

# CANADIAN COMMON SHORT CODE APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Version 3.8  
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### Document Version History

VERSION NO.	DATE MODIFIED	DESCRIPTION OF MODIFICATION
1.1	13/07/2010	<p>II.7, II.9: Adjustments made to reflect applicable GST/HST</p> <p>IV.1.2.10: Added details to requirements for summary terms and conditions</p> <p>IV.2: Added details to requirements for mandatory keyword STOP</p>
2.0	23/09/2011	<p>Overview and I: Status of Vidéotron, Mobilicity and WIND Mobile as participating WSP networks supporting CSCs</p> <p>I: Added definition for term “Contest Element”, “Premium SMS”, “Premium SMS Subscription Services” and “Stacked Marketing”</p> <p>II.7: Added pricing model regarding leases for Premium SMS Subscription Services with a contest element &amp; details to clarify when the deposit is applied</p> <p>II.9 Added GST/HST breakdown for Long Codes</p> <p>III.1: Added requirement for a media contact for Short Code programs</p> <p>III.2 Added details regarding lease period for Premium SMS subscription services</p> <p>III.4: Added details regarding lease renewal period for Premium SMS Subscription Services</p> <p>III.7: Added details that WSPs may prohibit a Content Provider from submitting an application for a specific period of time and leasing Short Codes in the future in cases of infractions</p> <p>III.8: New section - added details regarding Scrubbing Process for Deactivated/Ported MINs</p> <p>IV.1.1: Added details regarding monthly spending cap for Premium SMS Subscription Services + message cap for voting</p> <p>IV.1.2.6: New section - added details to CTA requirements for enhanced messaging</p> <p>IV.1.2.12: Added requirements on disclosures for mobile web</p> <p>IV.1.2.13: Added Terms and Conditions checkbox requirements for Premium SMS Subscription Services + monthly total cost disclosure</p> <p>IV.1.2: Added details regarding marketing incentives in exchange for SMS services, stacked marketing practices and that Short Code programs must not be obscured by unrelated material</p> <p>IV.2: Added details to requirements for mandatory keyword HELP &amp; STOP</p> <p>IV.3: Added requirements for manually entered/spoken opt-in</p> <p>IV.6.1: Added acceptable keyword responses for handset verifier</p> <p>IV.6.2: Specified acceptable response keywords for double opt-in message and prescribed language for within double opt-in message</p> <p>IV.6.2: Removed PIN validation option for PSMS subscription programs</p> <p>IV.6.3: Added customer service contact information as a requirement for the monthly reminder message</p> <p>IV.11: Added general requirements for programs with a contest element</p>
2.1	04/11/2011	<p>IV.2: Added wording to state that STOP ALL should be supported and function the same way as STOP</p> <p>IV.3: Added requirement that YES can only be advertised to the consumer in the double opt-in message</p>

		<p>IV.10.1: Corrected error from “minimum” to “maximum”</p> <p>IV.11.d: Omitted standard and free rated programs from the minimum prize value requirement of \$500 per month of the contest term</p> <p>IV.11: Added requirement that Content Providers must disclose their intent to advertise in Québec and must provide the appropriate statements from the RACJ</p>
2.2	09/08/2012	<p>Overview and I: Status of Public Mobile as a participating WSP network supporting CSCs</p> <p>I: Eliminated definition for “Common Programs” and added definition for “Common Short Code”</p> <p>I: Added definition for term “Cramming”</p> <p>I: Added definition for term “Spam”</p> <p>III.7: Revised timeframe for performing required modifications and added precision about possible penalties</p> <p>IV.1.1: Added that premium MTs must be delivered to the consumer evenly over the course of the month</p> <p>IV.1.2.1: Added that the term “subscription” must be disclosed for ongoing premium services</p> <p>IV.1.2: Clarified the requirements applicable to the mobile web</p> <p>IV.1.2.13: Added guidelines for pop-up window in lieu of a Ts&amp;Cs checkbox for the mobile web only</p> <p>IV.4: Added wording that spamming and cramming is not permitted</p> <p>IV.10.1: Revised wording to differentiate m-Payment spending cap from Premium SMS Subscriptions spending cap</p> <p>IV.11: Added that CTAs must not convey a false guarantee of prize or reward</p> <p>IV.11: Specified that requirements for contests running in Québec are only applicable to Premium SMS contests</p> <p>IV.14: Adding wording that Charitable Donation Programs must adhere to all Canadian Common Short Code Application Guidelines</p> <p>V.2: Changed wording to reflect that STOP must be supported, rather than preferred</p> <p>V.7: Changed wording to reflect that HELP &amp; INFO must be supported, rather than preferred</p>
3.0	11/03/2015	<p>Overview and I: Status of Eastlink as participating WSP network supporting CSCs</p> <p>I: Added definition for “Applicant”, “Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)”, “Commercial Electronic Message (CEM)”, “Direct Carrier Billing (DCB)”, “Premium SMS Subscription Services with a Contest Element” and “Subscription Program”</p> <p>II.7: Updated applicable taxes</p> <p>III.4.2: Added guidelines for Pre-Launch Testing</p> <p>IV: Added that compliance with all applicable laws, including CASL is the sole responsibility of the Content Provider</p> <p>IV.1.2.1: Added guideline that allows for “CAD” to be used when “\$” is not technically feasible</p> <p>IV.3.1: Added section to clearly define opt-in requirements for non-subscription services, including new guideline that specifies a handset verifier is no longer required for free/standard non-subscription services</p> <p>IV.3.2: Added section to clearly define opt-in requirements for subscription services</p> <p>IV.5: Added that all five Mandatory Keywords must continue to be supported if a Short Code is in a dormant state</p>

3.1	17/11/2015	IV.13: Added section on Urgent Alerts to the General Public V.11: Changed character limit from 136 to 160
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3.3	01/02/2017	Overview and I: Updated list of participating WSPs II.6: Updated available Short Codes II.7: Updated applicable taxes II.7.3: Added section on Common Short Codes leased by Not-for-Profit Organizations and Registered Charities II.8: Updated applicable taxes IV.3.3 Added section on Transferring Subscriber Lists IV.7: Narrowed description of General Use Short Code by eliminating CSC tied to single brand offering different program types from the definition
3.4	01/01/2018	II.8: Removal of Common Long Code section – included a brief description about Common Long Codes in II.6 III.4: Removed “Ready for Testing” process IV.1.2.17: Added a prohibition involving SMS related to WSP specific marketing/promotions IV.3: Language added to indicate opt-in disclosure for Time Sensitive Notifications and Informational Alerts IV.13: Added section on Emergency Alerts and WPA and updated description of programs that require special consideration
3.5	02/04/2018	V.11: Changed character limit from 140 to 160
3.6	10/09/2018	II.5: Reduced standard lead time for launching a new CSC program IV.13: Added clarification to the description of programs that require special consideration
3.7	08/02/2019	IV.7.8.6: Inclusion of marijuana/cannabis under “adult oriented content” for General Use programs IV.13: Inclusion of marijuana/cannabis under “adult oriented content” for Programs Requiring Special Consideration
3.8	11/03/2020	Overview and I: Updated list of participating WSPs IV.6: Removal of Monthly Reminder Message requirement IV.12: Added MMS program requirements V.11: Changed character limit from 160 to 320

## **Table of Contents**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **I. DEFINITIONS**

#### **II. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. Who manages Common Short Codes (CSCs)?
2. What are the requirements to obtain a Common Short Code?
3. How are applications for Common Short Codes administered?
4. How long does it take to have an application considered?
5. What are the standard lead times for the launching of new programs?
6. What Common Short Codes are available?
7. What is the lease fee for Common Short Codes?
  - 7.1 Free, Standard, Premium and Premium SMS subscription services with no contest element
  - 7.2 Premium SMS subscription services with a contest element
  - 7.3 Common Short Codes leased by Not-for-Profit Organizations and Registered Charities

#### **III. THE PROCESS**

1. Establishing SMPP Connectivity
2. Submitting a Common Short Code Application
3. Common Short Code Program Approvals
4. Common Short Code Pre-Launch Testing and Validation Procedure Prior to Commercial Availability
5. Common Short Code Lease Renewals
6. Cancellation of a Common Short Code Lease
7. Revisions to a Common Short Code Program
8. Common Short Code Compliance Testing
9. Scrubbing Process for Deactivated/Ported MINs

#### **IV. COMMON SHORT CODE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

1. Program Pricing, Promotion and Advertising
  - 1.1 Consumer Pricing
  - 1.2 Common Short Code Promotion and Advertising
2. Mandatory Keywords
3. Opt-In
  - 3.1 Non-subscription Services
  - 3.2 Subscription Services
  - 3.3 Transferring Subscriber Lists
4. Opt-Out
5. Mandatory Dormant Code Message
6. General Use Short Codes
7. Demo Codes
8. Rich Content and Complimentary Promotional Content
9. Mobile Commerce including m-Payments, m-Banking, m-Offers and m-Ticketing
10. Contests
11. Chat Programs
12. MMS Programs
13. Programs Requiring Special Consideration
  - 13.1 Time Sensitive Notifications
  - 13.2 Informational Alerts
  - 13.3 Age Restricted Content
14. Charitable Donation Programs

#### **V. CSC CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **OVERVIEW**

In July 2003 Canada's Wireless Service Providers (WSPs) came together with the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA) to offer Common Short Codes (CSCs) which may (subject to approval) be activated across WSPs' networks. The CWTA has been assigned the role of administrator of the CSC registry on behalf of the industry.

