

# THE DENVER CENTER FOR CRIME VICTIMS



## TELEPHONE OPTIONS

We now live in a high-tech world. Therefore, it is important for us all to take personal responsibility for learning how new technologies can affect us.

### DIRECTORY

Telephone Directory (QWEST Customer Service—for your home 1-800-244-1111 or for your business 1-800-603-6000):

If you don't want your name in the QWEST DEX White Pages, you have two choices:

- 1) **Non-listed** – Your name and number can be left out of the directory but still be available from directory assistance.
- 2) **Non-published** – Your name and number can be left out of the directory and not be available from directory assistance.

There's an additional charge for either option. For health and safety purposes, your non-published or non-listed information may be released when you call 911 or other emergency service providers.

### CALLER IDENTIFICATION AND BLOCKING

In the Denver metro area, ALL callers' names and numbers are displayed on every call to those who subscribe to Caller ID. There is a monthly charge and one-time installation fee. If you wish to block your name and number from appearing on Caller ID, you must dial "star (\*) 67" before dialing the number on each call. Or, contact QWEST to order a Line Blocking option to permanently block your name and telephone number (no charge).

### CALL REJECTION

You can store up to 15 numbers from which you do not want to receive calls. If you activate this feature immediately after receiving an abusive or prank call, you would need to know the number of the caller in order to block the call. There is a monthly charge and one-time installation fee.

Call rejection is an option if you do not want to change your telephone number and continue to receive calls you suspect are coming from one location. You can remove blocked numbers whenever you choose.

What to do:

- After receiving an abusive call or to store a number into the system, lift the receiver and dial “star (\*) 60” on a touch-tone phone or “1160” on a rotary phone. Follow the recorded instructions.

#### TO REPORT LOST OR STOLEN QWEST CALLING CARD:

Call 1-800-244-1111 Weekdays 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1-800-628-LOST (5678) after business hours and on weekends.

#### ANNOYANCE CALLS

Threatening and obscene calls not only create a personal problem, but can also become a legal issue. Individuals must know when and how to handle the problem themselves and when to call in local law enforcement or QWEST to assist.

Kinds of annoyance calls:

Three types of calls are considered by law enforcement and QWEST to be annoyance calls:

- Threatening calls – When you and your family are threatened with verbal or physical abuse, or your property is threatened or damaged.
- Abusive, harassing, or obscene calls – Calls meant to terrify or infuriate you through the language used by the caller.
- Nuisance calls – Prank calls designed to irritate you, such as constant and frequent hang-up calls.

#### 1. Threatening calls

Calls in this category may require intervention by the police. These calls include extreme cases: threats 1) to life and property, 2) of kidnapping, robbery or bodily injury to you or members of your family, or 3) bomb threats.

Sometimes these calls are repeated over an extended period of time to harass and frighten you.

What to do:

- Denver is a Call Trace area, so you should
  - Hang up.
  - Pick up the receiver and dial “star (\*) 57” to activate call trace or dial “1157” on a rotary phone. (There is a charge each time you activate this service.)
- Call your local police department. Use the 911 emergency number if your life or property is in imminent danger.

## 2. Abusive, Harassing or Obscene Calls

The purpose of these calls may be to infuriate or terrify you. These calls may include silent or obscene calls. When you receive these calls, it is best to take control and not show emotion or attempt to talk to the caller.

What to do:

- Upon receiving the calls, hang up immediately.
- If you keep receiving calls, you may want to unplug your phone for a time or not answer your phone.
- Keep recorded messages simple: “This is 555-5555. Please leave a message.”
- If the calls persist, you have several alternatives:
  - Hang up, pick up the receiver and dial “star (\*) 57 to activate call trace or dial “1157” on a rotary phone. (There is a charge each time you activate this service.)
  - Call QWEST and have your number changed.
  - Call QWEST to discuss placement of manual trace equipment. This option requires written authorization and is dependent upon equipment availability and continuous calling patterns.
- Call the police.

## 3. Nuisance Calls

Surprisingly, experience has shown that nuisance calls don't just come from strangers, but from acquaintances, neighbors and business associates.

- Prank Calls:

Generally such calls are made at random and, if you do not give the caller any satisfaction from the prank, the person will usually give up after one or two attempts. If you receive a prank call, hang up. You can use Last Call Return. To find out who has called, redial your last incoming call, lift the receiver and dial “star (\*) 69”. The number of the caller will be heard. If you decide to return the call, press “1” and the number will redial.
- Anonymous Calls:

These callers try to get information from you. Don't talk to anyone unless you want to. Use the telephone on your terms, not those of the caller. If the caller asks, “Who is this?” don't give your name. Instead, ask, “What number did you call?” or “Who do you want to speak to?” If the call is legitimate, these questions will normally end the call.

  - 1) Make sure to instruct children and babysitters never to talk on the phone to someone they don't recognize.
  - 2) An innocent comment like, “Daddy's out of town” could be helpful to a burglar.
  - 3) Tell them to ask for a name and number so someone can call back later.

## INDISCRIMINATE SALES OR SURVEY CALLS

These calls are not considered annoyance calls by QWEST or law enforcement agencies since, generally, they represent legitimate use of the telephone network. However, some individuals or businesses may use these methods to take advantage of trusting individuals. One in ten telemarketing calls is fraudulent.

Things to do:

- Be very direct and inform the caller you are not interested, then hang up.
- Ask for written information on products/services or that survey questions be submitted to you in writing. However, this requires that you give out an address.
- Never give out your credit card number on a call unless you ordered the product or service.
- Ask telemarketers to make sure nobody at the firm calls again. the Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991 says telemarketers can call only once a year before being told not to, and requires telemarketers to keep “do not call” lists. If a company calls a second time, you can take them to small claims court seeking \$500 per offending call. The law also bans unsolicited ads sent to fax machines and restricts the use of automatic dialing machines.
- Register your number with the national No Call List. Call 1-888-382-1222.

## KEEP A RECORD OF INCOMING ABUSIVE OR HARASSING CALLS

Keep a log of information available to you regarding the calls: date, time, person, telephone number, background noises, distinctiveness of voice, etc. Keep a pad and pen by the telephone(s) so it gets written down immediately.

Document this information:

1. In what specific ways was the particular call(s) abusive, harassing, obscene or otherwise annoying?
2. Does what the caller says change when different members of the family answer the call?
3. Has your family had any recent publicity (marriage, promotion, crime, etc.)?
4. Can you hear any background noise when you receive an annoying phone call? If so, describe it.
5. Is there anyone who might want to annoy or “get even” with any member of your household?
6. Have you reported these annoyance calls to the police?