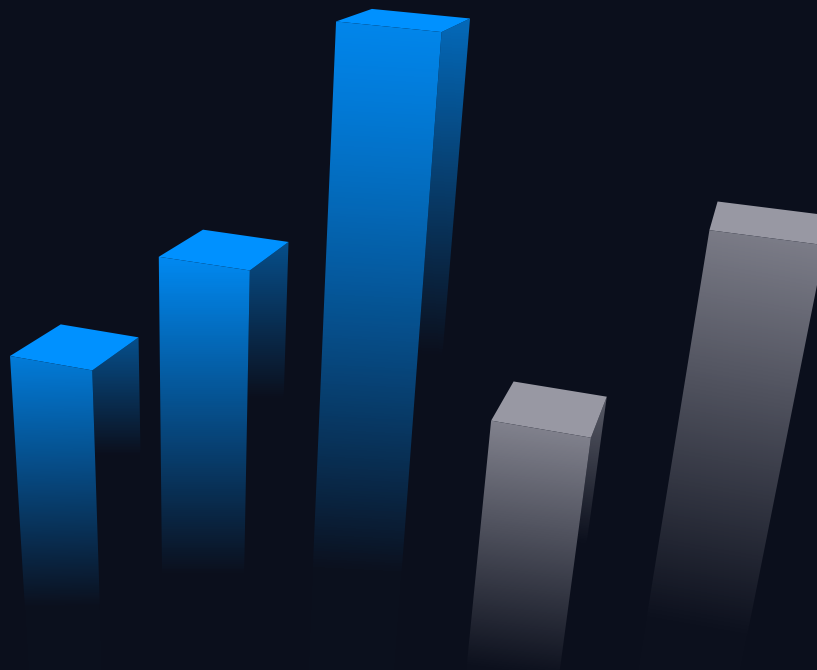




# The RoboKiller Report **2021** PHONE SCAM INSIGHTS



**RoboKiller**

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# PHONE SPAM IN 2021: KEY TAKEAWAYS

**RoboKiller** strives to create a world without phone spam. In our pursuit, we analyze millions of calls and texts to identify trends and neutralize emerging threats. Here's what we observed in 2021.

## Spam Texts Are the New Spam Call



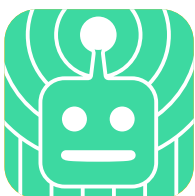
- Americans received more spam texts in 2021 than ever before
- Inside: 5 scam texts to look out for

## Despite New FCC Regulation, Spam Calls Surge



- STIR/SHAKEN was designed to end spoofed spam calls, but its impact thus far has been negligible
- Inside: What's behind the slow start?

## Take Back Control With RoboKiller



- RoboKiller prevented over \$100 million in consumer losses in 2021
- Inside: How to stay safe from phone spam with RoboKiller

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**87,850,585,036**

Total Spam Texts in 2021

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**58%**

Annual Increase in Spam Texts

**\$10,066,331,169\***

Estimated Losses to Spam Texts in 2021

**\$11,050,689**

Estimated Losses Prevented by RoboKiller in 2021

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\* According to RoboKiller, many scams go unreported to the FTC.

## Spam Texts Are the New Spam Call

The (text) message is clear: Scammers want to steal from you in a new way. They sent an astronomical 87.8 billion spam texts in 2021, far surpassing the 72.2 billion spam calls they placed in that same timeframe.

This is no fad or fluke: In fact, it's the second consecutive year in which spam texts outpaced spam calls. What gives?

YEAR	2020	2021
SPAM TEXTS	55,456,989,137	87,850,585,036
SPAM CALLS	54,670,045,755	72,236,875,541

### MANY FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SHIFT

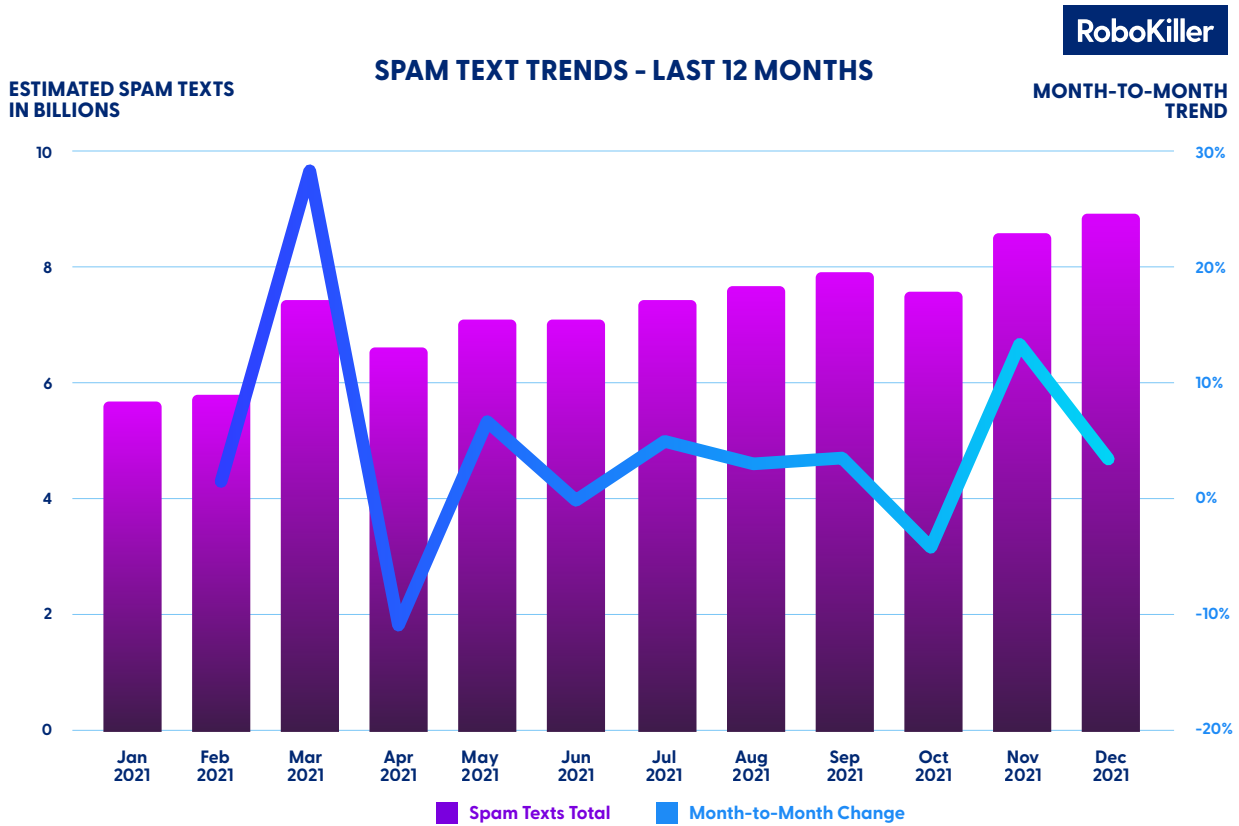
If there's a way for scammers to get their hands on your hard-earned money, they'll find it. Things have changed a lot in recent years, and they've adjusted with the times.

