraud.