

Attorney General Raoul Announces \$210M Settlement With Dish Network For Illegal Robocalls

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CHICAGO – Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a \$210 million settlement with Dish Network (Dish) over calls made to people on the Do Not Call Registry. Illinois will receive more than \$13 million as part of the settlement.

“Robocalls are more than a nuisance; these calls cost people time and money,” Raoul said. “Today’s settlement holds Dish accountable for placing millions of illegal calls and violating the privacy of consumers. It should also serve as a warning to other bad actors who attempt to profit off this illegal and invasive practice. I will continue to use the resources of my office to hold these businesses accountable and protect Illinois residents from these calls.”

The Attorney General’s office, along with the U.S. Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and the attorneys general of California, North Carolina, and Ohio filed a lawsuit against Dish Network in 2009. In the lawsuit, the coalition alleged that Dish violated federal telemarketing laws by calling individuals listed on the national Do Not Call Registry and by using a prerecorded voice to place calls to residential phone lines without first obtaining the party’s express consent. The complaint also alleged Dish and its order-entry retailers placed tens of millions of illegal calls to consumers through the campaign, and hundreds of Illinois residents complained about receiving unwanted telemarketing calls from Dish or Dish’s authorized dealers.

Following a five-week trial, in 2017 the U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois found that Dish was liable for more than 97 million violations of federal and state law. Dish appealed this decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, which in March 2020 upheld the district court findings that Dish is responsible for the illegal calls placed by its retailers because they were Dish’s agents. In June 2020, the 7th Circuit denied Dish's petition for rehearing.

Attorney General Raoul has been a consistent advocate for protections against illegal robocalls. In August 2019, Raoul joined a coalition of attorneys general from all 50 states and Washington D.C. in partnering with 12 phone companies to create a set of principles for telecom companies to fight robocalls. In June 2019, Raoul, in cooperation with the FTC, announced a major crackdown on robocalls that included 94 actions targeting operations around the country that were responsible for more than 1 billion calls. As part of that crackdown, Raoul filed a lawsuit against Glamour Services, LLC; Awe Struck, Inc.; and Matthew Glamkowski, the manager of Glamour Services and president of Awe Struck for allegedly using robocalling and telemarketing to solicit home cleaning services. In May 2019, Raoul submitted comments to the Federal Communications Commission urging the adoption of its proposed rules on enforcement against caller ID spoofing.

Consumers who wish to file a complaint concerning robocalls they have received can do so on the Attorney General's website. Information about how consumers can add their number to the Do Not Call Registry is also available on the Attorney General's website.

Bureau Chief Elizabeth Blackston and Assistant Attorney General Philip Heimlich handled the case for Raoul's Consumer Fraud Bureau, and Supervising Attorney Evan Siegel handled the matter for Raoul's Civil Appeals Division.