- **COVID-19 struck.** Spam calls [dropped by 50%](#) between April and June 2020, as the pandemic took hold. Scammers had to act quickly to stay relevant in a remote world not well suited to large call center-based operations, so they largely shifted to text messaging. Spam texts surpassed spam calls for the first time in 2020 and the gap widened in 2021.
- **Preferences changed.** The masses have come to embrace texts over calls. This is especially true among younger generations: According to [one survey](#), 75% of millennials would rather text than talk. Scammers know they're more likely to reach certain targets by text message.
- **STIR/SHAKEN went into effect.** Efforts to curb spam calls have been fierce. The FCC's [STIR/SHAKEN](#) mandate is one such measure. Although it may prove useful in curbing spam calls (more on this below) it doesn't address spam texts, and scammers know that.

# THE STATE OF THE SPAM TEXT

## NOW, TEXT SCAMS ARE A YEAR-ROUND PROBLEM

Americans never got a break from spam texts in 2021. In fact, January and February were the only months in which scammers sent fewer than 6 billion texts.



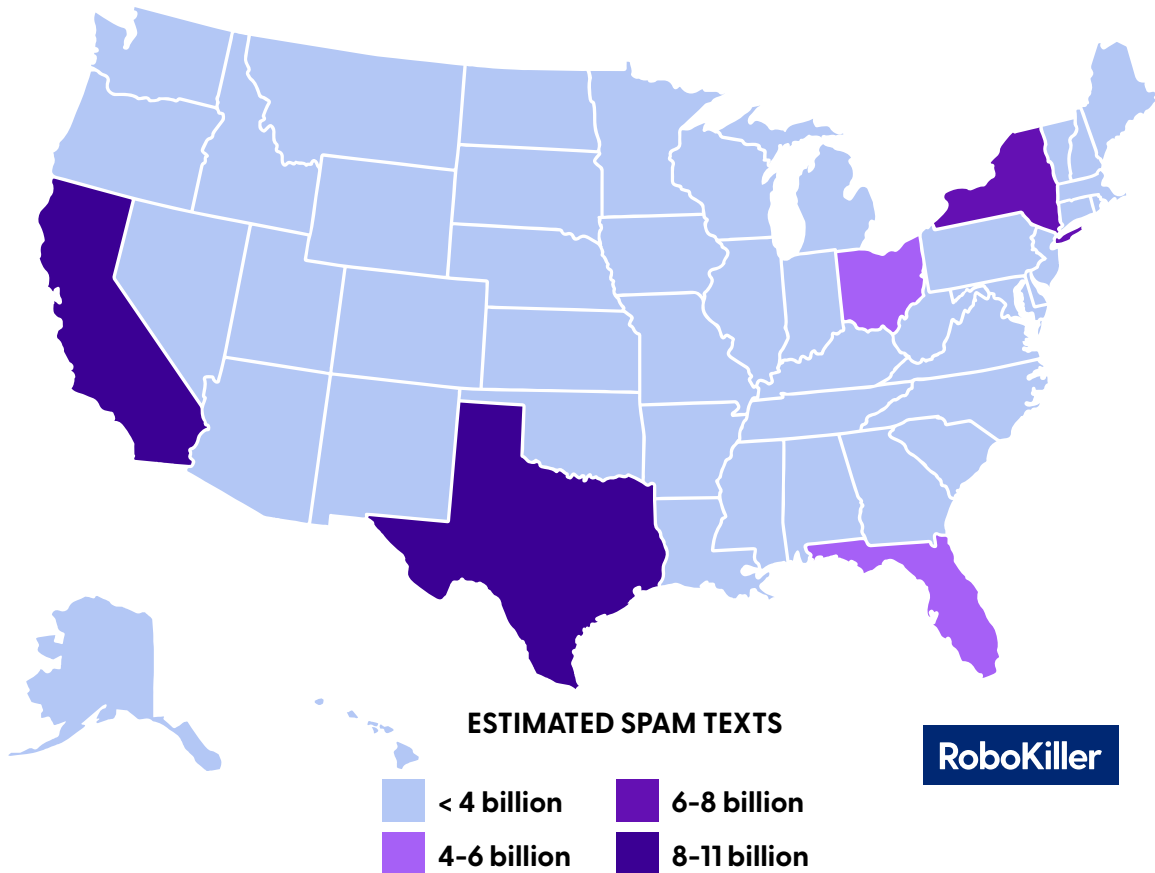
Expect this trend to continue in 2022. Scammers know people like to text, and as regulations for spam calls tighten, they’ll be incentivized to take the SMS route to reach their targets.

