

Messaging rules and regulations



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Disallowed content

To ensure a trusted messaging ecosystem, the following content categories are strictly forbidden and violating these rules can lead to your Toll-Free number being blocked

Category	Forbidden Content Includes
High-Risk Financial Services	Payday loans, short-term high-interest loans, auto/mortgage/student loans, third-party lending, stock alerts and cryptocurrency.
Gambling and Sweepstakes	Casino apps, sports betting, contests, rebates, 50/50 raffles, giveaways, instant win games (spin-to-win wheel) or other prize awards
"Get Rich Quick" Schemes	Work-from-home programs, risk investment opportunities, and multi-level marketing.
Third-Party Debt Collection	Debt consolidation, debt reduction, and credit repair programs. Note: TFN may be considered for 1st party collections only with express written consent in the United States ONLY . In Canada there is no TFN collections traffic, 1st party or otherwise.
Illegal and Controlled Substances	Content related to federally illegal drugs (including cannabis), and prescription drugs.
Lead Generation and Third-Party Marketing	Selling or sharing customer opt-in data with third parties. You may only send marketing from your own brand.
Job Postings	Third party job boards Note: TFN may be considered if the first party job brand is the one doing the hiring.
Deceptive Content	Phishing, spoofing, fraud, or deceptive marketing.

*[Click here](#) for the expanded notes on A2P Disallowed Content

Disallowed content (cont.)

The "SHAFT" categories (Sex, Hate, Alcohol, Firearms, and Tobacco) have specific sending rules, especially concerning age-gating.

SHAFT Category	Restriction on Toll-Free Numbers
Sex and Hate	Strictly prohibited (includes pornographic, sexually explicit, profane, or hate speech content).
Firearms	Not allowed (includes content related to the sale of guns, other weapons, fireworks or explosives).
Tobacco and Vaping	Not allowed.
<u>Indirect</u> Alcohol Promotion (<i>US Exception</i>)	Allowed only to US destinations, and ONLY if proper age-gate mechanisms are in place
<u>Direct</u> Alcohol Promotion	Not allowed.

Proper Age-Gating Requirements:

Requirement	Description
Proper Age Gate	The user must enter their full date of birth (Day, Month, Year) at opt-in.
Insufficient Method	A simple "Are you over 21?" checkbox is not sufficient.
Canada Restriction	Age-gated content of any kind is not allowed on Toll-Free numbers sent to Canadian destinations.

Rules and regulations

Must-dos for your Toll-Free Messaging campaign

Call to Action (CTA)

- All US Toll-Free messaging programs are required to include a Call to Action.
- This is the way you advertise the program to potential users and gain consent to send messages. A call to action may be presented verbally (i.e. at point of sale), via print ad (i.e. text JOIN to 8XX-XXX-XXXX), or via web (i.e. mobile number entry form).
- **Call-To-Action must be market ready.**

Your call to action must include

- Clear program description (e.g. Get updates about our sales and promotions!)
- “Message and data rates may apply” disclosure
- Link to Terms and Conditions
- Link to Privacy Policy
- Message frequency (#msgs/mo, msg frequency varies, recurring messages, etc)*
- Opt-out instructions (Reply STOP to end)*
- HELP instructions (Reply HELP for help)

*A CTA is still required for one-time transactional campaigns, but message frequency and opt-out instructions are optional
HELP instruction is optional if it is communicated in the Terms and Conditions

Call to Action (CTA) examples

Recurring message program examples

Want to learn more about messaging?

Text **JOIN** to 8XX-123-4567 to receive text messages from Brand Name.

Message frequency varies. Message and data rates may apply. Reply **HELP** for help. Text **STOP** to cancel. Terms and Conditions can be viewed at [{Terms link}](#). Privacy Policy can be viewed at [{Privacy link}](#)

Keyword

{Brand Logo}

Text {keyword} to 8XX-XXX-XXXX to receive {type of alerts} from {brand name}. Message frequency varies. Message and data rates may apply. Reply **HELP** for help. Reply **STOP** to cancel. [{Terms and Conditions link}](#) and [{Privacy Policy link}](#)

Brand Name's SMS Program
Receive informational alerts right to your phone!

Phone number *

XXX-XXX-XXXX

Sign up for SMS

By submitting your mobile phone number and checking the box, you are consenting to receiving informational alerts from {brand name}. Message frequency varies. Message & data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help. Reply STOP to cancel. By leaving this box unchecked you will not be opted in for SMS messages at this time. Terms and Conditions can be viewed at [{Terms link}](#). Privacy Policy can be viewed at [{Privacy link}](#). By leaving the box unchecked, you will not be opted into this short code campaign.

Web

By submitting your mobile phone number and checking the box, you are consenting to receiving {type of alerts} from {brand name}. Message frequency varies. Message and data rates may apply. Reply **HELP** for help. Reply **STOP** to cancel. [{Terms and Conditions link}](#) and [{Privacy Policy link}](#). By leaving the box unchecked, you will not be opted into this Toll-Free messaging campaign..

Hey, would you like to start getting informational alerts from Brand Name? It won't be too often, message frequency can vary, and just a heads-up, message and data rates may apply.

If you ever want to stop, you can just reply "STOP," and if you need help, text "HELP." You can also check out our terms and privacy policy at [{link}](#).

Would you like to sign up to receive informational alerts from {brand name}?

Yeah, that sounds great! consent to you signing me up for messages.