CSCs are numbers to which a text message can be sent and are typically much shorter than a 10-digit mobile phone number. They are easy to remember and take less time to type than 10-digit numbers. CSCs can be used for a number of mobile messaging applications. These include contests, promotions, mobile coupons, subscriptions and on-demand content.

CSCs are codes that have been activated on at least two mobile phone networks for the same application or service. In Canada, the industry makes available 5- and 6-digit codes. CSCs are normally obtained by Content Providers who wish to offer unique programs to mobile phone consumers. These Content Providers access mobile phone consumers via a connection, directly or indirectly with the WSPs' text messaging networks.

In Canada, content developers, application service providers and marketers are able to obtain CSCs from the CWTA that will be activated across participating WSPs' networks which currently includes any or all of the following: BCE Inc. (Bell Mobility, Bell MTS, PC Mobile, Virgin Mobile), Eastlink, Shaw Communications Inc. (Freedom Mobile, Shaw Mobile), Rogers (Chatr, Fido), SaskTel, SSI Canada, TELUS (Koodo, Public Mobile), Vidéotron (Fizz), and Xplore Mobile.

Connectivity with a WSP is established either using SMPP or other agreed methods of connectivity, dependent upon the individual WSP. Aggregators are required to adhere to technical specifications and procedures that have been outlined by the WSP; these tend to vary from provider to provider.

This document describes the guideline associated with the provisioning and operation of CSCs, and may be updated from time to time. Readers should visit [www.txt.ca](http://www.txt.ca), in order to obtain the current version of this document.

## I. DEFINITIONS

In this document, unless the context otherwise requires:

“**Administrator**” means the CWTA.

“**Aggregator**” means a third-party who would connect via SMPP directly to the WSP in order to offer services to consumers on behalf of Content Providers.

“**Applicant**” means the organization that applies for a Common Short Code. The Applicant is listed in Section 1.1 of the Canadian Common Short Code Application Form.

“**ASP**” means Application Service Provider, an organization that offers network based software solutions “applications”, or downloadable applications that enable the business logic behind mobile marketing initiatives.

“**Canada’s Anti-spam Legislation (CASL)**” is defined by the Government of Canada as “an Act to promote the efficiency and adaptability of the Canadian economy by regulating certain activities that discourage reliance on electronic means of carrying out commercial activities, and to amend the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Act, the Competition Act, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act and the Telecommunications Act”.

Copies of CASL, as well as CRTC and Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada regulations can be obtained at: [http://fightspam.gc.ca/eic/site/030.nsf/eng/h\\_00211.html](http://fightspam.gc.ca/eic/site/030.nsf/eng/h_00211.html).

“**Commercial Electronic Message (CEM)**” is defined by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada as “any electronic message that encourages participation in a commercial activity, regardless of whether there is an expectation of profit”.

“**Common Short Code (CSC)**” is a 5 or 6-digit number that replaces a traditional telephone number for the purposes of sending SMS or MMS content to a subscriber. CSCs can be activated on all or most mobile phone networks for the same application or service.

“**Consumer**” means any individual who obtains mobile phone services from a WSP.

“**Content Providers**” means third-parties who wish to offer services, via Common Short Code, to consumers.

“**Contest Element**” means programs where either the content is a contest or the content is promoted as part of a contest. Content Providers running contests are expected to abide by section 74.06 of the Competition Act (<http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/01279.html>) and section 206 of the Criminal Code of Canada (<http://www.agco.on.ca/en/whatwedo/criminalcode.aspx>).

“**Cramming**” means the fraudulent adding of unauthorized charges to a consumer’s phone bill.

“**CSC Code of Conduct**” has the meaning set forth in Part V.

“**CTA**” means call-to-action.

**“Direct Carrier Billing (DCB)”** means a billing integration method where the consumer is charged directly to their mobile phone bill via payment solution in a browser or mobile application. MO and MT messages are still required, however are used solely for handset verification and purchase confirmation, with no additional charges attached to them.

**“MIN”** means Mobile Identification Number, more commonly referred to as a wireless phone number which uniquely identifies a wireless device within a WSP’s network.

**“MMS”** means Multi Media Service, which is a standard for telephony messaging systems that enable the sending of messages between mobile devices that include multimedia objects (images, audio, video). It is also possible for MMS messages to simply include normal text.

**“MO”** means Mobile Originating is a message that is sent by consumer.

**“MT”** means Mobile Terminating is a message sent to the consumer.

**“Premium SMS”** means a Short Messaging Service that carries a premium price point that is charged to the consumer. A premium price point is considered anything a consumer is charged that differs from the cost charged by their WSP to send a regular standard rate text message.

**“Premium SMS Subscription Service”** means a Short Code program at a premium price point where text messages are delivered to the consumer on an ongoing basis. These services are opt-in and consumers can opt-out at any time. The frequency of messaging and cost depend on the service.

**“Premium SMS Subscription Service with a Contest Element”** means a Premium Common Short Code program with a subscription aspect, where either (a) the content is a contest or (b) the content is promoted as part of a contest.

**“Private Codes”** are Short Codes that are WSP specific and are not available for use by common programs.

**“Program”** means a program proposed by a Content Provider relating to the use of a Common Short Code resulting in the transmission of text messages to and from the WSP with the involvement of an Aggregator and consumers.

**“Short Code Council”** (“SCC” or “Council”), is a committee of the CWTA comprised of one voting representative from each of the participating WSPs.

**“SMPP”** means Short Message Peer-to-Peer Protocol. SMPP is a protocol that defines the language by which servers that host SMS applications and the operators’ Short Message Service Centres (SMSC) speak to enable two-way SMS.

**“SMS”** means Short Message Service, which is a standard for telephony messaging systems that enable the sending of text-based messages between mobile devices.

**“Spam”** is defined by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada as any electronic commercial message sent without the express consent of the recipient(s). The Short Code Council

reserves the right, for the purpose of these Guidelines, to determine what is considered spam in administering these Guidelines.

**“Stacked Marketing”** means a deceptive form of advertising, referring to a cross-selling of several PSMS promotions from the same or different sponsors, sometimes on multiple different short codes, within the same online user flow, whereby a customer is shown a series of offers in close succession, often with his or her mobile phone number pre-populated in subsequent pages. A website’s initial pitch might solicit the consumer’s number by offering “free” MP3s or ringtones, then cycle the customer through the series of offers before he or she can claim the free content.

**“Subscription Program”** means any CSC program that delivers content to a consumer on an ongoing basis.

**“Wireless Service Provider (WSP)”** means the wireless operators represented by BCE Inc. (Bell Mobility, Bell MTS, PC Mobile, Virgin Mobile), Eastlink, Shaw Communications Inc. (Freedom Mobile, Shaw Mobile), Rogers (Chatr, Fido), SaskTel, SSi Canada, TELUS (Koodo, Public Mobile), Vidéotron (Fizz), and Xplore Mobile.

## **II. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. Who manages Common Short Codes (CSCs)?**

The CWTA administers Common Short Codes (CSCs) in cooperation with the Wireless Service Providers (WSPs). The CWTA created the Short Code Council (SCC), comprised of at least one representative from each WSP to oversee the administration of CSCs.

The CWTA makes CSCs available on behalf of the WSPs, maintains a current registry of all in-use and available CSCs, and is the principal point of contact to parties interested in obtaining a CSC.

The role of the SCC is to develop to policy and Guidelines with respect to the use of CSCs. In addition, the SCC reviews all CSC applications.

Information about the Common Short Code Application Guidelines is hosted at [www.txt.ca](http://www.txt.ca). Interested parties are requested to frequently visit the website for updates, which includes estimated provisioning dates for new code requests, updates to industry Guidelines and other pertinent announcements.

For further information please email [shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca) or call 613-233-4888 and ask to speak to a member of the CWTA Short Code Team.

### **2. What are the requirements to obtain a Common Short Code?**

In order to obtain a CSC, the following is required:

- a) SMPP connectivity with the WSP must be established either directly or indirectly.
- b) A thoroughly completed and signed application form, which includes acknowledgement of all applicable Terms & Conditions, and a non-refundable deposit, must be submitted at the beginning of the application process.
- c) The program application must gain acceptance by two or more separately owned WSPs.
- d) Documents to verify readiness must be provided as required.
- e) A bilateral commercial agreement must be established with the WSP directly or indirectly through an Aggregator in order for the CSC to be provisioned on a wireless network.
- f) Adherence to the industry's CSC Code of Conduct, other guidelines as outlined in this document, and all applicable Canadian laws and regulations, is mandatory.

