

Our Code of Practice for handling customer enquiries and complaints about premium rate services, non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services

PREMIUM RATE SERVICES

This Code commits us to providing you with readily accessible and accurate information on premium rate services available from your Vodafone mobile. Contractual responsibility for premium rate services lies with the company providing the premium rate service itself (the 'service provider'), but this Code sets out useful customer information and advice, and information on how we would handle any enquiries and complaints you may have.

What are premium rate services?

Premium rate services offer some form of information or entertainment that is charged to your mobile phone bill or comes off your pay-as-you-talk balance. Services can also be accessed by landline telephone, fax, interactive TV and personal computer (for example, in e-mails or on the Internet).

Typical services include:

- TV votelines (such as *Big Brother* and *I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!*)
- competitions
- mobile ringtone and logo downloads
- technical helplines (for example, for computer or Internet problems)
- competition scratchcards
- phone chat
- horoscopes
- charitable fund-raising
- sports results
- information (weather, traffic etc)
- directory enquiry services

Some premium rate services including gambling and other 'adult' content are not appropriate for anyone under the age of 18. As we understand that parents are concerned about their children getting access to content of this nature, we have Content Control on our network. This bars access to adult services behind premium rate number ranges unless the customer's age has been verified. This service comes as standard on all our phones, giving parents the highest level of reassurance. For parents concerned about the cost of premium rate calls, Vodafone offers free call barring of the premium rate number range.

How do I recognise premium rate services?

Services are advertised on either phone numbers beginning '09' or, in the case of mobile text services, on four or five-digit short access codes followed by a descriptive key word (for example, 82828 VOTE). Premium rate directory enquiry (DQ) services are advertised on six-digit numbers beginning '118'.

How much do premium rate services cost?

Prices usually range from 60 pence per minute to £2.10 per minute on your Vodafone mobile. Directory Enquiry services range from 85 pence per minute to £3 per minute.

The cost of how much a premium rate service should cost should always be made clear, but if you would like more information on your tariff and a specific premium rate number, simply dial 191 on your Vodafone mobile. Full details of other ways to contact us are available on our website under the 'contact us' icon. Calling services from your mobile phones may cost more than the advertised rate, as you will be billed for the cost of the premium rate service plus the cost of carrying the call. The cost of carrying the call will vary depending on your service package.

Many services available on your mobile phone (for example, football goal alert text messages or ringtone downloads) will be charged at a fixed rate per call (for example, 50 pence per text message or £1.00 per download).

You may also find the number checking facility on the premium rate regulator's website useful, which is available at www.phonepayplus.org.uk. The regulator is discussed in more detail below.

Where does the money go?

Premium rate services are charged on a different basis to ordinary telephone calls. The money paid by users for services is shared between the telephone company carrying the service and the organisation providing the content. This arrangement is known as 'revenue sharing'. You pay for premium rate calls via your mobile phone bill or pay-as-you-go card in the normal way. We will then 'share' that money with the company providing the content.

What are premium rate text subscription services?

When you download a favourite tune as a ringtone for your phone or put a picture of a celebrity on your mobile's screen, you're probably using a premium rate text (also called 'SMS') subscription service.

You usually access a premium rate text subscription services by texting a four or five-digit shortcode, like 82828, followed by a word describing the service you're after. This might be VOTE if you're voting someone off the *Big Brother* House, or JOKE for the latest jokes. The most likely way you'll be asked to pay is by 'reverse-billed' premium rate. This is where you pay to receive, rather than send, text messages.

Services are often advertised on TV, radio, or in magazines offering ringtone or logo downloads or updates on football scores. You will only be charged if you send back instructions to the number advertised. The premium rate service will start sending you your requested message and you'll then get another message or series of messages for more downloads until you tell them to stop.

How do I stop receiving premium rate text subscription services?

If you decide you no longer want to receive the messages, simply text 'STOP' to the shortcode you got the service from. This will end the service and stop any more payments being taken from your account or pay-as-you-go card.

If you have mistakenly signed yourself up to an unwanted service, simply text the word 'STOP' to the sender. This will unsubscribe you from reverse-billed messages.

Who regulates PRS?

PhonepayPlus is the UK regulator for PRS. PhonepayPlus was previously known as ICSTIS – the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services.

What is the role and remit of PhonepayPlus?

PhonepayPlus regulates the content, promotion and overall operation of all premium rate services. It does this using its Code of Practice, which sets out the rules with which all providers of premium rate services must comply.

PhonepayPlus' role is to prevent consumer harm. Among other things, it requires:

- clear and accurate pricing information
- honest advertising and service content
- appropriate and targeted promotions

It investigates all complaints received about premium rate services. Where it decides that its rules have been broken, it can fine the companies responsible, bar access to their services, and bar the individual behind a company from running other services under a different company name. Lesser problems can be dealt with by it issuing formal reprimands or ordering companies to come to it for prior approval. Its service is free to consumers and independent.

How do I make a complaint to PhonepayPlus?

You can make a formal complaint by:

- completing the online form on the website at www.phonepayplus.org.uk
- calling its free helpline on 0800 500 212
- writing to PhonepayPlus at FREEPOST WC5468, London SE1 2BR

It helps PhonepayPlus investigations if the promotional material for the service, together with any other relevant details, could be provided.