Perfect, thanks! You'll get a confirmation text in just a second.

Verbal

Would you like to receive {type of alerts} from {brand name}? {Message Frequency}. Message frequency varies. Message and data rates may apply. Reply **STOP** to end. Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy can be found here: [{link}](#). Would you like to sign up to receive {type of alert} from {brand name}?

Call to Action (CTA) examples

One-time program (OTP) examples

Keyword

{Brand Logo}

We will send you an SMS verification code to complete the process. What's your mobile number?

[Phone Number field]

By providing your mobile number and tapping "Continue", you agree to receive a one-time verification code via SMS from Sinch. Message and data rates may apply. {Terms and Conditions link} and {Privacy Policy link}

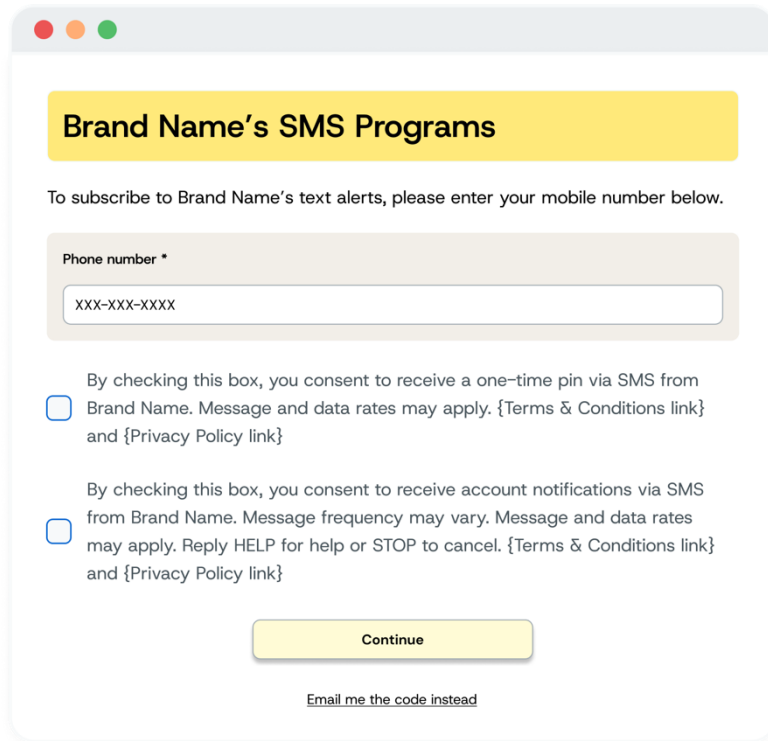
[Continue button]/[Email me the code instead]

One-Time Alert

By submitting your mobile phone number and checking the box, you are consenting to receive a one-time SMS delivery notification from {brand name}. Message and data rates may apply. {Terms and Conditions link} and {Privacy Policy link}. By leaving the box unchecked, you will not be opted into this Toll-Free messaging campaign.

Call to Action (CTA) examples

Multiple use cases, with one being an OTP (one-time program/Pin) example



Brand Name's SMS Programs

To subscribe to Brand Name's text alerts, please enter your mobile number below.

Phone number *

xxx-xxx-xxxx

By checking this box, you consent to receive a one-time pin via SMS from Brand Name. Message and data rates may apply. [Terms & Conditions link](#) and [Privacy Policy link](#)

By checking this box, you consent to receive account notifications via SMS from Brand Name. Message frequency may vary. Message and data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help or STOP to cancel. [Terms & Conditions link](#) and [Privacy Policy link](#)

Continue

[Email me the code instead](#)

Multiple use cases, with one being OTP

To subscribe to {brand name} text alerts, please enter your mobile number below.

[Phone number field]

By checking this box, you consent to receive a one-time pin via SMS from {brand name}. Message and data rates may apply. [Terms and Conditions link](#) and [Privacy Policy link](#)

By checking this box, you consent to receive account notifications via SMS from {brand name}. Message frequency may vary. Message and data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help or STOP to cancel. [Terms and Conditions link](#) and [Privacy Policy link](#)

[Continue]

[Email me the code instead]

Rules and regulations

Must-dos for your Toll-Free Messaging campaign

STOP keyword to Opt-Out

The STOP keyword is a mandatory, **network-managed feature** that allows mobile subscribers to easily opt out of receiving text messages. This process is handled automatically at the carrier network layer to ensure universal compliance with telecommunication regulations.

What Triggers a Network Opt-Out?

It is critical to understand that the network-level block is only triggered when the keyword STOP is sent as the sole content of the message. It is NOT case sensitive, but it **must be the only word in the text**.

Note: VALID: STOP, stop, Stop, stoP vs. **INVALID:** "Stop texting me" or "Stop it!"