### **3. How are applications for Common Short Codes administered?**

For detailed information regarding the administrative process please refer to part III of this document.

**4. How long does it take to have an application considered?**

The CWTA reviews applications to ensure they meet the requirements outlined in these Guidelines. Once a CSC application is considered fully detailed, it will normally be considered by the SCC within 7 days.

**5. What are the standard lead times for the launching of new programs?**

It is recommended that CSC applications involving Aggregators that already have direct connectivity to the WSPs normally allow a minimum of 20-35 days from the time the application is approved until the CSC is provisioned.

The foregoing is dependent on the volume of requests. Announcements of more current planning times are available at [www.txt.ca](http://www.txt.ca).

Requested launch dates will be targeted on a best-efforts level by each WSP.

**6. What Common Short Codes are available?**

Five and 6-digit CSCs are used as part of this inter-carrier initiative. Please note that Short Codes beginning with a “4” and a “0” are not available as part of this initiative. CWTA maintains the registry of available codes as follows:

<b>5 DIGITS</b>	
10000 – 39999	Common Short Codes
40000 – 49999	Private Short Codes
50000 – 99999	Common Short Codes
<b>6 DIGITS</b>	
100000 – 399999	Common Short Codes
400000 – 499999	Private Short Codes
500000 – 999999	Common Short Codes

8-digit Common Long Codes are available on a case-by-case basis and are assigned sequentially.

If an Applicant wishes to lease a 3-digit Short Code and is requesting the participation of two or more separately owned WSPs, it will be classified as a Common Short Code and must be submitted through CWTA. These CSCs are subject to all appropriate requirements and lease fees as set out in these Guidelines. Three digit Short Codes are typically classified as Private Codes and are leased out by individual WSPs.

For further information on 3- and 8-digit codes, please email [shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca) or call 613-233-4888 and ask to speak to a member of the CWTA Short Code Team.

## 7. What is the lease fee for Common Short Codes?

CSC applications will not be considered or processed until the deposit is received. The fees apply once the CSC program has been activated on the networks. The deposit will be applied and effective on the activation date indicated on the Letter of Approval.

CSC programs that are identified by the CWTA as a Premium SMS subscription with a contest element will be billed the fees outlined in this section regardless of whether there is a current contest element aspect to the program. If the marketing of the program at any time has used or will use in the future a contest element, the fees in this section will be applied for the duration of the lease.

### 7.1 Free, Standard, Premium and Premium SMS subscription services with no contest element

A non-refundable deposit of CAN\$1,500 (+ GST/HST) is required at the time of application. For approved CSC programs, this deposit will be applied towards the first 3 months of the lease.

For programs continuing beyond the deposit period, monthly fees will be reduced to CAN\$350 starting in month four (4) of the lease term. GST/HST will be charged based on the province/country of the company making payment. Fees will apply as follows:

PROVINCE	HST	GST	Tax	Total
Ontario	13%		\$195	\$1,695
New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, PEI, International (Non-Resident)	15%		\$225	\$1,725
British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, NWT, Yukon, Nunavut		5%	\$75	\$1,575

### 7.2 Premium SMS subscription services with a contest element

A non-refundable deposit of CAN\$3,000 (+ GST/HST) is required at the time of application. For approved CSC programs, this deposit will be applied towards the first 3 months of the lease.

For programs continuing beyond the deposit period, monthly fees will be reduced to CAN\$700 starting in month four (4) of the lease term. GST/HST will be charged based on the province/country of the company making payment. Fees will apply as follows:

PROVINCE	HST	GST	Tax	Total
Ontario	13%		\$390	\$3,390
New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, PEI, International (Non-Resident)	15%		\$450	\$3,450
British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, NWT, Yukon, Nunavut		5%	\$150	\$3,150

### **7.3 Common Short Codes leased by Not-for-Profit Organizations and Registered Charities**

Monthly fees for CSC programs where the Applicant has been identified as a Not-for-Profit Organization (NPO) or Registered Charity are CAN\$250 (+GST/HST) starting in month one (1) of the lease term. For this group of programs, a deposit is not required.

In order to qualify for this lease fee, the following criteria must be met:

- a) The NPO or Registered Charity must be listed as the Accounts Payable Company in the CSC application.
- b) The CSC program may only be tied to a single brand and cannot be used as a multiple branded General Use Short Code.
- c) For Canadian organizations, the Business Number or CRA Registration Number must be disclosed in the CSC application. This information will be validated by CWTA.
- d) For U.S. organizations, the Employer Identification Number (EIN) must be disclosed in the CSC application. This information will be validated by CWTA.

Should the required information not be provided at the time of application, regular lease fees will apply.

## **III. THE PROCESS**

The application and approval process is administered by CWTA upon direction from the Short Code Council. WSP participation in a CSC program is solely at their individual discretion.

### **1. Establishing SMPP Connectivity**

Prior to submitting a CSC application, Applicants will need to establish SMPP connectivity with the WSPs either directly or indirectly.

The CWTA has contact information for numerous Aggregators with connections to the WSPs' networks available on [www.txt.ca](http://www.txt.ca). In general, the options to gain connectivity are:

- Connect directly to the WSPs,
- Connect or partner with an existing Aggregator(s), or
- A hybrid of the above.

### **2. Submitting a Common Short Code Application**

Application forms are available at [www.txt.ca](http://www.txt.ca).

Applications can be submitted directly by the Content Provider (CP), or through an Aggregator and must be accompanied with the required deposit.

In instances where the CP submits the application, they must ensure that their Aggregator has reviewed the application prior to its submission, and is copied on the electronic submission. Likewise, should the Aggregator submit the application, they must ensure the CP has reviewed the application prior to its submission, and is copied on the electronic submission.

CSC applications are normally considered every Tuesday by the SCC. Applications will be reviewed by CWTA to ensure completeness before they are provided to the SCC. Applications that are missing any of the required elements, or are not clear, will be sent back to the submitting party.

In order to have an application considered on a particular Tuesday, it must be submitted before 1:00 PM (Eastern) on Thursday of the preceding week. A deposit equal to the first three month lease fee is required at the beginning of the application process.

Applications must be submitted to CWTA via email to [shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca).

### **3. Common Short Code Approvals**

Applications that meet the criteria established in this document are presented to the SCC for their review.

WSPs independently indicate to CWTA whether they wish to participate in the program. Two or more separately owned WSPs must agree to participate in your program in order for it to be approved.

Applicants will be formally notified of WSP participation via a Letter of Approval. The Letter of Approval will be copied to the SCC and, if applicable other parties involved with establishing connectivity to the WSPs.

The CSC will be assigned for the duration of the program proposed, up to a maximum of 12 months. Premium SMS subscription services will only be assigned up to maximum of 6 months.

### **4. Common Short Code Pre-Launch Testing and Validation Procedure Prior to Commercial Availability (testing by CWTA)**

Aggregators are responsible for submitting the Pre-Launch Testing document to the CWTA no later than 10 business days prior to when a CSC is ready for commercial launch. In some cases, the date for commercial launch may occur after the provisioning date stated in the Letter of Approval.

Content Providers must complete the Pre-launch Testing document, available at [www.txt.ca](http://www.txt.ca), and provide to their Aggregator with enough time for the Aggregator to review the document for completeness and submit to CWTA ([shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca)). Content Providers should note that the document requires disclosure of all MO opt-in keywords and all calls-to-action (including, but not limited to websites, online registrations with a MIN entry box, print material, TV commercials, radio advertisements, etc.) that will be promoting the CSC.

CWTA will test the five mandatory keywords, opt-in keywords and websites/advertisements associated with the CSC, as identified in the Pre-Launch Testing document. All of these elements must be in compliance with the applicable sections of the Canadian Common Short Code Application Guidelines.

CWTA will notify the Aggregator of any compliance issues noted when testing the CSC, and all non-compliances must be corrected prior to commercial launch.

Should the CSC not be compliant prior to the commercial launch date, CWTA will notify the SCC and the Aggregator will be advised to delay commercial launch. Content Providers are encouraged to submit the Pre-Launch Testing document well in advance of the deadline of 10 business days prior to commercial launch. This will ensure that there is sufficient time for CWTA to complete testing, and allow Content Providers to make any corrections to the calls-to-action so as not to delay commercial launch.

In the event that a CSC has commercially launched but has not passed the Pre-Launch Testing Process with CWTA, the SCC will be notified and penalties against the Content Provider may apply.

## **5. Common Short Code Lease Renewals**

Prior to the expiration of the lease, and only with the CSC program and account in good standing, the CWTA will offer the leaseholder the opportunity to renew the lease for a maximum of 12 months.

Renewals for Premium SMS subscription services will be offered up to a maximum of 6 months and are subject to approval from the SCC.

