

BRIGHT PATH VOIP, INC.
ROBOCALL MITIGATION PLAN¹

I. Background

The Federal Communications Commission (“FCC” or “Commission”) has adopted rules requiring voice service providers, like Bright Path VoIP, Inc. (“Bright Path”), to, among other things, file certifications and robocall mitigation plans in the FCC’s Robocall Mitigation Database (“RMD”). 47 CFR § 64.6305; *see also Call Authentication Trust Anchor*, WC Docket No. 17-97, Sixth Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 23-18 (Mar. 17, 2023) (“*Sixth Caller ID Authentication Report and Order*”).

The FCC requires that all voice service providers certify in the Commission’s RMD whether they have implemented the STIR/SHAKEN authentication framework, and that all of the calls that it originates, carries or processes are subject to a robocall mitigation program consistent with the Commission’s rules.² The provider’s mitigation plan “shall include reasonable steps to avoid originating illegal robocall traffic and shall include a commitment to respond within 24 hours to all traceback requests from the Commission, law enforcement, and the industry traceback consortium, and to cooperate with such entities in investigating and stopping any illegal robocallers that use its service to originate calls.” 47 C.F.R. § 64.6305(a)(2).

Despite imposing a general duty to mitigate “robocalls,” the Commission’s codified rules do not define “robocall.”³ The TRACED Act defines “robocall violation” as “a violation of subsection (b) or

¹ This is a provisional plan that Bright Path is filing to complete the enrollment as an approved SHAKEN service provider. Bright Path is currently not serving as a carrier but expects to implement the policies and procedures contained herein once it begins to carry traffic.

² *See* <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-24-73A1.pdf> (WCB Jan. 25, 2024 Public Notice).

³ The Commission’s TCPA-related regulations, 47 C.F.R. § 64.1200, use the undefined term “illegal traffic,” 47 C.F.R. § 64.1200((k)-(m)), while its STIR/SHAKEN-related regulations define the FCC’s public-facing Robocall Mitigation Database, but not the “robocalls” that are to be mitigated. 47 C.F.R. § 64.6300. Thus, neither of the regulations that bear directly on the project of robocall mitigation expressly define “robocall.” *Cf. In re Advanced Methods to Target & Eliminate Unlawful Robocalls*, CG Docket No. 17-59, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making, 32 FCC Rcd. 9706, 9725 ¶ 56 (Nov. 17, 2017) (declining to define “illegal robocall,” and acknowledging that “the record shows confusion regarding how the proposed definition of ‘illegal robocall’ should apply to the call blocking rules.”); *In re Core Communications, Inc., et al. Tariff F.C.C. No. 3*, WC Docket No. 21-191, Order, 36 FCC Rcd. 9997, 9999 (June 23, 2021) (In a related context, stating that the “Commission defines a robocall as a call made using an automatic telephone dialing system or an artificial or prerecorded voice.”) (citing 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1); 47 CFR § 64.1200(a)). Bright Path therefore focuses on the two types of unlawful calls—227(b) and 227(e) of the TCPA—that Congress expressly addressed.

(e) of section 227 of the Communications Act of 1934.” TRACED Act § 11(d), Pub. L. No. 116-105, 133 Stat. 3274 (2019); *id.* at § 13(d)(f)(3) (defining a “suspected unlawful robocall” as a “call that the Commission or a voice service provider reasonably believes was made in violation of subsection (b) or (e) of section 227 of the Communications Act of 1934.”

Thus, Bright Path’s training and mitigation efforts will focus, as they must, on potentially unlawful calls that violate either (a) 47 U.S.C. § 227(b) (governing non-emergency calls initiated with a prerecorded or artificial voice or an automatic telephone dialing system, as that term has been interpreted by the Supreme Court in *Facebook, Inc. v. Duguid*, 592 U.S. 395 (2001)) or (b) 47 U.S.C. 227(e), or the Truth in Caller ID Act, which prohibits people from causing “any caller identification service to knowingly transmit misleading or inaccurate caller identification information with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value,” absent an applicable exemption.

Bright Path notes that, by design, its services are provisioned to significantly curtail end users’ opportunity to make so-called “robocalls” in the first place. First, its system will be incapable of generating the telephone numbers its end users may use Bright Path’s voice services to call. Like traditional phone service, Bright Path’s end users must supply and choose the phone numbers it calls with Bright Path’s service. Thus, its end users will be incapable of making calls with an “automatic telephone dialing system,” as the U.S. Supreme Court interprets that term. Moreover, with limited exceptions, Bright Path’s end users must make live-agent calls; Bright Path’s services will only be used with prerecorded messages after going through additional customer screening, during which the customer must either demonstrate representative form of consent or commit to scrubbing wireless numbers out of its contact list for informational calls, as the case may be. As such, 47 U.S.C. § 227(b) violations simply should not, and in our experience generally do not, occur via Bright Path’s services. And, third, Bright Path’s end users will only use caller IDs that they have subscribed to and been assigned by Bright Path as their outbound caller ID, such that, absent some hacking event, which would violate Bright Path’s AUP, Bright Path’s end users can’t manipulate their caller ID. Thus, by design, Bright Path’s end users are likewise prevented from using Bright Path’s services to violate 47 U.S.C. § 227(e).

The FCC’s rules provide that the provider’s plan should describe how it “complies with its obligation to know its customers pursuant to § 64.1200(n)(4), any procedures in place to know its upstream providers, and the analytics system(s) it uses to identify and block illegal traffic, including whether it uses any third-party analytics vendor(s) and the name(s) of such vendor(s).” 47 C.F.R. § 64.6305(d)(1)(ii). The Commission has acknowledged, however, that, “we do not currently require [] providers other than gateway providers to engage in ‘know-your-upstream-provider’ procedures, [but] if they have put such procedures in place, they must be documented in their robocall mitigation plan,” and that “we do not specifically require providers to use call analytics.” *Sixth Caller ID Authentication Report and Order* ¶ 40 & n.155-56.

