

Scam Alert: Fla. a Top State for Spam-Texts

By Kerry Smith

Fla. A.G. warning: Americans now receive more robotexts than robocalls. Floridians will get 5 billion this year – and clickable links can easily download malware.

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody issued a Consumer Alert warning Floridians about a rise in robotexts. The alert calls Florida “one of the most spam-texted states in the nation.”

While a large number of unwanted robotexts can be irritating, the bigger danger lies in clickable links within those texts. In many cases, seemingly legitimate texts will include a link that downloads malware into a phone or computer.

“These automated text messages are now more prevalent, and potentially more dangerous, than robocalls since malicious links can be clicked on directly in a text,” Moody says. “These links often contain malware that can be instantly downloaded to a phone. Any interaction with this type of text will show the scammer that the phone number is active, making the targeted user vulnerable to further messages.”

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) runs the National Do Not Call Registry, which may offer some help to Americans who add their name. While robotexters may ignore U.S. laws, people registered on the Registry can report unwanted calls to the FTC after being on the list for 31 days. Violators, or those who call someone on the National Do Not Call List, can be fined [per call](#).

Register by visiting [DoNotCall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov) or calling 1 (888) 382-1222.

Avoiding illegal robotexts

- Don't answer texts from unrecognized numbers. Interacting shows the scammer that someone is actually receiving the texts and will likely lead to even more robotexts
- Never click links in text messages from unknown numbers. They often contain malware or lead to malicious websites
- Consider downloading phone apps that help block scam texts from even reaching your phone
- Texts from a five- to six-digit short code telephone number may be a scam. Legitimate short-code phone numbers can be found in the [U.S. Short Code Directory](#).

Report scam robotexts and robocalls to the [Federal Trade Commission](#).