## **6. Cancellation of a Common Short Code Lease**

A leaseholder may cancel a lease at any time by sending an email to [shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca) with the request to cancel. Please note that under certain circumstances, the Short Code Team may need to validate the cancellation with a confirmation from the consumer facing brand identified in the application form.

## **7. Revisions to a Common Short Code Program**

Leaseholders are able to request changes to an approved CSC application at any time by submitting a revised CSC application that includes the requested changes. In instances where the CP submits the application, they must ensure that their Aggregator has reviewed the application prior to its submission, and is copied on the electronic submission. Likewise, should the Aggregator submit the application, they must ensure the CP has reviewed the application prior to its submission, and is copied on the electronic submission.

The application form must be complete and reflect any new Guideline requirements that have been implemented since the program was last approved. In some cases, a new deposit may be required for revised applications.

Before any changes can be made to a CSC program, they must be approved by the SCC. Once approved, a revised Letter of Approval will be emailed to the leaseholder. Please note that some revisions, for example a change in price point or Aggregator, may require a new provisioning date which can take up to 30 to 45 days from the time the revised application is approved.

Billing information updates should be sent via email to the CWTA billing department at: [billing@cwta.ca](mailto:billing@cwta.ca).

## **8. Common Short Code Compliance Testing**

The CWTA performs ongoing compliance testing to ensure that all CSC programs adhere to the CSC Code of Conduct and other Guidelines as outlined in this document. The results of these tests are reported to the WSPs. All Content Providers, Application Service Providers and Aggregators must comply with all inquiries and requests for information that result from these compliance activities.

Upon receiving the compliance test results, it is the Aggregator's responsibility to ensure that all required modifications are made by the Content Provider within the defined timelines.

Depending on the level of severity of the infraction, new and revised applications submitted by, or on behalf of, the respective Content Provider will not be reviewed by the SCC until all identified issues have been successfully resolved. Based on the severity of an infraction, WSPs may also prohibit an Aggregator from submitting an application for a specific period of time.

Higher level severity issues will result in various penalties, including suspension of the CSC. In the most severe cases, the lease will be revoked and the CSC will be deactivated; the Content Provider may be prohibited from leasing other CSCs in the future.

For more information, please email [shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca).

## **9. Scrubbing Process for Deactivated/Ported MINs**

The scrubbing process, for the purpose of the Common Short Code Application Guidelines, is defined as the deletion of deactivated/ported MINs from the Aggregator's program database.

Each individual WSP has its own specific process for reporting and submitting delete lists to the Aggregators. If any WSP submits a list of deactivated/ported MINs directly to the Aggregators, the WSPs expect that it be acted upon by the Aggregators within 5 business days to ensure a positive consumer experience and to avoid any customer service issues.

WSPs may require Aggregators to act upon delete lists on shorter timelines under certain circumstances.

In addition, Aggregators are to delete any MINs in cases where text messages have been undeliverable for a period of 30 consecutive days where it can be determined that the unsuccessful deliveries are due to the MIN being inactive on the network.

## **IV. COMMON SHORT CODE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Notwithstanding CWTA and WSP Guidelines within this document, nothing contained herein confirms any legal compliance. Compliance of all CSC programs with all applicable laws is the sole responsibility of the CP.

As it relates to Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL), all CSC program Applicants, Content Providers and Aggregators are responsible for ensuring that any Commercial Electronic Messages (CEM) they send, or cause or permit to be sent, using a CSC fully comply with the requirements of CASL.

### **1. Program Pricing, Promotion and Advertising**

#### **1.1 Consumer Pricing**

The price of the CSC program's content is determined by the Content Provider and is subject to of the WSPs technical ability to charge the requested price.

In addition to standard text messaging rates, the WSPs have programmed several commonly used premium price points to facilitate a more rapid launch of programs:

\$0.00, \$0.15, \$0.25, \$0.50, \$0.75, \$1.00, \$1.25,  
\$1.50, \$1.75, \$2.00, \$3.00, \$4.00, \$5.00 and  
\$10.00

While Applicants are free to propose consumer facing prices that differ from these suggested price points, some WSPs may require additional lead-time to accommodate different price points. The Applicant must inform the WSPs of the consumer pricing, including their intent to use direct carrier billing (DBC) vs premium, at the time the application is submitted.

For Premium SMS subscription services, the Content Provider is required to implement a \$40 monthly spending cap per consumer per CSC. Premium mobile terminating (MTs) messages must be delivered to the consumer evenly over the course of the month so that charges incurred by the consumer are evenly distributed during the month. Front-loading of MTs is not allowed. In the event that there are multiple services running on a single CSC, the spending cap remains unaffected at \$40. Please note that some carriers may enforce the \$40 monthly spending cap, regardless of the type of Premium CSC service. Due to the viral nature of premium and standard voting programs, the WSPs require that Content Providers propose a reasonable spending cap per voting program and per consumer, to ensure a positive consumer experience.

#### **1.2 Common Short Code Promotion and Advertising**

When promoting a CSC program, Content Providers should ensure that the advertising is clear and conspicuous regarding all Terms and Conditions associated with participating in the program. At all times, the holder of the CSC must inform consumers of the cost of sending and/or receiving a text message to the CSC. No program should be promoted as being free unless it can genuinely be acquired for free by any consumer.

Minimum Disclosure Requirements for all forms of calls-to-action (CTA):

- 1.2.1 For premium services, the billing period and applicable cost must be disclosed using a dollar sign “\$”. For example: “\$2/msg” and “\$0.50/msg” are acceptable pricing disclosures; however “2/msg” is not acceptable. In cases where it is not technically feasible to include the “\$” sign, it is acceptable to use the currency code “CAD” when disclosing price. For example: “2 CAD/msg” and “0.50 CAD/msg” are acceptable pricing disclosures. Additionally, the term “subscription” and the frequency of message delivery must be disclosed if it is an ongoing service.
- 1.2.2 If an SMS service costs the consumer a standard rate message fee, then Content Providers must disclose that standard rates apply using “Std message rates may apply” or “Message rates may apply”. Alternatively, Content Providers who choose to utilize “Std msg & Data rates may apply” or “Msg&Data rates may apply” will also be considered acceptable.
- 1.2.3 In cases where there is an MMS component to a standard rated program, Content Providers must disclose that “Std msg & data rates may apply” or “Msg & Data rates may apply”.
- 1.2.4 In cases where the consumer receives an MT containing a clickable link to a site accessible on the consumer’s mobile phone, the content of the message which contains the link/URL must state that “Data rates may apply.” Content Providers who choose to use “Std msg & data rates may apply” will be considered acceptable.
- 1.2.5 It should be noted that any MT message containing a subsequent CTA must fully disclose the incremental cost for further participation.
- 1.2.6 Content Providers/Aggregators must use clear and easy to understand language when disclosing the pricing terms, message frequency and opt-out information. This is applicable to all CTA disclosures, the abbreviated Terms and Conditions of participation in the service and the double opt-in message (for more information regarding the double opt-in message please refer to part IV, section 6.2).
- 1.2.7 Content Providers/Aggregators should be aware that content that they control within text messages may appear as emoticons on handsets that support enhanced messaging. (e.g. if a message contains “:S”, “:STOP” may appear as “😞TOP”)

Minimum Disclosure Requirements for online advertising (including the mobile web):

- 1.2.8 If the signup process requires the consumer to visit multiple web pages, the cost for participating in the program must be clearly included on all pages throughout the signup process (from first contact page to last contact page including pages in between that are not requesting consumer registration information).
- 1.2.9 CTAs should not contain language or utilize tools (e.g. a countdown clock) that convey a sense of urgency about an offer or service.
- 1.2.10 The consumer’s MIN cannot be pre-populated in data entry fields.
- 1.2.11 The Content Provider must own and control the MIN entry page for all premium subscription online registrations.
- 1.2.12 Summary terms and conditions must be completely visible (above the fold at screen resolution 1024x768 for Internet Explorer 8) and not automatically pre-

checked in cases where a consumer is asked to accept the terms (applicable to CTAs meant for computers only).

- 1.2.13 Pricing terms on CTAs meant for the mobile web must be disclosed above the “Buy” (Accept, Purchase, Subscribe, etc.) button.
- 1.2.14 CTAs for Premium SMS Subscription Services (where opt-in occurs by entering the MIN online) must include a Terms and Conditions checkbox directly below the MIN entry box that discloses the billing period, applicable cost, frequency, that the service is a subscription and total monthly cost for participating in the program (e.g. This is a subscription service where you receive 3 messages per week at \$5.00 per week = \$20 per month. Please check to accept). This checkbox cannot be automatically pre-checked and the text must be entirely visible to the consumer (e.g. black text on white background). In instances where the monthly cost equation is not valid (e.g. 5 weekly billable messages in a month), the Content Provider must disclose in the abbreviated Terms and Conditions what the cost for participating will be for these months. Due to the screen size of some mobile phones, it is permissible for Content Providers to include a pop-up window in lieu of a checkbox for CTAs meant for the mobile web. This pop-up window must appear after the consumer enters their MIN and proceeds to the next page. The pop-up window must contain the exact same information that is required next to the Terms and Conditions checkbox. The pop-up window must also contain an Accept button and a Decline button.