The Opt-Out Process:

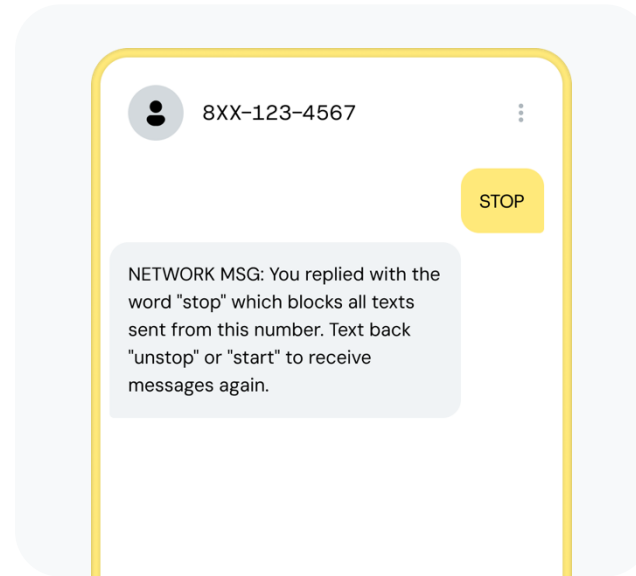
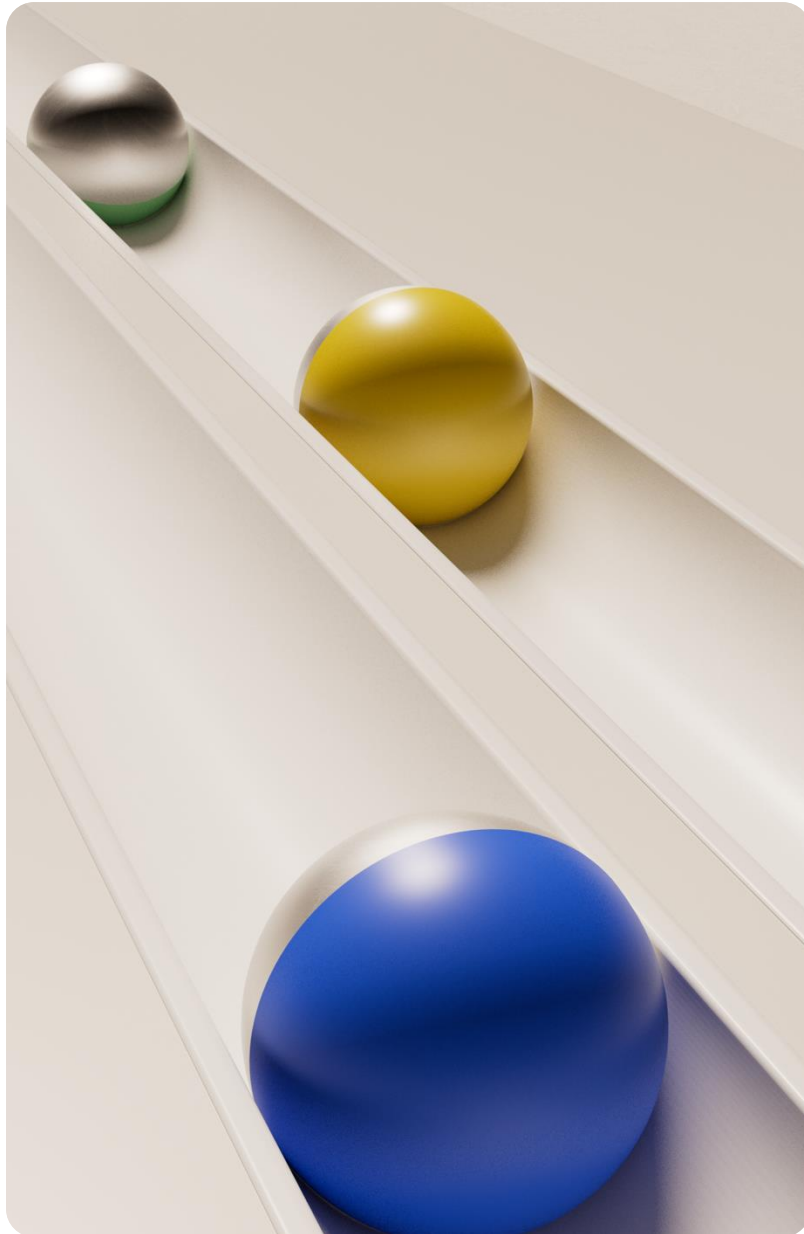
1. A subscriber texts STOP (or the French equivalent, ARRET) to a Toll-Free Number.
2. The carrier network automatically intercepts the message and sends a standardized confirmation reply (see table below).
3. All subsequent attempts to send messages from that Toll-Free Number to that subscriber will be blocked by the network and will fail with an error code of 1110 "User Opted Out (STOP)".
4. Sinch forwards the original STOP message to you for your awareness. Upon receiving this message, **you are required** to remove that subscriber from your campaign and contact lists to ensure full compliance and prevent failed message attempts.

Language Equivalents and Network Responses

Language	Keyword	Network Message
English	STOP	"NETWORK MSG: You replied with the word "stop" which blocks all texts sent from this number. Text back "unstop" or "start" to receive messages again."
French (Canada)	ARRET (STOP)	"MSG RÉSEAU: Vous avez répondu avec le mot "ARRET" qui bloque tous les textes envoyés à partir de ce numéro. Renvoyer le message "NONARRET" pour recevoir à nouveau les messages."

STOP keyword examples

English and French



STOP keyword to Opt-Out English

NETWORK MSG: You replied with the word "stop" which blocks all texts sent from this number. Text back "unstop" or "start" to receive messages again.



ARRET keyword to Opt-Out French

"MSG RÉSEAU: Vous avez répondu avec le mot "ARRET" qui bloque tous les text esenvoyés à partir de ce numéro. Renvoyer le message "NONARRET" pour recevoir à nouveau les messages."