# THE STATE OF THE SPAM TEXT

## SCAMMERS' EFFORTS ARE BROAD AND FORMIDABLE

It may come as no surprise that the most frequently texted states are among the most densely populated (Texas, California, New York, Florida, and Ohio).

2021 TOTAL ESTIMATED SPAM TEXTS BY STATE

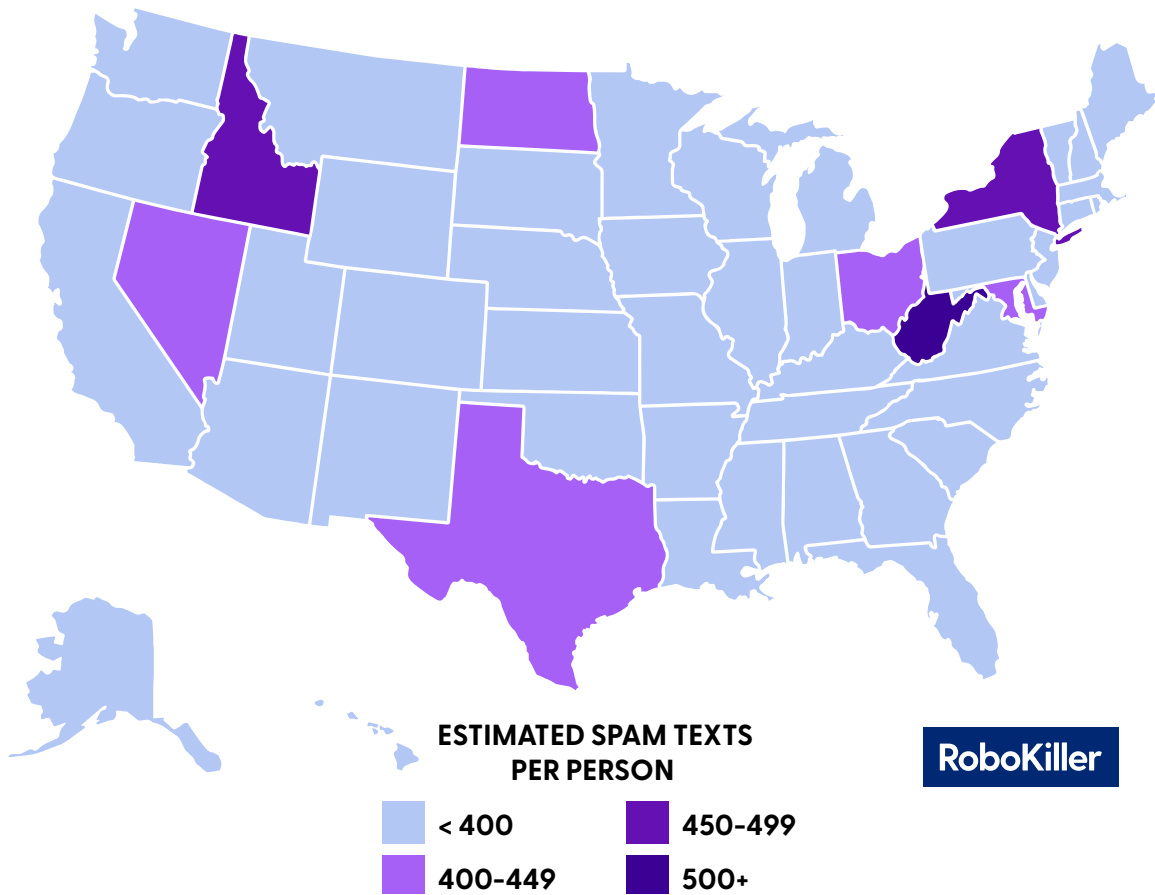


STATE	ESTIMATED SPAM TEXTS
TEXAS	10,095,771,312
CALIFORNIA	9,093,288,416
NEW YORK	7,866,422,408
FLORIDA	4,711,701,088
OHIO	4,004,379,666

# THE STATE OF THE SPAM TEXT

However, you'll want to keep an eye out for text scams if you live in any of the most spammed states per capita. Chances are, you'll get more than your fair share of SMS spam if you live in West Virginia, Idaho, New York, Texas, or Nevada.

2021 ESTIMATED SPAM TEXTS BY STATE PER CAPITA



STATE	ESTIMATED SPAM TEXTS PER PERSON
WEST VIRGINIA	515
IDAHO	491
NEW YORK	483
TEXAS	422
NEVADA	420

## CERTAIN SCAMS ARE PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS

Delivery scams (scammers impersonating the likes of Amazon, USPS, and FedEx) are the most prominent text scam, accounting for over 26% of all SMS scams in 2021.