Prohibitions involving use of SMS services:

- 1.2.14 SMS services must not be associated with, or used to entice consumers to access content that is associated with any illegal practices such as copyright violations or piracy.

Should SMS services be offered to customers in exchange for or in advance of getting to other content, such as in the case of legitimate marketing incentives, it should be clear to the consumer on the MIN entry pages what they are signing up for and at what costs, as specified in part IV, section 1.2 above. The legitimate marketing incentive must be presented fairly and must not be misconstrued as being something other than what it is (e.g. a licensed movie trailer instead of a movie). It is not permitted to advertise a marketing incentive as free unless it is truly free to the customer. This should also be made clear to the customer signing up for the CSC program.

Should SMS services be offered to customers in exchange for, or in advance of getting to other content, it must be specifically stated in the application form and be approved by the carriers. Content Providers must be able to provide proof that they are licensed to offer the marketing incentive upon request.

- 1.2.15 The actual nature of CSC programs must not be obscured by unrelated material. For instance, a premium charge program that provides a ‘joke of the day’ subscription should not be advertised, positioned or promoted as something else. The advertising, positioning and promotion of Premium SMS programs, including all affiliate advertising and any associated web sites, must clearly and inconspicuously highlight the content that the subscriber will be receiving on an

ongoing basis and the terms of that subscription distinctly from the marketing activity or incentive that encourages the consumer to subscribe to the service.

- 1.2.16 SMS services must not be associated with stacked marketing practices such as when a website's initial pitch might solicit the consumer's MIN by offering "free" MP3s or ringtones, then cycle the customer through the series of offers before he or she can claim the free content.
- 1.2.17 The CSC may not be used for the promotion or marketing of any WSP without explicit approval from the SCC.

#### Minimum Disclosure Requirements for TV advertising:

- 1.2.18 The thinktv guidelines (<https://thinktv.ca/think-clearance/>) provide advertisers and agencies with an outline of standards and requirements which must be adhered to when producing commercials, infomercials and/or public service announcements for television. All Short Code Applicants are expected to abide by the appropriate guidelines as a minimum when advertising their services on TV.
- 1.2.19 Participation TV is defined for the purposes of this document as the use of mobile interaction to allow viewers of a TV broadcast to engage in various ways with the broadcast content. These interactions can include having an impact (e.g. voting) or expressing an opinion (e.g. text to screen). Participation TV visual CTAs should use a minimum of 22 or 23 scan lines or font size of 12 in order to ensure the details are legible in the CTA and when used in conjunction with a verbal CTA be onscreen for 3 seconds for the first line of text and 1 second for each additional line. A minimum of 23 scan lines should be used when the CTA does not include a voiceover.

## 2. Mandatory Keywords

**STOP, ARRET, HELP, AIDE** and **INFO** are five (5) Mandatory Keywords that must be implemented on all CSC programs regardless of price point, intended audience, message frequency or commercial availability. All CSC programs must support these Mandatory Keywords to ensure a universal consumer experience. Please note that keywords shall not be case sensitive.

- 2.1 These Mandatory Keywords must be available in all programs without exception; whether the consumer is subscribed to the program or not.
- 2.2 These Mandatory Keywords must be written in CAPITAL LETTERS at all times in messaging and all advertising to emphasize their importance.
- 2.3 They must also be available in both English and French regardless of the intended audience. However, if a program is solely promoted in one language, it is acceptable that the messaging for all five Mandatory Keywords be in the language in which the program is promoted.
- 2.4 All Mandatory Keyword messages should be delivered free of charge where possible as they are administrative in nature.
- 2.5 In the event that a single CSC is running services for multiple clients, it is the Content Provider's responsibility to provide details for the **<INFO>**, **<HELP>** and **<AIDE>** keywords.

**<HELP>**: The following information must be included by the Content Provider in one (1) MT message:

- Customer service contact information (email and/or URL and/or phone). NOTE: if the phone number is the exclusive method of contact, then it must be toll-free;
- Cost and message frequency of the program;
- Opt-out/unsubscribe information using **<STOP>**;
- Identity of the program sponsor by company name and a short description of the program;
- The **HELP** message may also include a list of common keywords and a description on how to use the service.

**<AIDE>**: This keyword will return the same information as **<HELP>** but the one (1) MT response should be in French.

**<INFO>**: The following information must be included by the Content Provider in one (1) MT message:

- The Content Provider (or Aggregator's) company name and customer service contact information (email, URL and/or phone);
- Applicants may refer to the **HELP/AIDE** and **STOP/ARRET** keywords. Applicants can also include various opt-out methods (e.g. **ALERTS STOP**).

**<STOP>**: Whenever **STOP** is sent as a keyword in a Message Originating (MO) message, the Content Provider must:

- For subscription services, send one (1) MT message stating that the consumer will no longer receive messages in connection to all services running on the Short Code;
- For non-subscription services (one-time use), send one (1) MT message stating that the service is not a subscription and;
- Stop sending messages of any kind to that consumer until/unless the consumer initiates the service again.

Additionally, the **<STOP>** keyword:

- Must apply to all programs including one-time use programs.
- Must immediately opt-out the consumer from the CSC program. Therefore please note that a response containing a "Stop Menu" of programs is not permitted. The subscriber must be unsubscribed to all programs once the keyword **<STOP>** is sent to the CSC. The program can support other opt-out keywords such as **<ALERTS STOP>** or **<SPORTS STOP>** however the specific **<STOP>** function must be available to stop all contact in any manner. This is to avoid subscriber confusion around the use of the **<STOP>** command.
- Must always be available regardless of whether the program is commercially available or not. An error message is not to be sent back to the subscriber.

The keyword **<STOP ALL>** although not a Canadian mandatory keyword, should be active and function exactly the same as **<STOP>** on all programs.

**<ARRET>**: This keyword will return the same information and have the same effect as **<STOP>** but the one (1) MT response should be in French.

### 3. Opt-In

All Content Providers running CSC programs must obtain consent from consumers before sending SMS and MMS messages. Content must not be delivered until after the consumer has confirmed their desire to participate in a CSC program.

Consumers can initiate opt-in in response to a CTA by:

- Sending an MO message from their handset,
- Signing up via a WAP interface,
- Signing up online,
- Signing up via a manually entered opt-in (Content Provider manually enters MIN provided by consumer; e.g. MIN provided on paper application),
- Signing up via spoken opt-in (e.g. MIN provided to a call centre representative).

For CSC programs sending Time Sensitive or Informational Notifications, language should be included at the time of opt-in to inform the end-user that the CSC program will not be used to send any type of Broadcast Immediate Emergency Alerts.

For manually entered opt-ins and spoken opt-ins, it is expected that there may be a time delay from the time the consumer provides their MIN to the Content Provider, to the time the consumer receives the mandatory handset verifier. It is recommended that this time delay does not exceed 30 days.

The consumer must consent to receive text messages via a CSC from the Content Provider. If a consumer opts out of a service, no further messages of any kind may be sent to the consumer for the CSC program in question. Content Providers must maintain appropriate records of consumer consent/opt-in and be able to prove consumer opt-in, consistent with the requirements set out below if required.

All opt-in messages should be free of charge, where possible, as they are administrative in nature.

#### 3.1 Non-subscription Services

**Free to End User and Standard Rate Non-Subscription Programs** require a single opt-in. In instances where the consent is given by the consumer using a web-based opt-in, a manually entered opt-in or a spoken opt-in, CPs are permitted send one (1) MT to the consumer which must contain program pricing and instructions on how to stop the service using the <STOP> command. A handset verifier is not required.

Depending on the type of program, CPs may send more than one MT message (e.g. one (1) MT confirming an online order and one (1) MT confirming that the order has been shipped). In these instances, CPs must clearly outline the call-flow in the application form, indicating the message ratio and timeframe each MT will be sent to the consumer. It is recommended that all MTs be sent to the consumer no later than 30 days from initial opt-in.

**Premium Rate Non-Subscription Programs** require a single opt-in. In instances where the consent is given by the consumer using a web-based, a manually entered opt-in or a spoken opt-in, a handset verifier must also be used regardless of price point and message frequency. Use of the handset verifier is mandatory.

The handset verifier allows the CP to positively confirm that the authorized subscriber is acknowledging the opt-in. This can be done by the consumer inputting online a PIN sent via MT to their mobile phone number or by the consumer replying to an MT with a specific keyword. This PIN or keyword message must include the program pricing and terms. Please note that the handset verifier is not required to deliver the same content as what is required in the mandatory double opt-in for premium subscriptions.

Acceptable responses for a handset verifier include, but are not limited to: Yes, Y, Go, Okay, OK, K, O.K., Sure, Yep, Yeah.

