

## Nuisance & Robo Calls

Unfortunately, these calls are widespread not only affecting Harvard, but other universities, companies, residential landlines and cellphones. HUIT Communication and Collaboration Services understands that unwanted telephone calls, particularly at work are annoying. We are actively working with Verizon to combat this problem, and have filed a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). In addition, users who experience this issue can have verified or register their line on the Do Not Call Registry: <https://www.donotcall.gov/>. We are hopeful our vendor will provide a solution to alleviate the problem on the Harvard VoIP platform, but until then there is little more that can be done to systematically and fully end these unwanted calls for the following reasons:

**Caller ID spoofing** is the practice of manipulating the telephone network to display a number different than the true originating number. For example, Harvard University employees have received phone calls from what appears to be an internal Harvard University phone (exchange 495, 496, 384, etc.), but turns out to be a prank or solicitor call.

**Spam and Robo-calls** are automated phone calls with prerecorded messages. These calls have increased in recent years because technology has made it cheap and easy for Robo-callers to make calls from anywhere in the world while hiding their identities. This is also done by displaying fake Caller ID information and masking their spam Caller IDs with local, legitimate or legitimate looking phone numbers and effortlessly changing the number if blocked or ignored.

**Call blocking** numbers on the Harvard Phone VOIP platform is possible, however blocking is done at the Harvard Rate Center or city-level (Cambridge, Boston, Brighton, etc.). This means the blocked number, whether legitimate or spoofed, will be rejected from all Harvard phones in that city.

Still, please instruct anyone who receives a call that is threatening, harassing, or concerning to notify the Harvard University Police Dept., in order to file a report with them. (Note this procedure does not apply to telemarketer or charity calls.) HUPD will determine the best course of action and whether the incident justifies pursuing a number block.