Rules and regulations

Must-dos for your Toll-Free Messaging campaign

UNSTOP/START keywords to opt back in

- Subscribers who have previously opted out can easily opt back in to a messaging campaign using the network-managed UNSTOP/START keywords.

How it works:

- **User Action:** A previously opted-out subscriber texts UNSTOP or START to the same Toll-Free Number.
- **Automatic Opt-In:** The network recognizes these keywords and automatically removes the block, allowing the subscriber to receive messages again from that number.
- **Client Notification:** Sinch forwards the UNSTOP or START message to your account, signaling the user's renewed consent.

Canadian French-Language Equivalent:

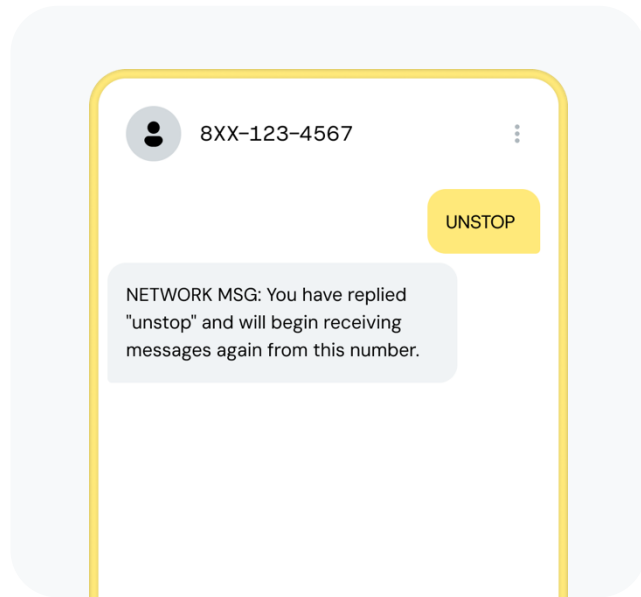
- The keyword NONARRET (Unstop) triggers the same opt-in process.

NOTE: Keyword requirements are largely the same as Canadian Short Codes, with the addition of French-language equivalents. Any other keywords/auto responses (including HELP or AIDE) need to be managed by the client.

Language	Keyword	Network Message
English	UNSTOP or START	<p>NETWORK MSG: You have replied "UNSTOP" and will begin receiving messages again from this number.</p> <p>NETWORK MSG: You have replied "START" and will begin receiving messages again from this number."</p>
French	NONARRET	"MSG RÉSEAU: Vous avez répondu "NONARRET" et recommencer à recevoir des messages de ce numéro."

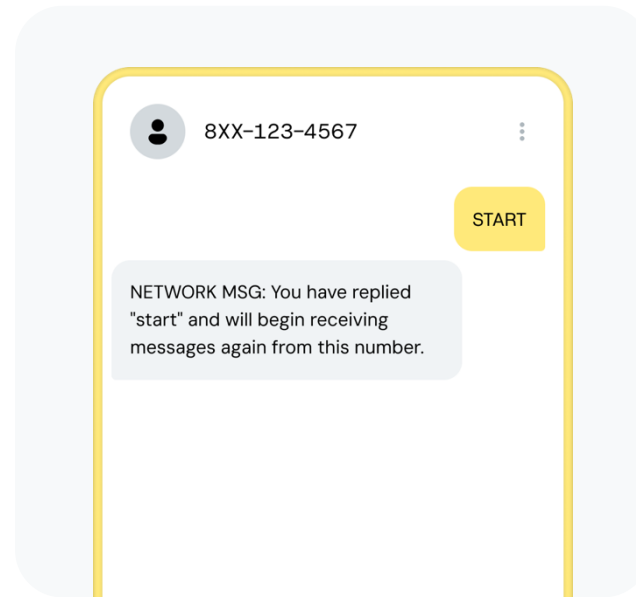
UNSTOP/START keyword examples

English and French



UNSTOP keyword English

NETWORK MSG: You have replied "unstop" and will begin receiving messages again from this number.



START keyword English

NETWORK MSG: You have replied "start" and will begin receiving messages again from this number.



NONARRET keyword French

Vous avez répondu "NONARRET" et recommencer à recevoir des messages de ce numéro.

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Must-dos for your Toll-Free Messaging campaign

HELP/AIDE keywords for customer support

- Subscribers can request assistance from your brand by using the HELP/AIDE keywords.

How it works:

- **User Action:** A subscriber texts HELP or AIDE to the Toll-Free Number.
- **Automatic Opt-In:** Unlike network-managed keywords like STOP or UNSTOP, you are responsible for configuring and sending the response to HELP/AIDE messages.
- **Required Information:** Your automated response must include your brand/program name and customer care contact information (e.g., a support phone number, email address, or website).

