

What is a trigger lead and what can I do to prevent becoming one?



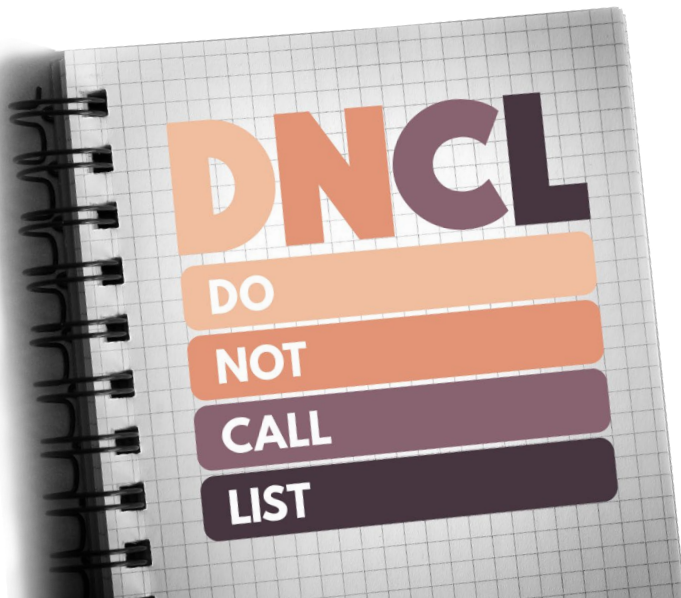
What are the National Credit Bureaus doing with my information?

When you apply for a loan, your credit is typically pulled to determine the types of accounts (for example, a credit card, mortgage, student loan or vehicle loan), the date those accounts are opened, your credit limit, loan amount, account balances and repayment history. Creditors report this information to the National Credit Bureaus including Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. When you apply for a new loan or your credit is pulled by an institution, the credit bureaus are allowed to sell information that you are in the market for a financing. Various lenders and will target you by phone, mail or email with competing offers, this is called a “trigger lead.” Trigger leads are legal however they can be used by companies that misrepresent themselves in an attempt to scam you.

What can I do to prevent from becoming a trigger lead prior to an upcoming credit pull or submitting a new loan application?

If you would like to protect your personal information, avoid multiple telemarketer calls, or simply reduce the risk of becoming a trigger lead, here are a few items you can do prior to your credit being pulled.

1. Sign up for the **National Do Not Call Registry**. After you register your phone number, it will take 24 hours to appear on the list. However, you may receive calls up to 31 days after registering



your phone number. So, start early and be sure to complete the instructions listed on the website.

2. Register your information at **OptOutPrescreen.com**. Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FRCA), the Consumer Credit Reporting Companies are permitted to include your name on lists used by creditors or insurers to make offers. By registering on this list, you have the option to opt out of this list for 5 years or permanently.
3. Sign up at **DMAchoice.org**. Do you want to stop getting junk in the mail? You can request to stop mail solicitation by signing up at DMAchoice.org, a tool developed by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA). Online registration costs \$2 and lasts for 10 years.

When you are going through the pre-qualification stage, a lender may conduct a “soft pull” of your credit.

This does not affect your credit score and it does not generate a trigger lead with the credit bureaus.

Is there any legislative effort to stop trigger leads?

The National Association of Mortgage Brokers (NAMB) has been lobbying for changes to the Protect Act of 2017 that would ban trigger leads and provide greater consumer information protection.

In the meantime, the best practice is to take the steps to protect yourself and always work with a reputable financial institution. Farm Credit has been around for over 100 years and helped millions of people live their dreams in the country.



National Do Not Call Registry

OptOutPrescreen.com

DMAchoice.org