Scammers send texts containing links to track packages or adjust user preferences—only they're not as they appear. The messages are instead designed to get the recipient to divulge sensitive information or download malware onto their device.

## TOP 5 TEXT SCAMS, 2021

CATEGORY	ESTIMATED SPAM TEXTS	% OF ALL TEXTS
DELIVERY	23,076,811,343	26.3%
COVID-19	5,696,455,112	6.5%
BANK	3,071,087,772	3.5%
APPLE + HARDWARE SWEEPSTAKES	2,601,735,612	3%
HEALTHCARE	1,060,272,839	1.2%

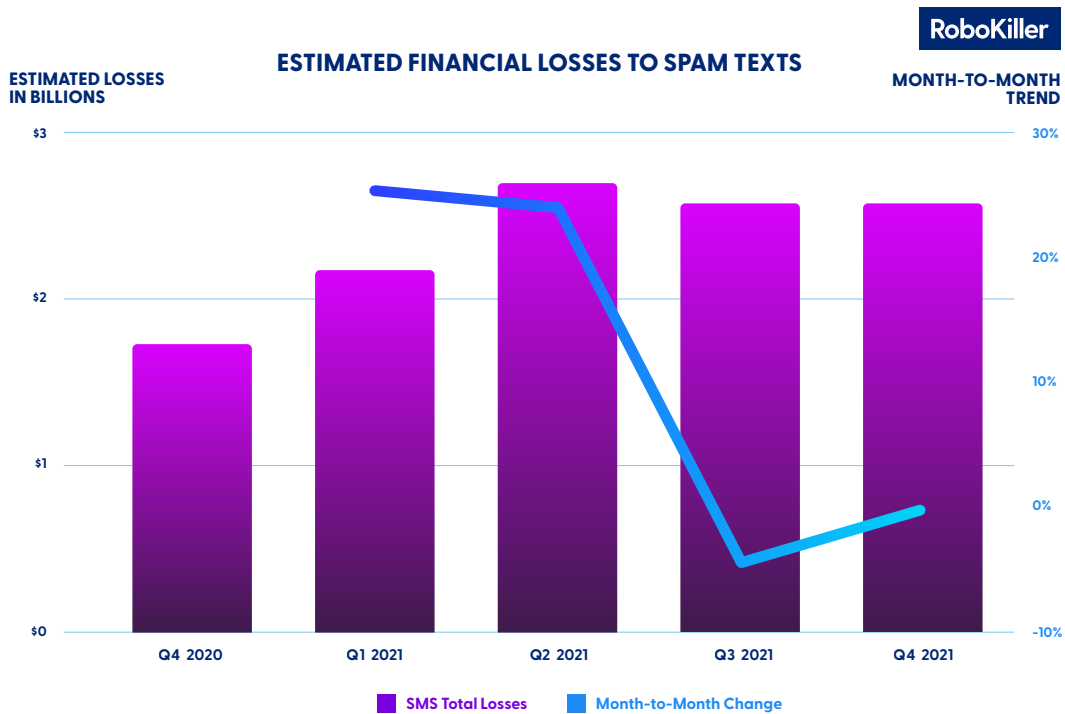
Also be on the lookout for COVID-19 scams, the second most common text scam in 2021 (6.5%). Scammers offer COVID-19 tests in exchange for personal and financial information.



# THE STATE OF THE SPAM TEXT

## BOTTOM LINE: TEXT SCAMS ARE COSTLY AND HERE TO STAY

Spam texts are proving a viable method for scammers. In fact, scammers stole an estimated \$10 billion from victims in 2021. It's clear by now that text scams are no flash in the pan.



## ROBOKILLER IS FIGHTING BACK

RoboKiller was the first to address text scams, and our 99% effective spam text blocker is designed to keep you safe. To date, we've kept \$400 million in Americans' pockets and out of the hands of scammers.

Be sure to take these [steps to stay safe from phone scams](#), and download RoboKiller for [iOS](#) or [Android](#) today. For additional spam text protection, [download TextKiller for iPhone](#).