### 3.2 Subscription Services

**Free to Consumer and Standard Rate Subscription Programs** require opt-in with use of a Handset Verifier. In instances where the consent is given by the consumer using a web-based, a manually entered opt-in or a spoken opt-in, a handset verifier must also be used regardless of price point and message frequency. Use of the handset verifier is mandatory.

The handset verifier allows the CP to positively confirm that the authorized subscriber is acknowledging the opt-in. This can be done by the consumer inputting online a PIN sent via MT to their mobile phone number or by the consumer replying to an MT message with a specific keyword. This PIN or keyword message must include the program pricing and terms. Please note that the handset verifier is not required to deliver the same content as what is required in the mandatory double opt-in for premium subscriptions.

Acceptable responses for a handset verifier include, but are not limited to: Yes, Y, Go, Okay, OK, K, O.K., Sure, Yep, Yeah.

**Premium Rate Subscription Programs** require a double opt-in regardless of the method used by the consumer to subscribe to the program. This double opt-in is mandatory and must be in the form of an affirmative action by a new consumer to acknowledge the terms of the subscription service.

The double opt-in is applicable the first time a consumer subscribes to a specific service on a CSC. Separate programs offered on the same CSC require a separate double opt-in. Management of subscriber opt-in information is the responsibility of the Aggregator who is maintaining the direct connection to the WSP networks, regardless of any other parties involved.

The following information must be included in the double opt-in message:

- Identification of the service as a subscription.
- Pricing terms, message frequency and billing interval.
- Description of the program type (chat, vote, alert, etc.).
- Contact details for the program sponsor including a phone number and/or website URL and/or email address at a minimum. NOTE: if the phone number is the exclusive method of contact, then it must be toll-free.
- How to stop the service using the <STOP> command (at a minimum).
- The exact instructions for consumer action, “To accept reply YES”

The CP must positively confirm that the authorized subscriber is acknowledging the opt-in. The only acceptable double opt-in method is by the consumer replying to an MT message with a prescribed keyword. This prescribed keyword and language surrounding it is “To accept reply YES”. The keywords YES or OUI are the only acceptable MO responses to the double opt-in message. A double opt-in method using a PIN is not permitted for Premium SMS subscription services (please refer to example 1 below).

It is not permitted to advertise to the consumer that they may send the word YES to the CSC number anywhere but in the double opt-in message sent to the device. All CPs must ensure that their platforms do not permit any acceptance of a YES command from a consumer prior to the double opt-in message being successfully delivered to the consumer's device.

Regardless of the opt-in method from which the consumer subscribes, the MO keyword placement must be such that it is after the pricing terms in the double opt-in message (please refer to examples 1 and 2 below).

Example 1: Double opt-in for web based opt-in

	<b>Sample Text</b>	<b>Charge</b>
CTA	Consumer is asked to enter the MIN online to subscribe to a premium alerts program.  Consumer enters MIN, checks terms and conditions, and clicks ‘subscribe’ to opt-in to the program.	
Double Opt-in MT	Astro ABC subscription service \$1.00/msg, 2 msgs/week. To accept reply YES. To end txt STOP. Help 1-800-123-4567	Free
MO	YES	Non-Premium
MT	Thx! U’ve now been subscribed to receive 2 msgs/week at \$1.00/msg. U will receive ur 1 <sup>st</sup> msg shortly. To stop txt STOP	Free
MT	First delivery of premium subscription content	Premium

Example 2: Double opt-in for MO Keyword opt-in

	<b>Sample Text</b>	<b>Charge</b>
CTA	Print, web, radio promotion of Short Code opt-in by MO keyword: “Text ASTRO to 23456, \$1.00 /msg, 2 alerts/week. Msg&Data Rates may apply”	
MO	ASTRO	Non-Premium
Double opt-in MT	Astro subscription service \$1.00/msg, 2 alerts/week. To accept reply YES. To end txt STOP. Help 1-800-123-4567	Free
MO	YES	Non-Premium

MT	Thx! U'r subscribed to receive 2 alerts/week at \$1.00/msg. U will receive ur 1 <sup>st</sup> alert shortly. To stop txt STOP	Free
MT	First delivery of premium subscription content	Premium

### 3.3 Transferring Subscriber Lists

Applicants are permitted to transfer a list of subscribers from one CSC to another CSC in instances where the subscribers have opted-in using valid mechanisms. For example, a transfer could occur in instances where a Content Provider has built a consumer base by obtaining opt-ins on a multiple branded General Use Short Code and would like to transfer this consumer base to a singled branded CSC.

Only MINs that have opted in to a subscription service may be transferred to another CSC and the content of the program must remain as originally promoted to consumer. Approval must be granted by the SCC prior to any transfer.

Prior to transferring the list of MINs to another CSC, the Content Provider must send one (1) MT to each consumer's MIN from the original CSC containing the following information:

- Identity of the program sponsor by company name
- That the original CSC associated with the subscription service will be changing
- Identification of the new CSC
- Instructions on how to obtain more information using <HELP>

The same requirements apply if the Applicant intends to transfer a list of opted-in subscribers from a Long Code or a 10-digit number to a CSC.

## 4. Opt-Out

Consumers must maintain the ability to stop participating and receiving messages from a Short Code program when desired.

The consumer can stop participating in any program by texting the word <STOP>. When a subscriber opts-out of a program, no further charges should be submitted by that program for that subscriber.

No text messages of any kind may be sent to a consumer who has opted out of the service. Content Providers must not engage in spamming or cramming. Appropriate penalties will be applied should spamming or cramming activities be identified.

## 5. Mandatory Dormant Code Message

In the event that a CSC is inactive for a short period of time, Aggregators are required to implement a customer service message that will be returned to the mobile phone in the event a consumer attempts to send a message to the CSC. Ideally, this message will indicate the status of the program, such as that a campaign has recently concluded, or that the CSC is not currently in use. Secondly, this message will provide customer service information such as a dedicated website or email address

where consumers may contact a knowledgeable source. All dormant code messages should be delivered free of charge where possible as they are administrative in nature.

All five Mandatory Keywords must continue to be supported if a CSC is in a dormant state.

English text example:

Thanks for your text. This program is over. Please check [www.abcde.ca](http://www.abcde.ca) for more details.  
DataRatesMayApply.

French text example:

Merci pour votre message. Ce programme est terminé. Veuillez visiter [www.abcde.ca](http://www.abcde.ca) pour plus d'info. FraisDeDonnéesPeuventS'appliquer.

## 6. General Use Short Codes

The SCC may permit the assignment of a General Use Short Code at a single price point, premium or standard rated.

A General Use Short Code is described as a CSC program tied to a single Aggregator/Content Provider who may choose to operate a single program type (for example, contests, or alerts, or voting, etc.) for several different brands. In this model, the Aggregator/Content Provider is responsible for customer service at all times, the consumer interaction may not differ from that which was originally approved, and finally, the WSP call centre scripts provided by the Aggregator/Content Provider must at all times remain valid.

Moreover, once the application requesting a General Use Short Code has been approved, neither the WSPs nor the Administrator require advance notification of the timing of when the CSC is to be used, assuming said usage is consistent with the type and timing of usage identified in the approved application form. Any material change in the operation of an approved General Use Short Code program requires the submission of a revised application form and the written approval of the CWTA Short Code Council. Modifications that are not permitted without the Council's written approval include but are not limited to changes;

- 7.1 That add an alternate program type(s);
- 7.2 In the scope of the program;
- 7.3 That render a current WSP's customer care help script invalid.

The normal conditions of use, such as adherence to the industry CSC Code of Conduct, continue to apply. Additional conditions are detailed below:

- 7.6 All programs utilizing the same CSC must have the same price point.
- 7.7 The Content Provider/Aggregator must provide a general consumer script for use in the WSP call centres that must include only one point of contact for customer support. The WSPs will use the one point of contact with their customers for all enquiries about any of the programs running on the General Use CSC. It is the program Aggregator's or Content Provider's responsibility for providing customer service.
- 7.8 Unless specifically approved by the SCC, no General Use CSC is permitted to be used for:
  - 7.8.1 The ordering and/or delivery of Rich Content;

- 7.8.2 Mobile billing in the form of m-Commerce;
- 7.8.3 Programs with an explicit or implicit guarantee that a text message will be delivered
- 7.8.4 Programs involving charities (includes programs where full or partial donations are solicited);
- 7.8.5 The promotion of any individual WSP without written authorization from the CWTA:
- 7.8.6 Age restricted content, such as services involving alcohol, tobacco, marijuana/cannabis, gaming, and any other adult oriented or mature content.

Any violation of the guidelines governing General Use Codes will result in penalties that may include the placing of restrictions which remove the General Use program authorization or the immediate termination of the lease at the Applicant's expense.

## **7. Demo Codes**

Demo CSC programs will not be provisioned in the production environment and are strictly for the purposes of conducting demonstrations.

It is expected that Demo Codes will respect all mandatory program requirements such as the Mandatory Keywords (STOP, ARRET, HELP, AIDE, INFO).

