



## RECOGNIZE AND AVOID Telemarketing Fraud

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACCS) is the state's leading consumer protection agency. The agency works to protect consumers in many ways, including actively investigating telemarketing fraud. The more people know about telemarketing fraud, the lower the likelihood that they will fall victim to this faceless crime.

The Florida Telemarketing Act governs the actions of these businesses. All non-exempt telemarketing companies must be licensed with DACCS, and post a security bond of no less than \$50,000 prior to soliciting. Each individual telemarketing salesperson of a non-exempt business is also required to be licensed. Applicants are required to disclose information about their criminal and litigation history. Individuals with a criminal history may be denied licensure.

*The following are a few requirements set forth in the statute that consumers should be aware of:*

- Telemarketing calls can only be made between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. and the salesperson must state his or her true name, the company that he or she is representing and the products or services being sold within the first 30 seconds of the phone call.
- If a sale or agreement to purchase is completed, the consumer must be informed of his or her cancellation rights, the license number of both the business and the salesperson and the street address of the business.
- The business or salesperson cannot require that payment be made by credit card or even state that this is their preferred method of payment.



**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**  
www.800helpfla.com ■ 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) ■ 850-410-3800

**ADAM H. PUTNAM, COMMISSIONER**

## Avoid Becoming a Victim

*When dealing with telemarketers keep these tips in mind:*

- Don't provide any personal or financial information over the phone, unless it is to a known and trusted source.
- Before any purchase is made, research whether the telemarketer or telemarketing salesperson is registered with DACS and if there have been any complaints filed against them. This can be done by utilizing the "Business/Complaint Lookup" at [www.800helpfla.com](http://www.800helpfla.com) or by calling 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) and asking a member of the assistance center staff.
- Require written information by mail about the organization itself, as well as the product, service, investment or charity.
- Don't send cash by messenger or overnight mail. Using a credit card will allow you to dispute the charges if you don't get what you were promised.
- Don't answer the phone if you don't recognize the number on your caller ID. Instead, let it go to voicemail.
- Beware of offers to "help" you recover money you may have lost previously. Be wary of callers saying they are law enforcement officers who will help you get your money back "for a fee."
- Register for the Florida Do Not Call Program by calling 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) or subscribe online at [www.800helpfla.com](http://www.800helpfla.com).
- Don't be afraid to say "no thanks" and hang up the phone.

## Report Telemarketing Scams

Fraudulent telemarketers should be reported to DACS. File a complaint online at [www.800helpfla.com](http://www.800helpfla.com). You can also request a copy of the form be mailed to you by calling the assistance center at 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) from within Florida, 850-410-3800 from outside of Florida or 1-800-FL-AYUDA (352-9832) en Español.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
POINT YOUR QR READER TO

