

# OPT-OUT REGISTRY: HOW CONSUMERS CAN AVOID SPAM CALLS

Category: IT Law

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The dreaded spam call – a daily frustration for many consumers. Whether it’s repeated offers for funeral covers, persistent insurance sales pitches, or unsolicited financial products, these interruptions can feel both invasive and relentless. Like many others, I often find myself asking: *How did they get my number, and is there any way to stop it?*

Fortunately, recent regulatory developments suggest there may finally be an effective solution to this ongoing problem.

## Key Legislative Developments

On 15 April 2026, the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition introduced amendments to the regulations under the Consumer Protection Act 68 of 2008 (“**CPA**”). These amendments aim to strengthen consumer protections against unsolicited direct marketing communications.[\[1\]](#)

A core feature of these changes is the enhanced opt-out registry, which allows consumers to proactively block unwanted marketing communications.

## Important Definitions Explained

The amended regulations introduce and clarify several key concepts:

- **Cleansing** refers to the process of removing consumers who have opted out of electronic communications from a direct marketer's database. It ensures that those consumers are no longer contacted.
- An **Electronic Communication Recipient** is a consumer who receives electronic communication from a direct marketer but has registered a **pre-emptive block** on the opt-out registry.
- A **Pre-emptive Block** is a mechanism that allows consumers to register their details on the opt-out registry to prevent any unwanted electronic communications from direct marketers before they occur.

## What Businesses Must Do

The amendments impose significant obligations on businesses engaged in direct marketing, including those using phone calls, emails, SMS, or other electronic channels. Key requirements include:

- **Mandatory Registration** -Direct marketers are now required to register on the opt-out registry before contacting consumers. This involves submitting the prescribed Annexure P registration form and paying the applicable filing fee.
- **Monthly Data Cleansing Obligations** -Businesses must cleanse their entire marketing databases every month against the registry.
- **Strict Compliance with Opt-Outs** -Once a consumer has registered a pre-emptive block, businesses are prohibited from contacting them.
- **Operational and Cost Considerations** -Companies must implement systems to integrate registry data into their processes. A recurring cleansing fee applies, making compliance both a legal and operational priority.

## What This Means for Consumers

For consumers, these amendments represent a significant step forward in protecting privacy and reducing unwanted communications. Consumers can now actively register their details to block unsolicited marketing, exercise greater control over how their personal information is used; and reduce the volume of spam calls and messages received.

## Consequences of Non-Compliance

Businesses that fail to comply with these regulations may be in violation of the CPA. This could result in administrative penalties, enforcement actions by the National Consumer Commission, and potential reputational damage.

## Is This the End of Spam Calls?

While these amendments mark a positive shift, their effectiveness will ultimately depend on compliance and enforcement. However, they provide consumers with a powerful new tool to protect themselves. As for me, I will certainly be making use of the opt-out registry and ensuring that any telemarketer who reaches me respects my choice.

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[\[1\]](#) Consumer Protection Act Amendment Regulations,2026