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**72,236,875,541**

Total Spam Calls in 2021

**32%**

Annual Increase in Spam Calls

**\$30,315,520,899\***

Estimated Losses to Spam Calls in 2021

**\$97,369,487**

Estimated Losses Prevented by RoboKiller in 2021

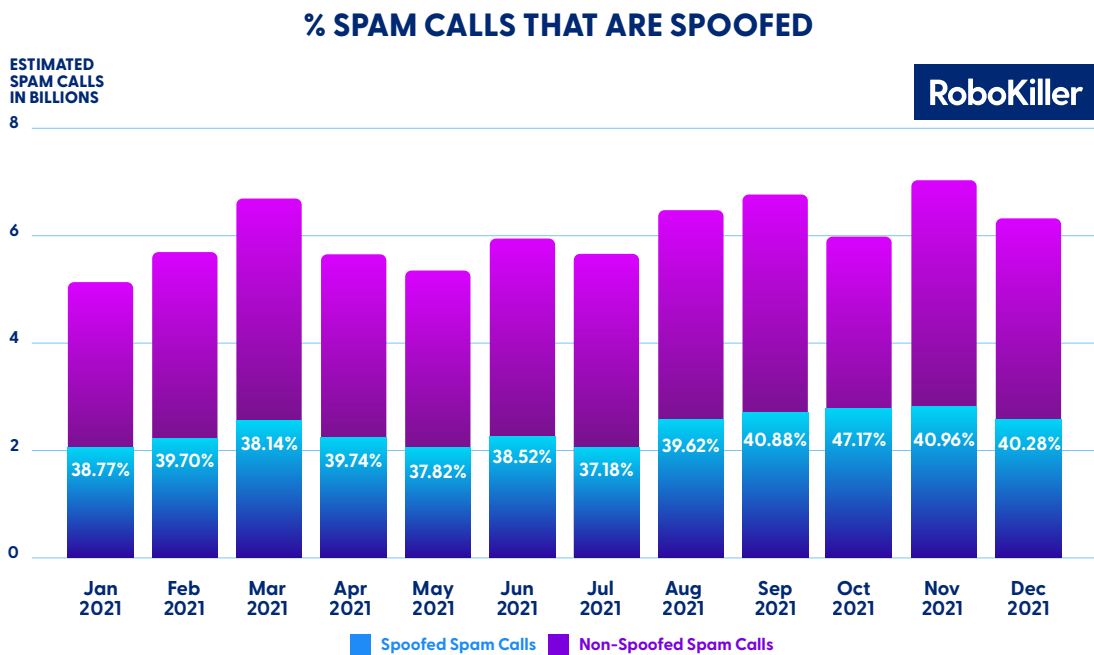
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\* According to RoboKiller, many scams go unreported to the FTC.

## Despite New FCC Regulation, Spam Calls Surge

STIR/SHAKEN (Secure Telephone Identity Revisited/Signature-based Handling of Asserted information using toKENs) may sound like an instruction for a mixed drink, but it has nothing to do with mixology. Rather, it’s a framework devised by the FCC to address a growing issue: caller ID spoofing. Large voice service providers had until June 30th, 2021 to implement it.

The problem is, the deadline came and went and STIR/SHAKEN is yet to make a dent in spoofed calls. The rate of spam calls originating from spoofed caller IDs remained in the vicinity of 40% for most of the year.



Meanwhile, spam calls as a whole skyrocketed by 32% in 2021 to 72.2 billion. Even with the rising popularity of spam texts, scammers haven’t abandoned more “traditional” scamming methods—anything but.

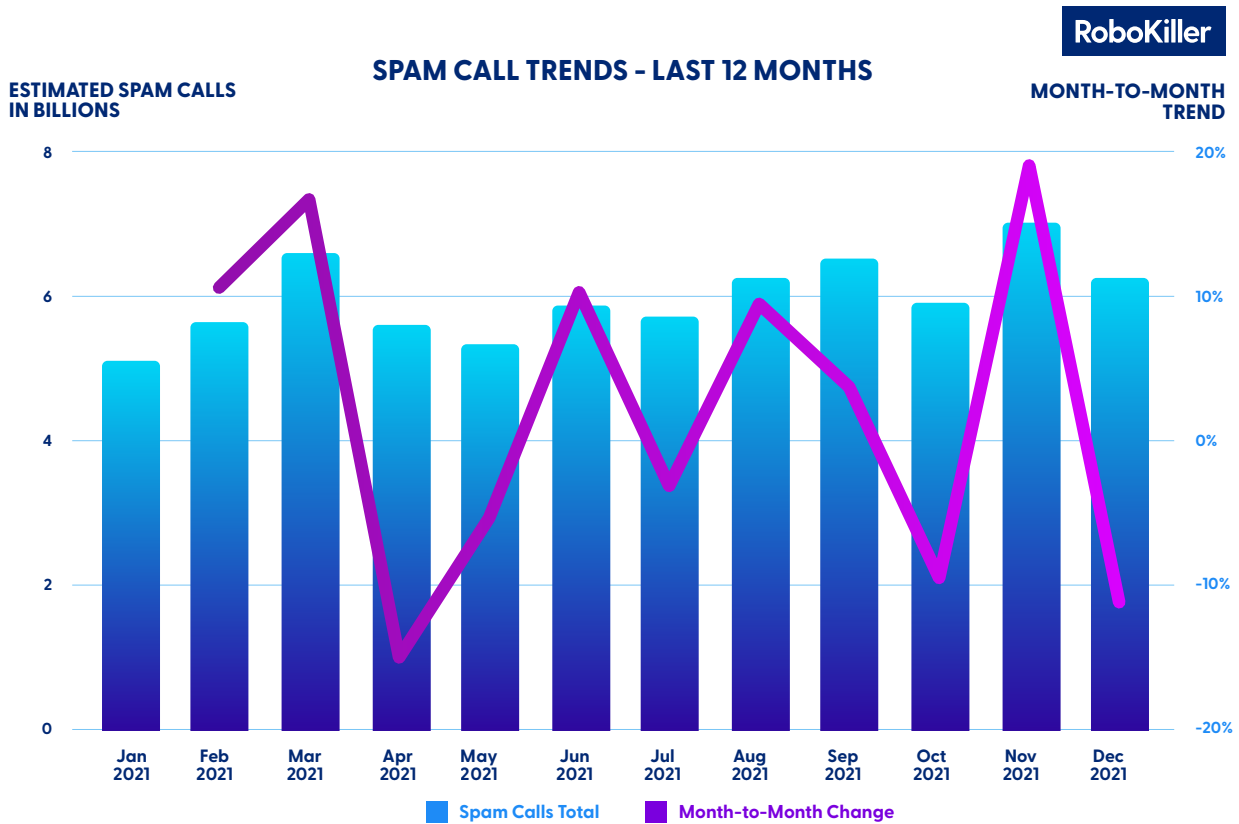
## LACK OF PROVIDER BUY-IN IS LIMITING STIR/SHAKEN

Several factors may be to blame for STIR/SHAKEN’s slow start, but perhaps most glaring is a lack of buy-in among carriers. As of September, merely [one-third](#) of major carriers had implemented the FCC framework.