The Commission has explained that a robocall-mitigation program is “sufficient if it includes detailed practices that can reasonably be expected to significantly reduce” the provider’s origination of illegal robocalls, and the voice service provider complies with the practices described in its plan. *Sixth Caller ID Authentication Report and Order* ¶ 31. Bright Path is dedicated to developing and taking reasonable steps. This document outlines Bright Path’s robocall mitigation plan.

II. Bright Path’s Know Your Customer (“KYC”) Standards

Bright Path is a voice service provider that focuses its business and operations on the business end user customer segment of the voice services communications market. As part of its customer-onboarding process, Bright Path undertakes various commercially reasonable precautions to verify a given customer’s identity as part of entering into a formal written agreement.

All prospective customers will participate in an in-person or telephonic enrollment process. Bright Path will investigate the prospective customer’s background, such as checking for a company website, the amount of time the business has been open, and other indications of a legal, operating business. Among other data points to be collected and, as appropriate, verified, as part of those processes Bright Path will gather the following customer-identifying facts and circumstances:

- Customer business name and any DBAs,
- Company email, phone number, and website domain,
- state or country of incorporation, with proof thereof,
- physical business location, and
- contact person(s), and

Bright Path will also collect various written details about the prospective customer’s intended use case for their Bright Path service, including the nature of their business and campaign, how they ordinarily acquire the numbers they typically call, and, if their proposed use case includes sales calls and/or is not solely live-agent calls, their scrubbing practices vis-à-vis wireless numbers and numbers on the DNC Registry, among other considerations.

III. Bright Path’s Acceptable Use Policy

As part of its customer-onboarding process, Bright Path’s customers will contractually agree to various terms and conditions, including a commitment to comply with Bright Path’s Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Among other things, this AUP will prohibit:

- Using the Services to engage in any activities that are illegal, abusive, false, fraudulent, deceptive or misleading, or any activity that exploits, harms, or threatens to harm children.

- Engaging in any unsolicited advertising, marketing, or other unlawful activities using the Services, including, without limitation, any activities that violate laws applicable to advertising, electronic communications, and telemarketing, including, but not limited to, Section 5 of the FTC Act (15 U.S.C. § 45), the CAN-SPAM Act (15 U.S.C. §§ 7701-7713), the Telemarketing Consumer Fraud and Abuse Prevention Act (15 U.S.C. §§ 6101-6108), the Federal Trade Commission Telemarketing Sales Rule (16 C.F.R. § 310 et seq.), the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (47 U.S.C. §§ 227), the Federal Communications Commission regulations (47 C.F.R. 64.1200 et seq.) and orders implementing the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, and all federal and state Do Not Call and calling-time restriction laws and regulations.
- Using Bright Path's Services in any way that fails to conform to any applicable industry guidelines and standards, including, without limitation, the CTIA Messaging Principles and Best Practices, Short Code Registry Best Practices, and Short Code Monitoring Handbook.
- Creating a false identity, forged email address or header, phone number, or otherwise attempting to mislead others as to the identity of the sender or the origin of a message or phone call, including failing to comply with the Truth in Caller ID Act.

Bright Path's contracts with its customers will stipulate that Bright Path is authorized to suspend and/or terminate all Services in the event of an AUP violation.

IV. Telephone Number Authorization and STIR-SHAKEN Capabilities

Bright Path is in the process of fully implementing the STIR/SKAKEN authentication framework across its entire network, and to help ensure that all calls for which it serves as the originating carrier are compliant with 47 C.F.R. Sec. 64.6301(a)(1)-(2).

As noted above, Bright Path's end users will only be able to use telephone numbers to which they have subscribed from Bright Path, such that Bright Path has a documented, verified relationship between the originating end user and their telephone number(s) used to originate their calls.

In the event an Bright Path end user would use numbers secured from a different service provider, Bright Path would require competent documentary evidence (in the form of an LOA, contract or invoice) evidencing the end user's right to use the associated phone number(s) from the unaffiliated provider(s). Thus, as noted above, given Bright Path's caller ID practices, its customers should be incapable of a spoofing violation prohibited by 47 U.S.C. § 227(e).

V. Proactive Network Monitoring and Analytics

Bright Path will implement various internal monitoring and reporting systems in place to analyze traffic on its network for potentially suspicious traffic patterns that are likely to be associated with illegal robocalls or other potentially unlawful usage. For example, Bright Path's switch provider and monitoring systems will be able to assess traffic based on various criteria, including data relating to short-duration calls, SDP/SDR, answer-seizure ratios, call-failure (404) ratios, and ANI Cardinality Ratio, a measure of uniqueness in the ANI distribution to help identify any suspicious calling patterns.

If Bright Path detects a pattern consistent with illegal robocalls, or has reason to suspect illegal robocalling or spoofing is occurring on its network, Bright Path will take prompt action to identify the party that is using its network to carry these calls and take appropriate action. Bright Path will dedicate significant personnel time and resources, including outside TCPA and telecom counsel, to remain abreast of developments in the law and to be better informed surrounding issues that may arise.

VI. Commitment to Timely Traceback Responses and Cooperation

Bright Path will respond fully and in a timely manner, within 24 hours, to all traceback requests from the Commission, law enforcement, and the industry traceback consortium, and to cooperate with such entities in investigating and stopping any illegal robocallers that use its service to originate, carry, or process illegal robocalls. Bright Path will dedicate sufficient resources to provide timely and complete responses to such requests, and will investigate suspicious activity found by its monitoring systems or reported to it by appropriate parties and take appropriate action.