

Media Contact:

MediaRelations@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release**FCC KICKS OFF ‘SPRING CLEANING’ ENFORCEMENT SERIES BY ORDERING VOICE SERVICE PROVIDER TO CEASE ROBOCALL CAMPAIGN PUSHING FAKE ‘NATIONAL TAX RELIEF PROGRAM’**

WASHINGTON, April 4, 2024—The FCC’s Enforcement Bureau today issued a cease-and-desist letter against Veriwave Telco. The letter [ordered](#) Veriwave Telco to cease and desist its origination of an apparently illegal robocall campaign pertaining to a “National Tax Relief Program.” The Bureau also warned the company that failure to comply with the requirements outlined in the cease-and-desist letter may result in mandatory blocking by downstream providers of all traffic from Veriwave. In addition, the Bureau issued a “[K4 Order](#),” notifying all U.S.-based voice service providers that they may be permitted to cease accepting traffic from Veriwave Telco.

Between November 1, 2023 and January 31, 2024, the YouMail software app company estimates that approximately 15.8 million calls playing prerecorded messages pertaining to a “National Tax Relief Program” were placed. The Bureau found no evidence that this program actually exists. This illegal robocalling campaign increased in volume in the three months immediately preceding the start of the 2024 tax filing season. These calls offered to “rapidly clear” the call recipient’s tax debt. Those receiving the call were apparently asked to provide personal information, including dates of birth and social security numbers. An example call transcript is available in the FCC’s cease-and-desist [letter](#). FCC investigators and the Industry Traceback Group traced a number of these calls back to Veriwave Telco as the originating provider.

Today’s action kicks off a “Spring Cleaning” initiative from the Enforcement Bureau during which it plans to coordinate closely with other federal agencies to issue a series of robocall actions against entities harming consumers and eroding trust in the telecommunications infrastructure. The Bureau’s focus is on preventing the damage and distress resulting from active scams particularly widespread during the spring season. The perpetrators of illegal robocalls use the springtime calendar, with the tax filing deadline a notable feature, to initiate predatory activities seeking to maximize the harm to consumers.

FCC Leadership:

FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel: “Tricking consumers with tax season scams is just plain wrong, but we all know it remains a common ploy. While illegal robocallers continue to try to hide from us, we’ll keep seeking them out and hold them accountable for putting consumers at risk.”

Internal Revenue Service Leadership:

IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel: “The IRS continues to warn taxpayers about aggressive scam attempts that threaten people’s cash as well as sensitive financial and personal

information. Impersonating the IRS and others in the tax community remains a favorite tactic for scammers hoping to prey on innocent taxpayers, and we highlight these as part of our annual IRS ‘[Dirty Dozen](#)’ tax scams. The IRS urges people to be extra cautious about unsolicited messages, whether by phone or text as well as avoiding clicking any links in an unexpected email. These scams can occur at any time of the year, not just during tax season.”

Enforcement Bureau:

Chief Loyaan Egal: “Through our ‘Spring Cleaning’ initiative, we are taking targeted actions to ensure the integrity of U.S. communications networks and increase consumers’ confidence that their phones are not being weaponized against them to commit fraud. We want to thank our partners at the IRS for helping us kick off the ‘Spring Cleaning’ initiative and will be working closely with other agencies throughout the spring to address different illegal robocall campaigns that are harming consumers.”

FTC’s Bureau of Consumer Protection

Director Samuel Levine: “Illegal robocalls waste Americans’ time and can cost them money, and unscrupulous VoIP providers knowingly enable these scams. I commend FCC Chair Rosenworcel for continuing to use every tool to hold upstream actors accountable and protect Americans in the fight against illegal telemarketing.”

What’s New

The Enforcement Bureau issued a cease-and-desist letter demanding that Delaware-based voice service provider Veriwave Telco no longer facilitate an illegal robocall campaign, specifically citing evidence it was the originating provider for “National Tax Relief Program” robocalls. The Bureau warned the company that, if it does not stop its support for illegal robocalls and promptly report to the FCC the actions it has taken to prevent continued illegal activity, it may be cut off from handing call traffic off to other voice service providers. Providers received a “K4” public notice informing them that, depending on Veriwave Telco’s cooperation, they may cease accepting traffic from Veriwave Telco.

How We Got Here

Since March 2021, the FCC has been issuing [cease and desist letters](#) to companies suspected of originating and/or transmitting illegal robocall campaigns. These warnings have largely resulted in the targets ending their robocall activities. Where a warning was not enough, the FCC has moved quickly to block ongoing robocall campaigns. The FCC has prioritized addressing ongoing robocall campaigns to save consumers from the scams and the frustration of illegal calls.

Getting Results:

The [FCC’s Robocall Response Team](#) serves as an FCC staff working group to combat the unyielding menace of illegal spoofed, or scam, robocalls.

- Blocking active robocall scam campaigns by issuing first-of-their-kind actions:
 - 99% drop in auto warranty scam robocalls after an FCC action;
 - 88% month-to-month drop in student loan scam robocalls;
 - Halted predatory mortgage robocalls targeting homeowners nationwide;
- Fining companies record-breaking amounts for illegal robocalls and spoofing;
- Closing gateways used by international robocallers to reach Americans’ phones;
- Widespread implementation of STIR/SHAKEN caller ID authentication standards – including applying the requirements to gateway providers;
- Working with industry to traceback illegal calls to their sources;
- Ensuring voice service providers meet FCC robocall mitigation requirements;

- Signing robocall investigation partnerships with [49](#) states, District of Columbia, Guam and international partners;
- Establishing first-of-their-kind regulations targeting scam text messaging; and
- Launching the Robocall Mitigation Database to monitor STIR/SHAKEN compliance.

The IRS's Dirty Dozen List can be found at: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/dirty-dozen>.

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Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / Twitter: @FCC / www.fcc.gov

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).