



HOW TO STOP UNSOLICITED MORTGAGE OFFERS

If you apply for a mortgage, your inbox, answering machine, and mailbox may fill up quickly with competing offers from other mortgage companies. Those offers may include information such as your current lender and the amount of your loan. Know this:

Community First Bank is NOT selling or sharing your information!
But we DO have a way for you to stop those unwanted offers.

The **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)**, the nation’s Consumer Protection Agency, wants you to know why your application for a mortgage may trigger competing offers, how you can use those offers to your benefit, and how to stop getting those offers if that is your choice.

When you apply for a mortgage, your lender usually gets a copy of your credit report. At that point, an “inquiry” appears on your credit report. The inquiry indicates that you are in the market for a loan. Mortgage companies and other businesses buy lists of those consumers who have a recent inquiry from a mortgage company on their credit report, and Federal law allows this practice if the offer of credit meets certain legal requirements.

The unsolicited calls, emails, and letters about competing offers often are called “prescreened” or “pre-approved” offers of credit. They are based on information in your credit report that suggests you meet criteria set by the creditor making the offer – for example, you live in a certain zip code, you have a certain number of credit cards, or you have a certain credit score. Credit bureaus and other consumer reporting companies sell lists of consumers who meet the criteria to insurance companies, lenders, and other creditors.

Clearly, some mortgage companies benefit from the practice. But the **FTC** says *consumers* can benefit also: prescreened offers can highlight other available products and make it easier to compare costs while you carefully check out the terms and conditions of any offers you might consider.

Still, some people may prefer not to receive prescreened offers of credit and insurance at all. Here is how to stop them:

Call **1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688)** or visit optoutprescreen.com (**Opens in a new Window**).

When you call this toll-free number or visit the website, you will be asked to provide certain personal information, including your home telephone number, name, Social Security number, and date of birth. The information you provide is confidential and will be used only to process your request to opt out. Do not enter any personal information until you have checked for indicators that the site is secure, such as a *lock icon* on your browser or a web address that begins with *https*.

Opting out of prescreened offers does not affect your ability to apply for credit or to get it. Your **OPT OUT** request will be processed within five days, but it may take up to 60 days before the prescreened offers stop coming. If you have a joint mortgage, both parties need to **OPT OUT** to stop the prescreened offers. If or when you want to opt back in, use the same telephone number or website.

Put your phone number on the federal government's **National Do Not Call Registry** to reduce the telemarketing calls you get at home. To register your phone number or to get information about the registry, visit [donotcall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov) (**Opens in a new Window**), or call **1-888-382-1222** from the phone number you want to register. You will get fewer telemarketing calls within 31 days of registering your number. Your number stays on the registry for five years, until it is disconnected, or until you take it off the registry.

That said, the FTC wants you to know that many companies use other tools to identify marketing prospects, and that the Do Not Call Registry will not shield you from all telemarketers. For example, companies which you have a business relationship with already are allowed to call you. Even if you opt out of prescreened offers and put your number on the National Do Not Call Registry, you can expect some unsolicited offers.

For more information about the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the law that spells out the terms under which companies can check credit reports, read [Free Credit Reports](#) (**Opens in a new Window**).

This article is from the Federal Trade Commission Website.
<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-stop-junk-mail>