Canadian French-Language Equivalent:

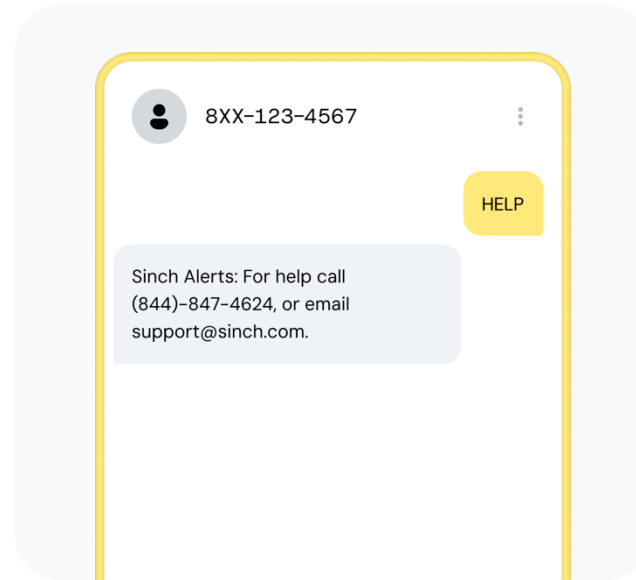
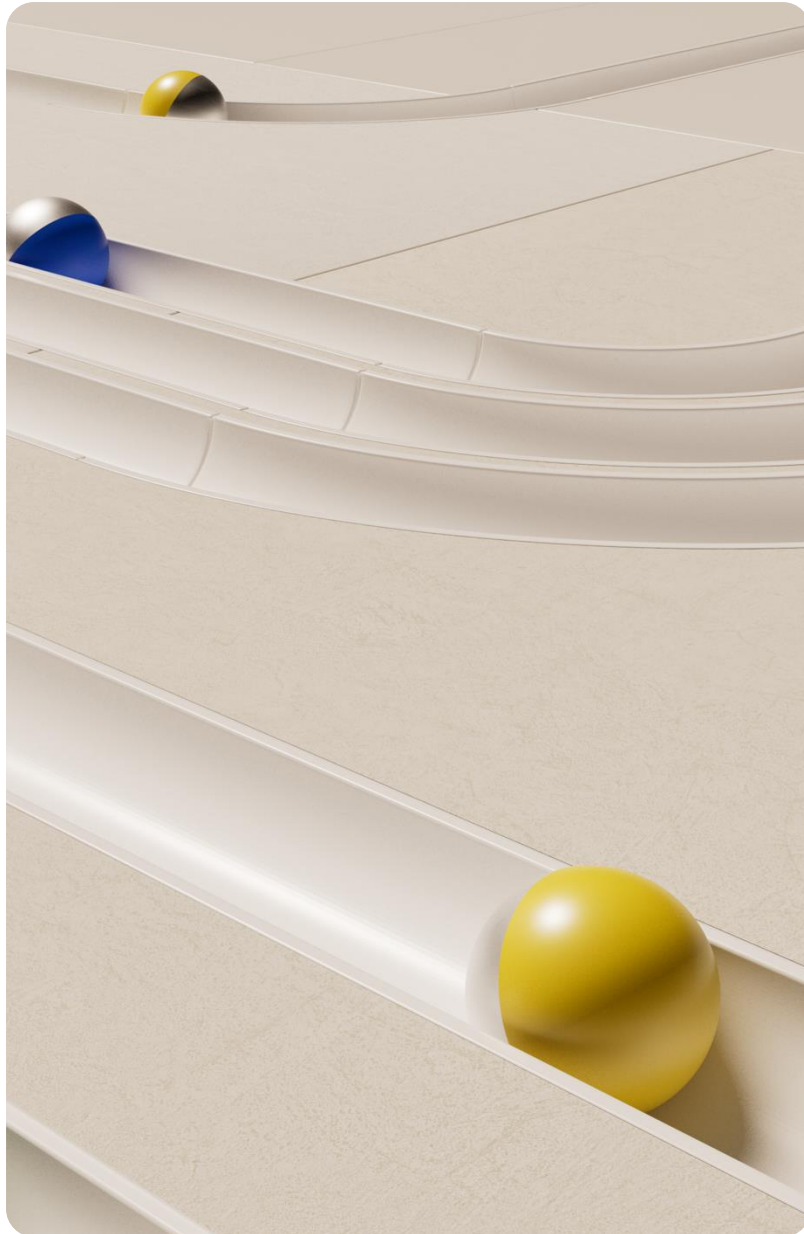
- The keyword AIDE (Help) triggers the same process and should generate a similar response in French.

NOTE: It is your responsibility to manage all HELP/AIDE keyword responses. The network does not handle these automatically.

Language	Keyword	Example Message
English	HELP	Sinch Alerts: For help call (844)-847-4624, or email support@sinch.com.
French	AIDE	Offres Sinch: Pour obtenir de l'aide, appelez le (844)-847-4624, ou envoyez un courriel à support@sinch.com.

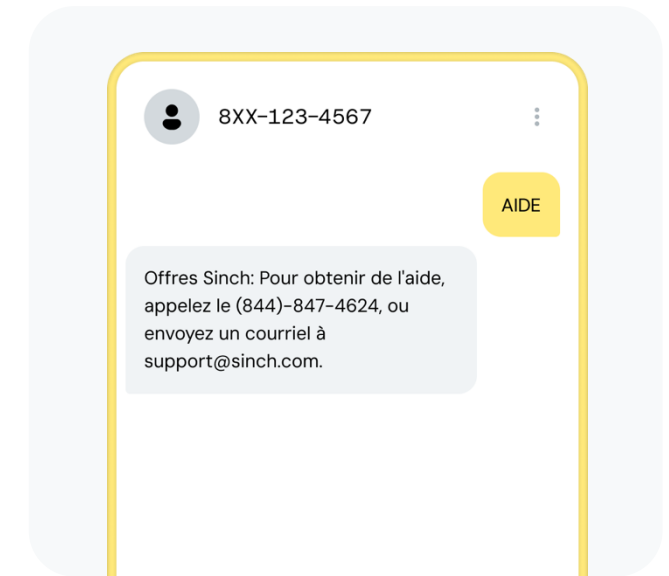
HELP keyword examples

English and French



HELP keyword to Opt-Out English

Sinch Alerts: For help call (844)-847-4624, or email support@sinch.com.