Can I find out more about the company running the premium rate line?

If you want to check a premium rate number on your bill, you can use PhonepayPlus' number checking facility on its website at www.phonepayplus.org.uk.

As well as identifying the premium rate service, the facility will let you know whether it is under investigation for any reason and of any action PhonepayPlus is taking.

How can I avoid receiving unsolicited communications?

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) helps you to make sure your telephone number is no longer available to organisations, including charities and voluntary organisations, who may telephone you with offers and information.

The TPS can be contacted at:

Telephone Preference Service (TPS)
DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London W1W 8SS

TPS Registration line - 0845 070 0707
E: tps@dma.org.uk
W: www.tpsonline.org.uk

The Facsimile Preference Service (FPS) helps you to make sure your fax number is no longer available to organisations, including charities and voluntary organisations, who may fax you with offers and information.

The FPS can be contacted at:

Facsimile Preference Service (FPS)
DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London W1W 8SS

FPS Registration line - 0845 070 0707
E: fps@dma.org.uk
W: www.fpsonline.org.uk

Can I bar access to premium rate services?

If you feel that you do not want to risk calling premium rate services at all, ask us about placing a bar on calling numbers with 09 prefixes.

What can I do to try to get a refund?

This may not always be possible, but you should speak to us in the first instance to discuss any problems with your bill.

If you believe that you have been the victim of a premium rate scam, you should contact PhonepayPlus. In certain circumstances, PhonepayPlus will instruct the company running the premium rate service to offer a refund. You should contact the company providing the service directly to ask for the refund. PhonepayPlus informs all those who complain to it of the outcome of its investigations and, if a refund is instructed, it will inform you of the company's contact details.

Is there an Ombudsman service to look into disagreements?

Vodafone is a member of Ombudsman Services Communications (OCS). It has been set up to sort out disagreements between members (such as Vodafone) and their customers.

It provides a free and independent service that has been approved by the regulator, Ofcom. Its job is to investigate complaints fairly by listening to both sides of the story and looking at the facts.

OCS can be contacted at:
Ombudsman Services Communications
PO Box 730
Warrington WA4 6HL

W: www.os-communications.org
E: enquiries@os-communications.org
T: 0330 440 1614

What are premium rate services on the Internet?

Some companies offer access to certain Internet sites at premium rates rather than charging by credit card. If you come across a site that is charged at premium rate, you will, in almost all cases, have to download a piece of computer software, known as a 'dialler', onto your computer. The dialler will disconnect you from your usual Internet Service Provider (ISP) and dial a premium rate number to access the site.

More information is available at

www.phonepayplus.org.uk/pdfs/prs_internet_factsheet_oct04.pdf

Who is responsible for Vodafone's compliance with the Code?

Our Code compliance representative is:

Name	Richard Sullivan
Address	Baird House, The Connection, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2FN
Email	PRSmanager@vodafone.com

NON-GEOGRAPHIC NUMBERS AND PERSONAL NUMBERING SERVICES

This Code commits us to providing you with readily accessible and accurate information on services available on non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services from your Vodafone mobile. Non-geographic numbers in almost all cases start '08', and technically are called 'Number Translation Services' (NTS). Personal numbering services start '070'.

What are non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services?

Non-geographic numbers are so called as the number dialled does not relate to a specific geographic location, but instead relates to a particular service. At a technical level, the number dialled by a caller is 'translated' by the network to a geographic number to deliver the call to its destination. This 'number translation' is why the technical term 'Number Translation Services' is used.

Types of services include information services, some technical helplines, access to telephone banking, sales and customer service lines and dial-up pay-as-you-go Internet services.

A personal numbering service is based on the principle of a flexible virtual telephone number. The service, based on number translation, enables end-users to be called, using a single personal telephone number, and to receive those calls at almost any telephone number.

How do I recognise non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services?

Non-geographic numbers include the number ranges 0800, 0844, 0845, 0870, 0871 and 0500.

Personal numbering services start '070'. Standard mobile phone numbers start '07', but are not followed by a '0'.

How do I find out the cost of a call to a non-geographic number and personal numbering service?

Services offered using non-geographic numbers are often similar to premium rate services, covered above, except that prices range from free to caller up to a maximum of usually no more than 35 pence per minute from your Vodafone mobile. The cost of calls to a personal numbering service is up to 67 pence per minute.

Vodafone is committed to publishing the usage charges of non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services on our website and in our price lists in a way that makes the cost of calling non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services clear and easy-to-find. If you would like any more advice on non-geographic numbers, call us on 191 from your Vodafone mobile.

Who regulates non-geographic numbers and personal numbering services?

The Office of Communications – Ofcom

What is the role and remit of Ofcom?

It is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications and wireless communications services.

How do I make a complaint to Ofcom?

Telephone 020 7981 3040
Fax 020 7981 3334
Textphone 020 7981 3043 (this number is only for those people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired)
Website www.ofcom.org.uk/complain/

Who is responsible for Vodafone's compliance with the Code?

Our Code compliance representative is:

Name Richard Sullivan
Address Baird House, The Connection, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2FN
Email NTSmanager@vodafone.com