Small carriers, defined as 100,000 subscribers or fewer, have until mid-2022 to comply (the FCC deadline was recently [pushed up a year](#)). As a result, it may be a while before we see how effective STIR/SHAKEN can be.

## STIR/SHAKEN OR NOT, SCAMMERS STAYED BUSY IN 2021

Spam calls fluctuated month-over-month in 2021, but remained at elevated levels compared to 2020. Phone call scams peaked at 7 billion in November, and stayed above 5 billion every month of the year.

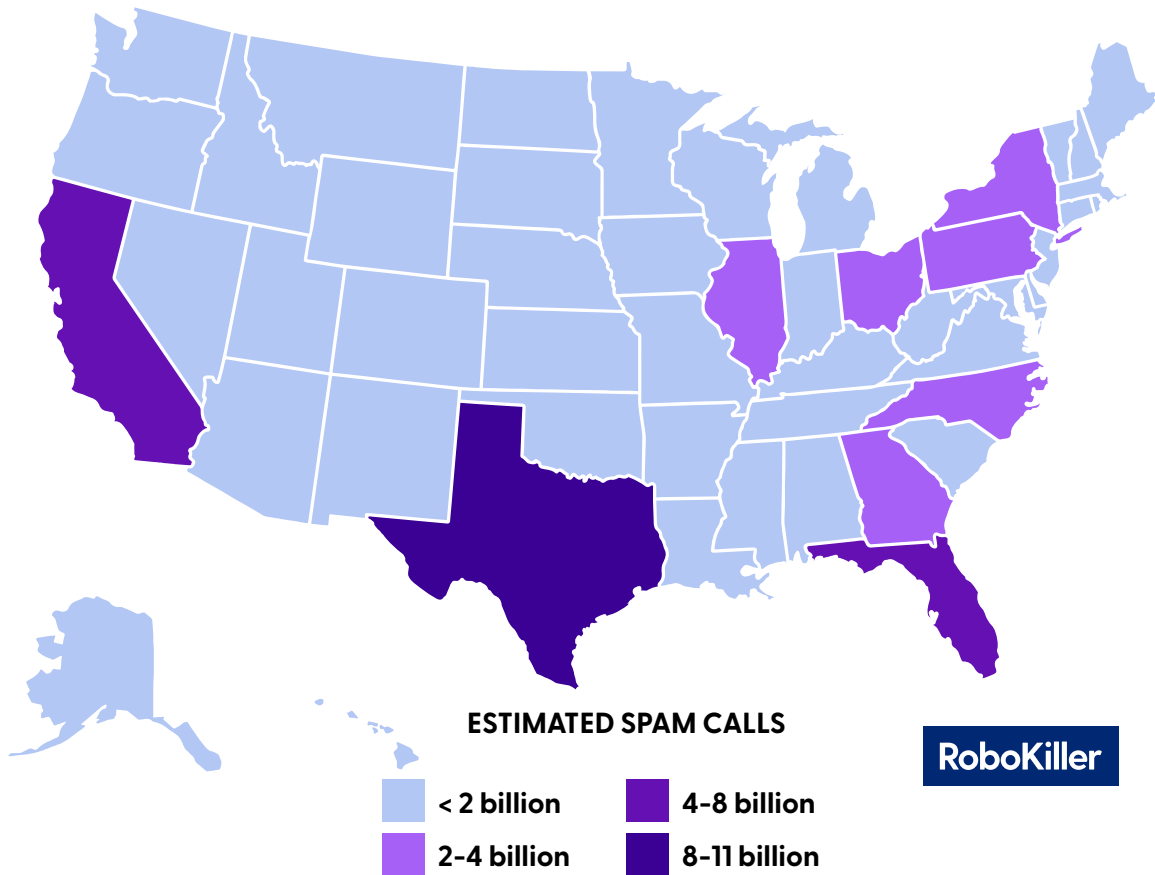


# THE STATE OF THE ROBOCALL

## SCAMMERS ARE REACHING PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

Densely populated states Texas, California, Florida, Ohio, and Georgia make up the top five most spam called states.