AIDE keyword to Opt-Out French

“Offres Sinch: Pour obtenir de l'aide, appelez le (844)-847-4624, ou envoyez un courriel à support@sinch.com.”

Message flow

The order of your messages matter. Here's how to create a message flow that meets requirements.

If you're running a recurring program, you must send a message when a new customer opts in. This is called the opt-in confirmation message, or sometimes referred to as a welcome message. It's the first message that is sent to your customer confirming to them they've opted into your program. Your brand also needs to respond to HELP and opt-out keywords (STOP, QUIT, CANCEL, END, and UNSUBSCRIBE) whether your Toll-Free messaging program is recurring or one-time.

Message response requirements:

Opt-in message

- Program/brand name*
- Message frequency (i.e. Msg freq. may vary)
- "Message and data rates may apply"
- Customer care information (i.e. Reply HELP for help)
- Opt-out instructions (i.e. Reply STOP to end)

*Brand name is the only requirement for **one-time** programs

Help response

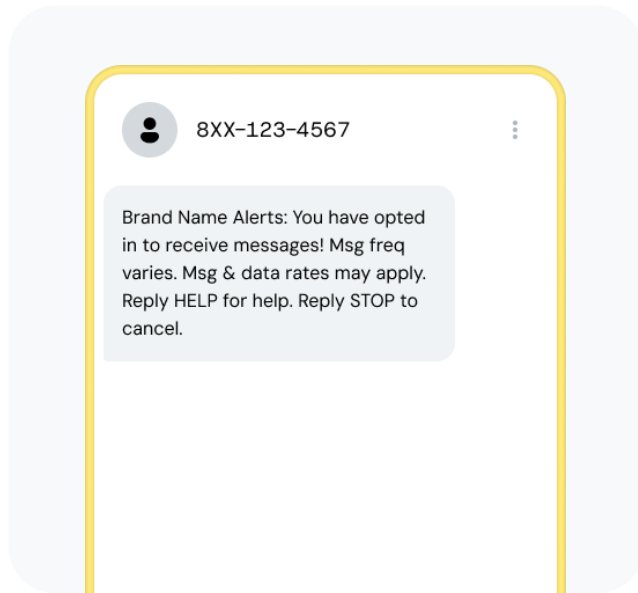
- Program/brand name
- Contact info (email/phone/support web page)

Opt-out message

- Program/brand name
- Confirmation that user has unsubscribed and will not receive any more messages

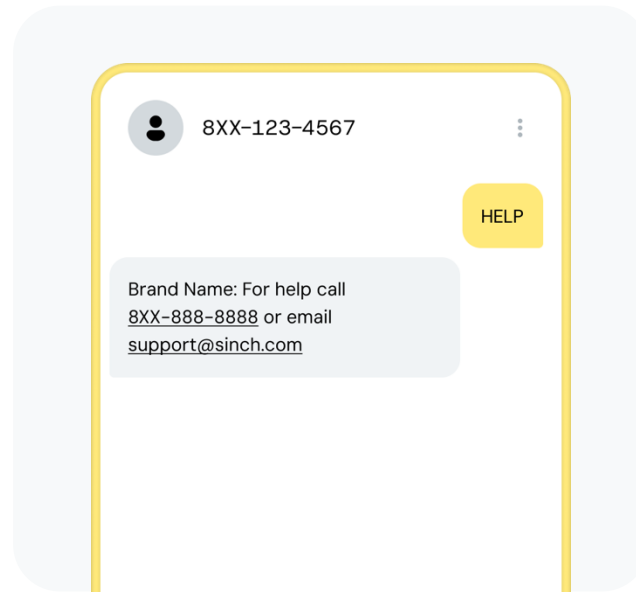
Message flow examples

A Toll-Free message flow that meets requirements



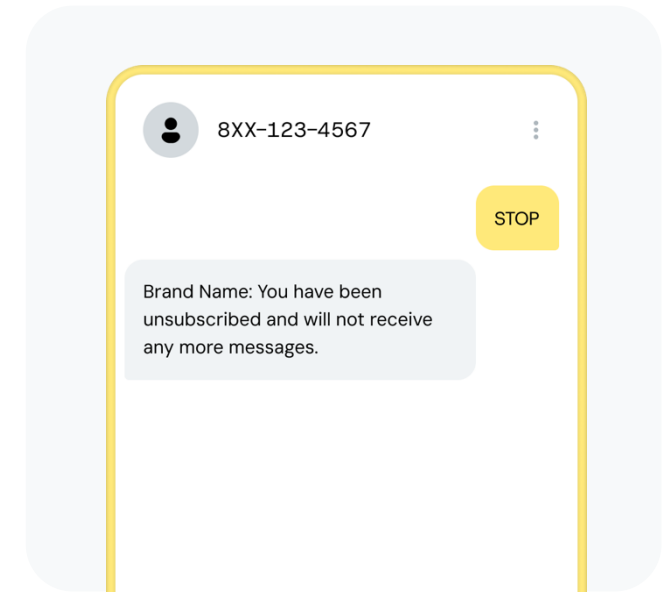
Recurring program Opt-In confirmation message

{Brand name} alerts: You have opted in to receive messages! Msg freq varies. Msg and data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help. Reply STOP to cancel.



