

# Consumer Connections

Brought to you by the Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division  
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, FCC

January 2018

## Helpful Consumer Information to Keep in Mind for the New Year

### FCC Resources from Holiday Webinar

- [Stop Unwanted Calls and Texts](#)
- [Spoofing and Caller ID](#)
- [Protect Your Mobile Device](#)
- [Wireless Connections and Bluetooth Security Tips](#)
- [Disaster Relief Scams](#)
- [FCC Fraud and Scam Alerts](#)

### FTC Resources from Holiday Webinar

- [Before Giving to a Charity](#)
- [Shopping Tips](#)
- [Comparing Products Online](#)
- [Billed for Merchandise You Never Received](#)
- [Using Layaway Plans](#)
- [Travel Tips](#)
- [FTC Scam Alerts](#)

**Webcast of the FCC and FTC Holiday Tips Webinar:**  
[Event Page Link](#)

## FCC is Now Accepting Nominations for the Chairman's Awards for Advancement in Accessibility

Innovation is one of the core drivers for advancement in accessibility for people with disabilities. The Chairman's Awards for Advancement in Accessibility (Chairman's AAA) is an FCC program recognizing products, services, standards and other innovative developments that improve the experience of people with disabilities in telecommunications and technology. The Chairman's AAA celebrates outstanding private and public sector ventures as part of the Commission's continuing effort to facilitate ongoing exchanges among the telecommunications industry, assistive technology companies, app developers, government representatives and consumers to share best practices and solutions for accessible communications technologies. To submit a nomination send an email to [ChairmansAAA@fcc.gov](mailto:ChairmansAAA@fcc.gov). For more details on what to include in your submission visit [www.fcc.gov/chairmansaaa](http://www.fcc.gov/chairmansaaa). Nominations are due on or before February 28, 2018.

## Consumer Tips Holiday Webinar



From Left to Right: Rebecca Lockhart (FCC), Diana Coho (FCC), Alma Hughes (FCC), Colleen Tressler (FTC) and Celeste McCray (FCC).

In partnership with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau's (CGB) Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division (CAOD) hosted a webinar to address issues that impact consumers the most during the holiday season. This webinar provided valuable consumer protection tips,

resources and best practices on how to be a smart consumer. Topics discussed included: robocalls and spoofing; protecting your mobile device; public Wi-Fi security tips; privacy issues associated with using mobile devices and apps; and charitable donations. Panelists discussed tips that help consumers be aware of scams when making purchases or charitable contributions; safely use public Wi-Fi networks and passwords; and how to protect your mobile device by staying aware of your surroundings and safeguarding your phone and other electronics while you are out in public.

## Upcoming Events

- **Disability Advisory Committee Meeting February 28, 2018**  
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554  
Commission Meeting Room (Room TW-C305)  
[Event Page Link](#)
- **National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) March 4 - 10, 2018**  
Stay tuned to [fcc.gov/outreach](http://fcc.gov/outreach) for upcoming information.

## Additional Resources for Topics in This Issue

- For more information about the Chairman's AAA, please visit: [fcc.gov/chairmansaaa](http://fcc.gov/chairmansaaa)
- Nominations for the Chairman's AAA should be sent to: [ChairmansAAA@fcc.gov](mailto:ChairmansAAA@fcc.gov)
- November 2017 Open Commission Meeting: [Event Page Link](#)

## Contact Us

Please contact us if you have any questions about consumer issues and outreach at the FCC or have any recommendations for this newsletter.

[outreach@fcc.gov](mailto:outreach@fcc.gov)

Visit our webpage at: [fcc.gov/outreach](http://fcc.gov/outreach)

## Accessibility Innovation Expo



In October 2017, CAOD and the FCC's Connect to Health Task Force hosted the Accessibility Innovations Expo at the Pepco Edison Place Gallery. This first of its kind expo showcased next-generation innovations and breakthroughs for users of all abilities. In the health arena, the event demonstrated cutting-edge broadband-enabled solutions that showed how consumers benefit from the connected health revolution. At one of the exhibits that displayed technology designed for those who are blind and have low vision, some users cried as they tried on headsets and could see for the first time in their lives. The version of these assistive technologies pictured here (to the left) uses virtual reality innovations connected to software that allows low vision users enhanced

vision through sharp vivid color, a wide range of magnification, and auto focus capabilities. More information about this expo is available on the [event page](#).



## DC Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday Celebration



CAOD Staff, Alma Hughes (left) and Chantal Virgile (center), distribute information at the DC Mayor's Annual Holiday Celebration.

In partnership with the DC Office on Aging, CAOD provided information at the December 13, 2017 DC Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday Celebration that was held at the DC Armory. Approximately 3,500 older adults attended the event where several government agencies and community organizations exhibited. This event was a wonderful opportunity to share resources and consumer-focused information with the Older American community. The number one question asked was about robocalls. Specifically, they asked: "What can I do about the many calls I receive?" We shared information on how to prevent unwanted calls as well as several helpful consumer tips including how to avoid scams and other topics that are particularly important throughout the holiday season.

## Commission Meeting Updates: New Rules on Robocalls

In November 2017, the Commission acted to allow voice service providers to block certain types of unlawful robocalls. The calls appear to be from legitimate telephone numbers, but they are from numbers that do not or cannot make outgoing calls. The Commission will allow voice service providers to block calls claiming to be from a phone number placed on a "do not originate" list by the number's subscriber. The new rules also prohibit providers from blocking 911 emergency calls.