## **8. Rich Content and Complimentary Promotional Content**

CSCs can be used as a means for consumers to purchase content downloadable to mobile phones such as ringtones, images, graphics or games. For more information, [please](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca) contact shortcodes@cwta.ca.

## **9. Mobile Commerce including m-Payments, m-Banking, m-Offers and m-Ticketing**

m-Payments allow consumers to pay for goods and services using their mobile handset; payments appear directly on their phone bill or prepaid account, via SMS or a carrier billing transaction. m-Payments are different from Premium SMS and Premium SMS Subscriptions in that content is not delivered directly to the mobile device.

When using m-Payments, the CP must implement and enforce a \$20 monthly spending cap per consumer per CSC. Any increase to the spending cap must be approved in advance of its implementation and may be granted at the sole discretion of each WSP on a case-by-case basis. Lease terms for these programs are limited to a maximum of 6 months, and may be renewed pending Short Code Council approval.

Note: where m-Payment programs have a subscription element associated with the program all applicable rules in IV.6 will apply.

m-Banking allows financial institutions to offer mobile services to their customers: alerts for account activity and transfers, transaction verifications and notifications, and customer service information requests such as branch locations for example.

m-Offers allow the CP/Aggregator to send consumers vouchers or coupons. Presenting an m-Coupon at the point of sale (retailer for example) allows the consumer to receive the same benefits as another consumer who has a paper coupon/voucher. These coupons or vouchers can be sent via SMS, as a WAP link or MMS (such as a barcode).

m-Tickets allow consumers to obtain tickets from any location and at any time using mobile phones. m-Tickets are typically delivered to the consumer via SMS, as a WAP link or MMS (such as a barcode). Consumers can use their immediately by presenting their mobile phones at the venue.

## 10. Contests

In addition to adhering to the Canadian Common Short Code Application Guidelines, CPs running contests are encouraged to refer to the following governmental guidelines:

- Competition Bureau Enforcement Guidelines for Promotional Contests;  
<http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/03126.html>,
- Québec Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux;  
<http://www.racj.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=88&L=1>

The following information must be included in the CSC application for all contesting programs:

- 10.1** There must be a “No Purchase Necessary” method of participating in the contest.
- 10.2** Full contest Rules and Regulation, which abide by all applicable local, provincial, territorial and federal laws, must be available upon request by any individual WSP prior to the program launching. The Applicant must provide the contact information for the WSPs to use should they require access to the contest Rules and Regulations.
- 10.3** The details regarding prizing offered to contest winners, draw dates, defined contest period, number of prizes, any regional allocation of prizes and chances of winning must be included in the application form for all programs with a contest element.
- 10.4** For all Premium SMS, there must be a minimum prize value of \$500 per month of the contest term (e.g. a 6 month contest term must offer a prize with a minimum value of \$3000). This guideline does not apply to free or standard rate CSC.

Minimum Advertising Requirements for all CSC with a contest element:

- 10.5** Disclosure should be made in a reasonably conspicuous manner prior to the potential entrant being inconvenienced in some way or committed to the Content Provider's product or to the contest.
- 10.6** Contest winners are to be selected or prizes are to be distributed on the basis of skill or on a random basis.
- 10.7** CTAs must not use wording that convey a false guarantee of prize or reward (e.g. “already a winner”, “today’s winner”, “selected to win”, “must enter phone number to claim prize”)

Examples of SMS contests include but are not limited to: answering trivia/skill questions, ballot draw entries and reverse auctions.

Contests Running in Québec:

Where Québec residents are ineligible to participate in a Premium SMS contest, the CP must block Québec area codes from participating in the contest.

In the event that a Premium SMS contest is only used to promote the content (where the contest is not the content), the CP must make clear to customers with province of Québec area codes that they are ineligible for the advertised prize in advance of confirming their participation. Should the consumer abandon the registration process, all communication with them must stop. If they agree to continue, the subsequent registration steps must carry out the required opt-in process in full.

At the time of application, the CP must disclose their intent to offer their Premium SMS contest to Quebec residents or their intention to block Québec area codes. If the CP intends to offer Québec residents the opportunity to participate, they must include a statement that confirms the Premium SMS contest is currently registered with the Québec Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux (RACJ). In the event that the contest is not required to be registered with the RACJ, a letter from the RACJ must be submitted with the CSC application form confirming this fact.

Additional Chances to win:

The CP must disclose their intent to offer the consumer additional chances to win in this CSC application submitted to the SCC.

Once the consumer enters the contest, the confirmation MT they receive may include a CTA for an additional chance to win. This message must include the additional pricing terms and opt-out information. The consumer must reply to this message indicating that they wish to play again prior to incurring any additional costs.

Example: Additional chance to win for a premium contest programs:

	<b>Sample Text</b>	<b>Charge</b>
MO	Consumer's entry in response to a CTA	Non-Premium
MT	Congratulations u'r entered in the draw! Want 1 more chance to win? \$2 per entry reply YES to play again! To end txt STOP	Premium
MO	YES	Non-Premium
MT	Additional chance to win in the form of a ballot or question	Premium

## 11. Chat Programs

There are two types of chat programs:

- 11.1 Peer to Peer – Where the interaction is between two individuals, neither of whom are a paid “chat professional.” In order to minimize the potential for one consumer to send large amounts of messages to another, Peer to Peer chat programs charged on a per message basis should be charged on the MO. Consumers should also have the ability to ‘block’ unwanted contact from a specific consumer. This ‘block’ function should be reversible.
- 11.2 Operator Assisted – Interaction with an operator assisted chat must be limited to a 1:1 message ratio unless otherwise approved. The paid “chat professional” is expected to conform to their own industry best practices to ensure an ideal consumer experience.

Administrative messages associated with opting-in to the chat program and setting up profiles should not incur premium charges where possible. Should premium charges be incurred as part of the registration process, this must be made clear in the CTA.

All chat programs should include an age verification process to ensure the content of the chat is appropriate to the consumer’s age. The age verification process must require the consumer to actively confirm their age, either by providing their birth date, age or by replying in the affirmative that they are past a certain age.

If any aspect of a chat program includes a subscription element, all subscription program guidelines must be followed. Chat-specific subscription elements can include: A match or profile notification subscription service offered at a premium above and beyond the initial agreed terms, which must require an additional opt-in to be obtained from the subscriber for this service.

Each WSP may, on a case-by-case basis, request that a monthly spending cap be implemented for a chat program. Chat Program Operators should contact their Aggregator for specific information related to each WSP.

## **12. MMS Programs**

An MMS program is considered any Short Code program involving the sending and/or receiving of multi-media content, such as photos, images, videos, or animations such as GIFs.

All MMS programs must adhere to the same Guidelines as SMS programs, as outlined within this document, which includes explicit consent for opt-in.

Please note that these Guidelines apply only to the WSPs that support MMS. Currently, MMS programs are only supported by Rogers, TELUS, and Vidéotron. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, these section 12 MMS Guidelines shall only become applicable to a WSP that indicates its assent thereto in writing to the CWTA.

Programs involving an MMS component on the MO and on the MT are considered equally acceptable.

Additional MMS program requirements:

- 12.1 Detailed forecasts/estimates around MMS messages sent/received per month, file sizes and file formats, will be mandatory as a part of the application submission process.

- 12.2 MMS programs cannot be run over a Free (i.e. free-to-end-user) Short Code. Due to the fact that MMS programs consume data, no MMS program can truly be considered free. As a result, only standard rated Short Code programs can be used to send/receive MMS.
- 12.3 Mandatory pricing disclosure on all calls-to-action. Whereas SMS Short Code programs are only required to disclose that “Std msg rates may apply”, MMS programs are required to disclose that “Std Msg&Data rates may apply”. Disclosing that “Msg&Data rates may apply” is also acceptable.

Unless otherwise explicitly approved by the Short Code Council, no MMS program may be used for:

- 12.4 Age-restricted content, such as, mature content, or content related to alcohol, tobacco, gambling, or marijuana.
- 12.5 WSP specific promotions or offerings.

Important considerations for MMS programs:

- Some WSPs may have a Multimedia Messaging Service Centre (MMSC) on which MMS programs are provisioned. Therefore, a connection to that WSP’s MMSC must be established in order to apply for an MMS program in Canada.
- Provisioning timelines, along with fees, will differ from the typical SMS Short Code provisioning timelines and fees, for some WSPs.
  - o If an already active SMS Short Code program is being amended to include MMS, re-provisioning may be required.
- MMS functionality is handset dependant. It is important to understand that not all devices can support MMS, and that not all devices have the same MMS capabilities (e.g. older devices may not be able to support GIFs or high resolution images). This is not a WSP limitation and should not be considered as such.
- Short Code throughput for MMS programs is different than that of SMS programs. To avoid undue network congestions, some WSPs will limit MMS throughput, or may choose to implement specific MMS frequency requirements. MMS messaging will need to be sent in a measured fashion by aggregators to prevent messaging delays and queuing. E.g. if 100 MMS are to be sent out, it may be required that they be sent out in lower increments, over a period of time, such as 1 MMS per second.