Help response

{Brand name}: For help call 8XX-XXX-XXXX or email example@example.com



Opt-out response

{Brand name}: You have been unsubscribed and will not receive any more messages.

Rules and regulations

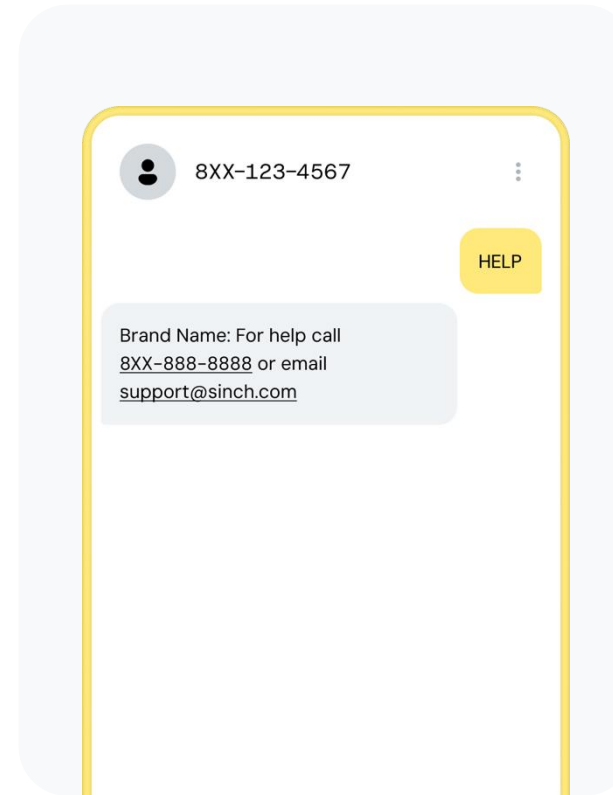
Want to get your Toll-Free Messaging campaign approved the first time? Follow these guidelines:

Terms and conditions

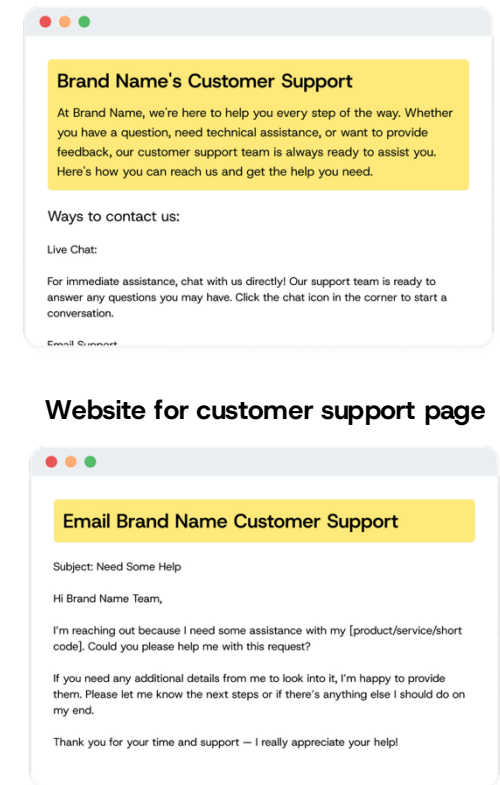
Your terms and conditions page will be checked for:

- Program name and description
- Message frequency
- "Message and data rates may apply"*
- Customer care contact information (reply HELP for help) and another form of customer support (phone number, email or a direct link to the customer support page)
- Opt-out instructions (i.e. Reply STOP to end)*
- Link to Privacy Policy

*Terms and Conditions are still required for one-time transactional campaigns, but opt-out instruction is optional



Phone call option

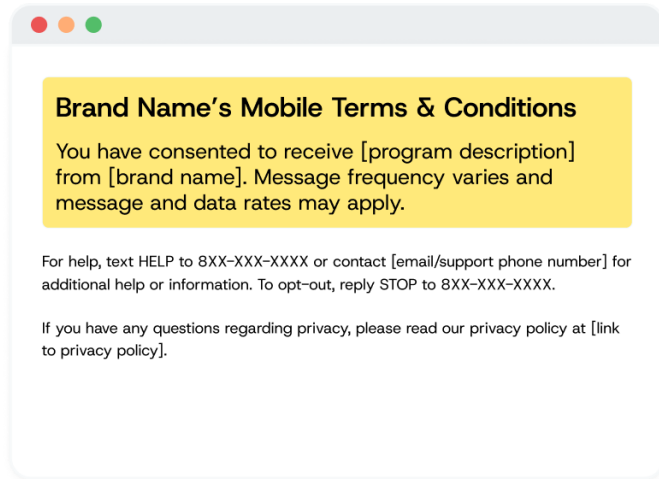


Reaching out via e-mail

Read the ["Verification Compliance Guidance"](#) community article

Terms and Conditions (T&C) examples

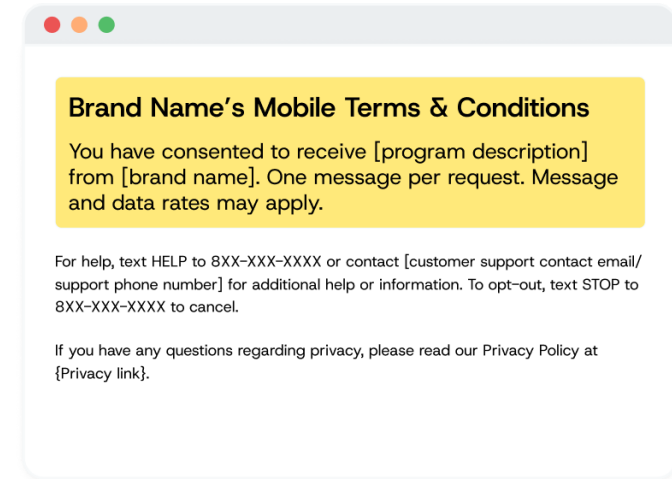
Recurring message and one-time program (OTP) examples



