

STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

61.99.99.M0.03 Communication with Students by Text/SMS Messages

Approved September 11, 2019

Reviewed January 14, 2025

Next scheduled review: January 14, 2030

Standard Administrative Procedure Statement

To help ensure student success, it is important that Texas A&M University communicate timely and effectively with its students so that the students receive the official University information that they want and need. Text/SMS messaging is one of the methods of communication that Texas A&M may use to communicate directly with students. Text/SMS messages sent by Texas A&M using an automatic telephone dialing system must comply with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA), 47 U.S.C. §227, and this SAP.

Definitions

“Automatic telephone dialing system” means equipment which has the capacity to store or produce telephone numbers to be called, using a random or sequential number generator, and to dial such numbers. (47 U.S.C. §227(a)(1)). This definition applies to voice calls and text/SMS messages.

Official Rule/ Responsibilities/ Process

1. REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 Any department/unit within Texas A&M that sends text/SMS messages using an automatic telephone dialing system is responsible for complying with the TCPA and the following requirements:
 - a. Obtain prior express consent of the recipient of the text/SMS message;
 - b. Provide the recipient of text/SMS messages the option to opt-out of future text/SMS messages from the department/unit;
 - c. Send no further text/SMS messages if consent is withdrawn or the recipient opts-out of future messages from the department/unit; and

- d. Verify, at least annually, that the cell/mobile telephone numbers on the department's/unit's call list are current and remove any number(s) from the call list that cannot be verified.
- 1.2 The department/unit sending the text/SMS message using an automatic telephone dialing system is responsible for complying with the TCPA and this SAP whether the mobile/cell phone numbers are pulled from a central university database or from a list created at the department/unit level.

2. BEST PRACTICES

Text/SMS messages sent by Texas A&M, whether sent using an automatic telephone dialing system or by direct dialing, should follow these best practices to ensure that students remain in the texting program and do not opt-out due to an excessive number of texts:

- 2.1 Text/SMS messages should only be used to send students important and time sensitive official information, including emergency notifications, health and safety information, notices critical to student success, account information, registration, advising, and financial aid.
- 2.2 The number of text/SMS messages sent by the department/unit should not be excessive.
- 2.3 Text/SMS messages should not exceed 160 characters.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Telephone Consumer Protection Act, 47 U.S. Code §227

Contact Office

Office of the Registrar