




WHAT IS SLAMMING?

Slamming occurs when a company changes a consumer's telephone service -- usually long distance -- without permission. It may occur as the result of a contest or sweepstakes entry that authorizes a change of service in very small print; it may also occur when telemarketers use deceptive or confusing language to get consumers to change their service.



WHAT IS THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION DOING TO DETER SLAMMING?

In 1998, the PSC toughened its slamming rules and began bringing even harsher penalties against companies that continue the practice. Florida's slamming rules are some of the most stringent in the country, and have served as a model for a number of other states as they created their own rules.



24-Hour On-line Complaint Forms
www.floridapsc.com

If you have questions, you may call the Florida Public Service Commission at
1-800-342-3552,
fax your questions to
1-800-511-0809,
or contact the PSC via the following E-mail address:
contact@psc.state.fl.us.
See our Internet home page at
www.floridapsc.com.

Or write to the
Florida Public Service Commission
Division of Regulatory Compliance and
Consumer Assistance
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850



**COMPETITION
CALLING**

FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



**FIGHT BACK AGAINST
SLAMMING**

**PROTECT YOURSELF
FROM UNAUTHORIZED
CHANGES TO YOUR
PHONE SERVICE**

You may have heard of
"slamming" recently.
Learn what it is --
and how to keep from
becoming the next victim.

HOW TO AVOID BEING SLAMMED



Thoroughly check your telephone bill monthly. Make sure your phone company is listed correctly.



Always carefully read the fine print on everything. This includes any checks, offers for calling cards, sweepstakes or drawings.



If you receive a call from a telemarketer asking you to change your long distance service, and you are happy with your current service, just say that you are not interested and hang up. Don't verify your name, your spouse's name, or your address, and never give out your Social Security number to telemarketers.



Sign up for "No Sales Solicitation Calls" with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. This way, no one can call you trying to sell you their products and/or services. Call 1-800-HELP-FLA (1-800-435-7352) to find out more. For Spanish translations call 1-800-352-9832.



Call your local telephone company and request a Preferred Carrier or "PC" Freeze. This prohibits future changes to your account without your authorization.



If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

- WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SLAMMED -

Call your local telephone company. Let them know you did not request service from your "new" phone company and would like to be switched back to your original phone service provider. Have them remove any switching fees from your bill.

My local phone company is: _____

Their phone number is: _____

Notes: _____

Have your local telephone company place a PC Freeze on your account. This will prevent changes from being made to your phone service without your permission.

Notes: _____

Contact the company that slammed you. Insist on paying only the charges your original carrier would have imposed. Call the PSC at 1-800-342-3552 if the carrier will not adjust your charges.

The company that slammed me is: _____

Their phone number is: _____

Notes: _____

Call your original company. Tell them you were switched to another company without your permission and ask them to reconnect you at no charge.

My correct company is: _____

Their phone number is: _____

Notes: _____

If at any point your slamming complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, call the PSC at 1-800-342-3552. You can also file an online complaint at www.floridapsc.com.

Notes: _____

WHAT THE PSC IS DOING ABOUT SLAMMING

In 1998, the PSC adopted some of the toughest rules in the nation to fight slamming. Among those new rules are the following:

- ★ The customer must be given notice on the first or second page of his or her next bill, in conspicuous bold-face type, when the provider of local, local toll, or long distance service has changed.

WHAT THE PSC IS DOING CONTINUED

- ★ Only a customer, or other authorized person 18 years of age or older who lives in the household, can authorize a change in residential phone service.
- ★ A company may not mail out "negative response" cards, in which a customer's service will be changed unless he or she returns a postcard to the company.
- ★ A company may not place a consent form for changing service on any inducement such as a sweepstakes registration.
- ★ Companies that practice slamming can have their certificates to practice business in Florida canceled and are subject to fines of up to \$25,000 per day per infraction.

If you are unsatisfied with the response you receive from any company regarding a slamming complaint, or have a question or problem regarding this issue, contact the Florida Public Service Commission at **1-800-342-3552**, or via E-mail at contact@psc.state.fl.us. You can also fill out our 24-hour on-line complaint form via the Internet at www.floridapsc.com.