Recurring programs

[Brand Name] Terms and Conditions

[Program description]. Message frequency varies and message and data rates may apply. [Customer care contact information (reply HELP to 8XX-XXX-XXXX for help and another form of customer support)]. To opt out, reply STOP. For our privacy policy, see here: [link to privacy policy].



One-time programs

[Brand Name] Terms and Conditions

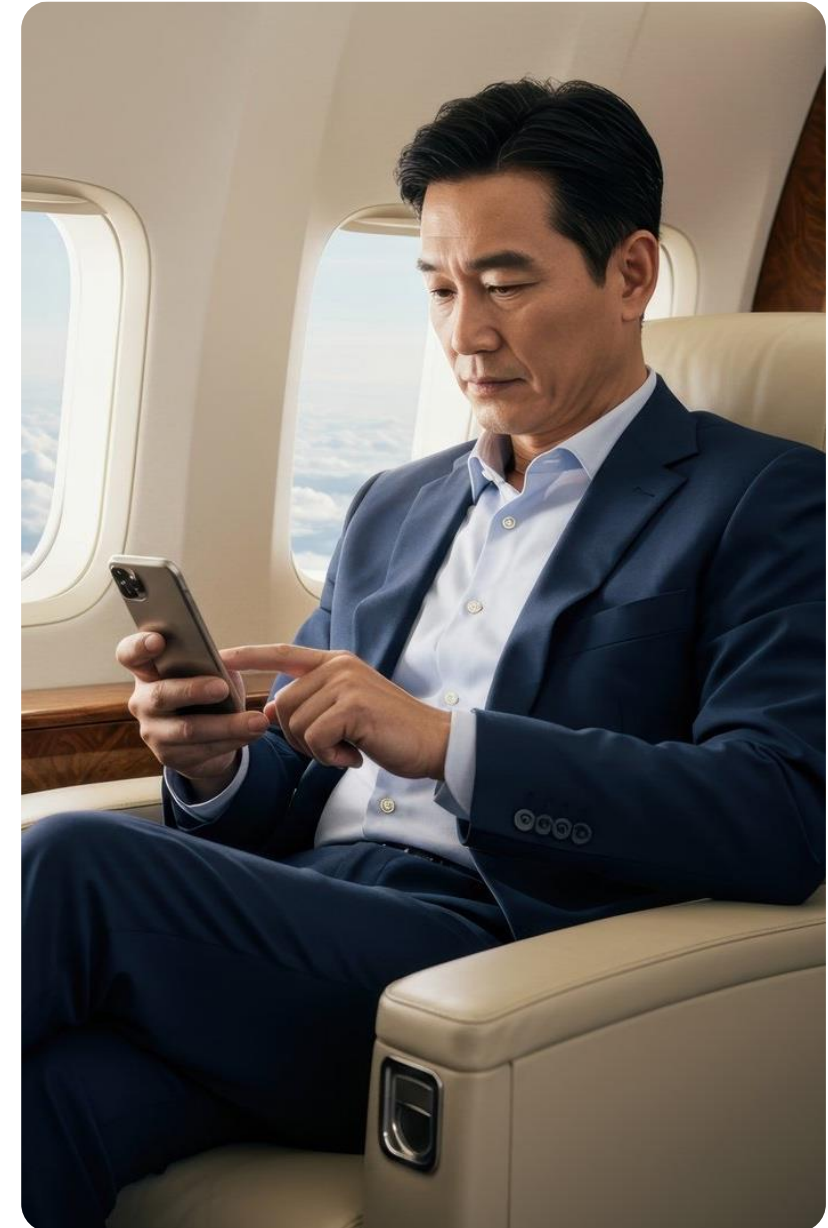
[Program description]. One message per request. Message and data rates may apply. [Customer care contact information (reply HELP to 8XX-XXX-XXXX for help and another form of customer support)]. For our privacy policy, see here: [link to privacy policy].

Rules and regulations

Privacy policy

It must be clear that the end user's personal information will not be shared or sold to third parties for the purpose of marketing. In other words, only the brand that the user specifically provides consent to may send messages to that user. Lead generation is not permitted.

Note: Businesses that collect personal data must generally have a Privacy Policy under U.S. and Canadian privacy laws. Even if not **legally** required in all cases, having a Privacy Policy is a best practice for transparency and compliance. If a business has one, it should be submitted and made easily accessible on its webpage.



Privacy policy example

Privacy policy example via Web

Privacy policy

[Program/Brand Name] Privacy Policy

“No mobile information will be sold or shared with third parties/affiliates for marketing/promotional purposes. All the above categories exclude text messaging originator opt-in data and consent; this information will not be shared with any third parties”.