For more detail about WSP specific requirements for MMS programs, please be in touch with your aggregator.

Anticipated MMS use cases include, but are not limited to the following:

- Mobile tickets
- Product registrations
- Mobile flyers
- Contests
- Promotional offers/coupons
- Insurance claims
- Non-emergency community reporting (i.e. vandalism)

### 13. Programs Requiring Special Consideration

There are three general categories of programs that require special consideration from the Short Code Council. These categories, that may be authorized to run on a Common Short Code if explicitly approved, are further explained below:

#### 13.1 Urgent Informational Alerts:

The intent of these guidelines is to ensure Common Short Codes are used appropriately in situations concerning personal safety and property.

Effective April 2018, all Canadian WSPs are required, by the CRTC, to implement Wireless Public Alerting (WPA) capabilities on their LTE networks, as part of the overall National Public Alerting System (NPAS).

An “Emergency” is defined as a collection of event types that have been identified by the *Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management*, as having an imminent or unexpected threat to life or property. These event types are referred to as Broadcast Immediate (BI) and require broadcast to the public as soon as possible. Government officials have developed a specific list of types of alerts that are considered an immediate or unexpected threat to life or property and should be “broadcast immediately”. Examples of Broadcast Immediate event types are:

- Urban and industrial fires (threat to multiple residential or commercial properties)
- Extreme weather such as flash floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, or earthquakes
- Terrorist threats (including active shooter situations at a school campus or other)
- AMBER Alerts for abducted children

For a full list of Broadcast Immediate events, please visit <https://www.alertready.ca/#types>.

“Broadcast Immediate” Emergency Alerts can only be issued by designated provincial/territorial, or federal authorities, or those otherwise approved for connection to Canada’s national Wireless Public Alerting system. For example, Emergency Management Officers, Environment Canada, and Law Enforcement Agencies.

When an unsafe situation warrants a call to 911 Emergency Assistance, the 911 Responders/Officials will take charge to manage the emergency event and its communication.

To ensure Short Code messages do not conflict with Wireless Public Alerts, as of March 2018, Canadian Common Short Code programs that themselves are described as providing Emergency Alerts, that fall under the “Broadcast Immediate” category, or where the entity sending the alerts identifies itself as a provider of Emergency Alerts or advertises its services as such, will no longer be approved to run on a Common Short Code.

In the event there is an urgent situation, which, by definition would be considered a threat to life or property, but does not warrant a call to 911 Emergency Responders and is relevant to only an individual, a household, or a localized community (such as a school or an office building), use of a Common Short Code may be approved on a case-by-case basis, as such events would not necessarily trigger a cell-broadcast Wireless Public Alert. However, the Short Code application would be subject to review to ensure it would not overlap with Broadcast Immediate-type alerts.

**Example #1:**

*The smoke detector in your home has been activated and your home security provider notifies you of this via SMS and email. This would be considered a threat to property, but would not trigger a Wireless Public Alert.*

**Example #2:**

*A minor spill of a hazardous material that will not impact the surrounding community has occurred in a university lab and evacuation of the lab and/or neighbouring labs is required.*

CSC programs requesting to send safety-related informational alerts in an urgent situation, where there is unexpected event developing, but is not considered “Broadcast Immediate” as per the above description, may also be approved on a case-by-case basis. These types of alerts should be used in support of regular protocols to reinforce procedures in place.

When a Short Code is used to deliver imminent, safety-related messages, the content should be managed by a Safety Management individual(s), to:

- Advise of the situation
- Reinforce established safety protocols; such as evacuation procedures

It is important to consider that Wireless Public Alerts are managed by Canada’s Public Alerting Officials. These cell broadcast messages are sent to mobile users with compatible devices within the vicinity of the event. CSC messages are text messages sent to the opted-in subscribers, no matter where they are located.

These types of CSC programs are required to adhere to the following:

- Terms & Conditions must indicate that:
  - o Message delivery is not guaranteed; and
  - o Any alerts sent over the Wireless Public Alerting system are to take precedence over any notifications sent via the CSC.
- SMS alerts must not be the only method of alerting the community. A secondary method of communication (such as email, push notification, voice) is required at the time of user registration;
- Acknowledgement from the Applicant/Content Provider that the Short Code is not to be advertised or promoted as an emergency alerting tool; and
- The inclusion of timestamps in the text message itself.

Under no circumstances may Applicants:

- Use a CSC to send Broadcast Immediate alerts to the general public or;
- Advertise or promote their CSC program as an emergency alerting tool. Use of the term “emergency” in any call-to-action, advertisement, or promotion, is strictly prohibited.

**13.2 Time Sensitive Notifications:**

CSC programs where content includes time sensitive information, such as school exam/class schedule changes, school closures due to weather, road detours, building/office closures, health related medication or appointment reminders, etc., may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

### 13.3 Age Restricted Content:

CSC programs related to alcohol, tobacco, marijuana/cannabis, gaming, and any other age restricted or mature content are not typically run using a CSC, but may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Short Code Council.

All CSC programs related to age restricted content are required to include an age verification process.

**For example:** *“Reply with your DOB to complete your subscription” or “Reply YES to confirm that you are 19 years of age or older”*

**Note:** Provinces and territories are responsible for determining how cannabis is distributed and sold within their jurisdictions. Age restrictions on cannabis use do vary province-to-province. Please visit the Government of Canada website for more information:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations/provinces-territories.html>.

Due to the sensitive nature of programs that fall within this category (“**Programs Requiring Special Consideration**”), violation of the above Guidelines will result in immediate review of the Short Code in question, by the Short Code Council.

The above CSC programs may be subject to additional requirements. For further information on these types of programs, please email [shortcodes@cwta.ca](mailto:shortcodes@cwta.ca) or call 613-233-4888 and ask to speak with a member of the Short Code Team.

## 14. Charitable Donation Programs

The Mobile Giving Foundation Canada (MGF-C) allows registered charities the opportunity to have mobile phone consumers donate money to participating charities by texting a keyword to a CSC. All charitable donation programs that use a CSC must be fully compliant with the Canadian Common Short Code Application Guidelines.

ASPs wishing to run charitable donation programs should contact the MGF-C for more information about running these types of programs in Canada. General information is also available by visiting the Mobile Giving Foundation Canada website at [www.mobilegiving.ca](http://www.mobilegiving.ca).

### **CSC CODE OF CONDUCT**

The following items are to be complied with by, or are the obligations of, the leaseholder of record and/or the Aggregator:

1. The Aggregator must ensure that consumers “opt-in” or volunteer to participate in a Program. Unsolicited text messages shall not be sent to consumers.
2. The Aggregator must provide an “opt-out” process. This process must include the ability for a consumer to simply send the message “STOP” to the Short Code in order to opt-out of the program.
3. The Aggregator can only use an approved Short Code for each Program and may not alter the approved Program without obtaining permission from the Administrator.
4. The Aggregator, in conjunction with the Application Service Provider and Content Provider, will use commercially reasonable efforts to promote the Short Code program.
5. The Aggregator shall not assign or resell the Short Code.
6. The Aggregator must ensure that consumers are informed of the price of sending a text message to the Short Code, every time the Short Code is promoted to the public.
7. Customer support must be provided for the program. At a minimum, this must include a web based support page and/or email address and/or phone number. Should a phone number be the only available means of obtaining customer support, then it must be a toll-free number. The customer support process must include the ability of a consumer to send the message “HELP” to the Short Code in order to obtain information about how to participate in the program. It is also required that consumers be able to send a message to “INFO” in order to obtain contact information for the Program.
8. All messages sent to a consumer must identify the Short Code from which the message was sent.
9. If a message sent to a consumer solicits the consumer to contact the Program by means other than text messaging (e.g. phone, web, etc.), the price of the means of contact must be stipulated in the text message.
10. For applications involving information services, such as news, stock, event or sports score updates, the date and time the information was produced must be included in text message.
11. Unless otherwise agreed to by the Administrator, the length of text messages sent to consumers must not exceed two (2) SMS segments, for a maximum character limit of 320. As it relates specifically to the five (5) Mandatory Keywords, a 160-character limit remains in effect, as these messages are administrative in nature.
12. The Aggregator must ensure that the Program is not misleading and, in the case where the Short Code is promoted as brand name or trade mark (for example CWTA instead of 2982), the Program Aggregator must guarantee that it has the right to use said brand name or trade mark.

13. For services or programs involving, but not limited to, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, gaming, and any age restricted or mature content, the Aggregator must verify that each consumer is of legal age in his/her Province or Territory of residence, prior to allowing the consumer to participate in the program or receive a text message from the Program. These programs should not be marketed to individuals under the legal age.

In the event that the Program Aggregator does not comply with this CSC Code of Conduct, the Administrator may revoke the Short Code.