

CWTA: Short Code Compliance

To ensure uninterrupted service for schools and their communities using our message notification system, it is important that schools understand and comply with regulations as outlined in the Canadian Common Short Code Application Guidelines. There have been recent changes to the guidelines that include stricter regulations for customers who advertise or refer to Short Codes on their websites. Specifically, the use of the word “emergency” when referring to our messaging notification system is not compliant and there must be full disclosures of standard message rates that may apply.

The Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA) works with application service providers to ensure that they’re in compliance with these regulations.

This guide highlights the CWTA’s specific calls to action for compliant Short Code use.

Important: *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.*

Opt-In Flow

Before importing contact data into Communicate, you should send a one-time phone/email broadcast informing potential recipients of the date/time the welcome message will be sent.

How do I ensure that I’m being compliant?

All websites that refer to Short Codes must:

Have absolutely no mention of “emergency” messaging/alerts of any kind.

It’s important to note that advertising or promoting SchoolMessenger to your recipients as an **emergency alert service** is in violation of Canadian Common Short Code compliance guidelines.

To prevent violations, do not use the term “emergency alert service” when referring to SchoolMessenger in any of your communications with recipients regarding opting into receiving SchoolMessenger broadcasts (this includes information provided on school websites).

Have the standard rated message disclosure clearly defined and present on the websites, particularly anywhere that users are being asked to text (opt in and/or opt out).

‘Standard message and data rates may apply’ or ‘Std msg & data rates may apply’

What are potential consequences for noncompliance?

Any violation of the guidelines may result in restriction or suspension of your use of the Short Code.