2021 TOTAL ESTIMATED SPAM CALLS BY STATE

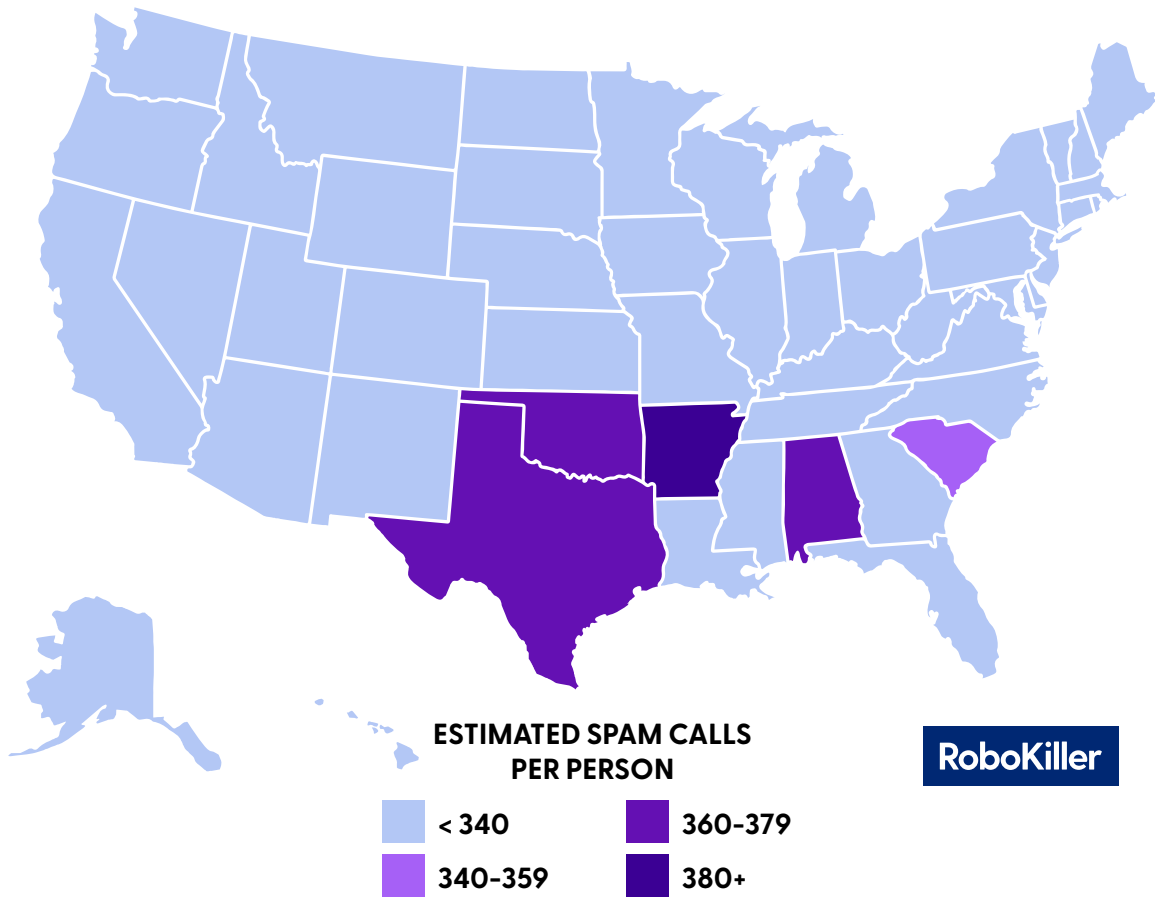


STATE	ESTIMATED SPAM CALLS
TEXAS	8,895,603,622
CALIFORNIA	7,113,989,672
FLORIDA	4,873,590,078
OHIO	3,142,198,567
GEORGIA	2,973,724,407

# THE STATE OF THE ROBOCALL

If you're looking to avoid these calls, you'll probably want to steer clear of Arkansas, Texas, Alabama, Oklahoma, and South Carolina. These five states ranked highest in spam calls per person.

2021 ESTIMATED SPAM CALLS BY STATE PER CAPITA



STATE	ESTIMATED SPAM CALLS PER PERSON
ARKANSAS	383
TEXAS	372
ALABAMA	363
OKLAHOMA	361
SOUTH CAROLINA	359

## SCAMMERS DEPLOY A WIDE RANGE OF POTENT SCAMS

Chances are, you’ve received a car warranty scam call at one point or another. In fact, it’s [statistically possible](#) that every American with a smartphone will receive more than one of these calls during any given year. Vehicle warranty scams are the largest robocall on record since RoboKiller began tracking scam calls in 2017. Don’t give out your credit card number; these callers aren’t associated with the manufacturer or dealer—they just want your money.

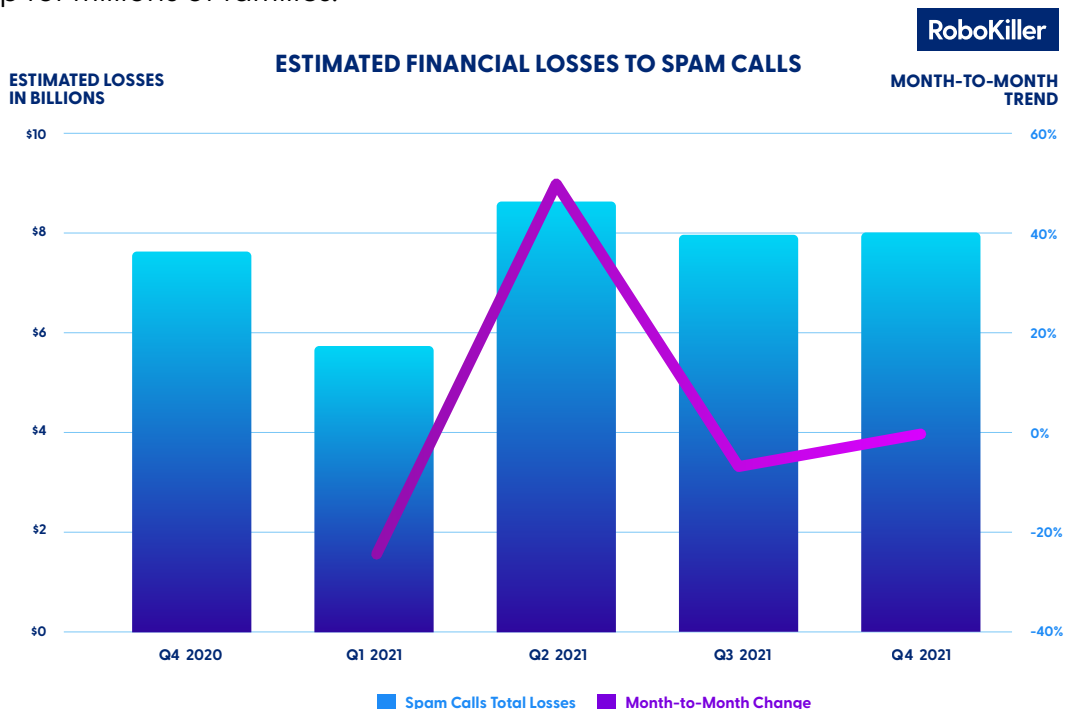
TOP 5 ROBOCALL SCAMS, 2021

CATEGORY	ESTIMATED SPAM CALLS	% OF FINGERPRINTED CALLS
VEHICLE WARRANTY	12,995,413,910	18%
HEALTH INSURANCE	3,106,185,648	4.2%
RELIGIOUS	3,041,172,460	4.1%
SOCIAL SECURITY	2,961,711,897	3.9%
STUDENT LOANS	2,802,790,771	3.1%

Also watch out for religious scams (4.1% of all scams in 2021) in which religious figures manufacture a crisis in the hopes you’ll help them out financially.

## CALL SCAMS ARE HITTING AMERICANS’ POCKETS

Scammers stole an estimated \$30 billion from Americans with phone call scams in 2021, marking a 22% decrease from 2020’s \$39 billion. Despite the year-over-year dip, the impact of these scams can’t be overstated. Nearly [40%](#) of Americans lack the funds to cover a \$400 emergency. Considering the average phone scam stole [nearly \\$1,200](#) in 2020 (the FTC is yet to release its 2021 findings as of the time of this writing), one scam can cause significant financial hardship for millions of families.



# THE STATE OF THE ROBOCALL

## ROBOKILLER IS FIGHTING BACK

RoboKiller is the leading independent spam blocker. Our impact in the fight against call scams includes:

ROBOKILLER

**600,000,000**

Calls Blocked

**3,000,000,000**

Calls Processed

**\$400,000,000**

Losses Prevented

**99%**

Effective Blocking

IMPACT

Be sure to take these [steps to stay safe from phone scams](#), and download RoboKiller for [iOS](#) or [Android](#) today.



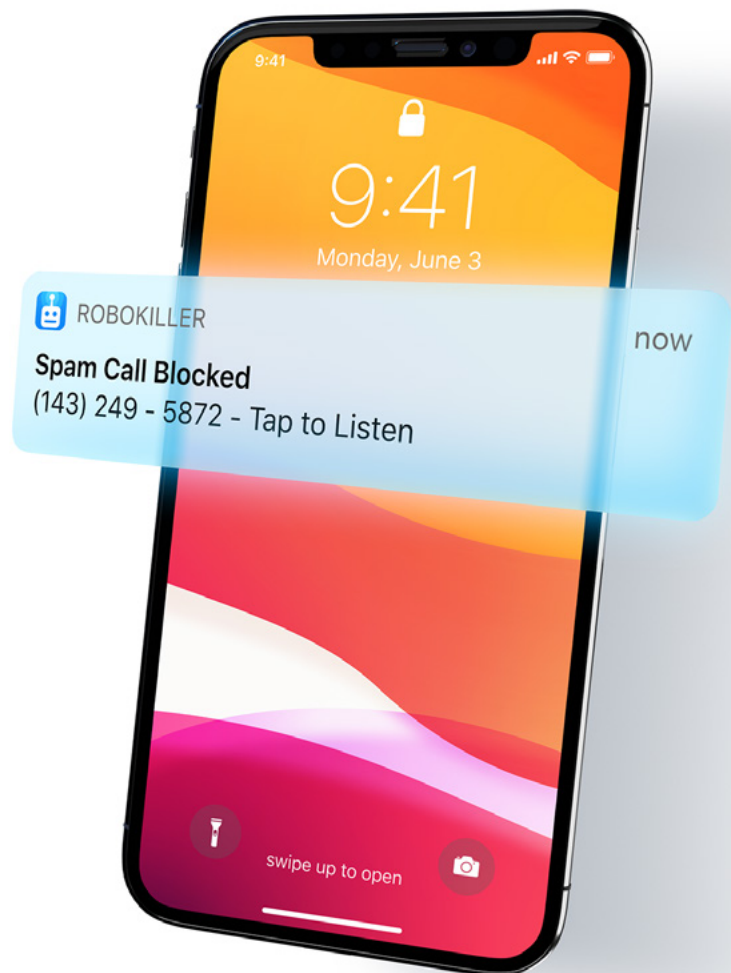
# MEET ROBOKILLER

## Take Back Control Over Your Phone With RoboKiller

*Everyone hates phone spam. RoboKiller is creating a world without it.*

We're all better off without car warranty calls, delivery scams, and annoying telemarketer sales pitches. And we're all safer without the risk a crafty scammer will cut into our savings.

RoboKiller's award-winning, AI-powered technology stops **99%** of unwanted spam calls and texts, so everyone can live life spam-call-free™.



**Take back control over your phone** with RoboKiller. Download the app for iPhone or Android and start your **FREE 7-day trial** today.

