

## CenturyLink Customer Letter

[Dear Existing Lifeline Customer in a non-waiver state]

Earlier this year the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) initiated many changes to the federal Lifeline Program. These changes will become effective starting December 2 of this year. Those changes include:

- adding and removing certain programs that can qualify consumers for Lifeline support;
- changing the timing of annual customer re-certifications;
- making Lifeline discounts available on certain qualifying broadband internet access service; and
- establishing a 12-month transfer restriction (port freeze) on moving Lifeline discounts from qualifying broadband service.

If your state has a state Lifeline/Telephone Assistance Program, it may have been impacted by the FCC changes. This may cause changes to any state discount you may be receiving.

### **Changes to Qualifying Programs**

Starting December 2, 2016, new customers can qualify for federal Lifeline discounts by meeting income criteria, or by participating in one of these programs : Medicaid; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8); or Veterans and Survivors Pensions Benefit. As an existing customer, if you qualified for Lifeline discounts through participation in any other program, you will continue to receive Lifeline discounts on your CenturyLink service until your next re-certification for the Lifeline program. At your 2017 re-certification, to remain eligible for Lifeline discounts, you must certify that you are eligible through participation in one of the programs listed above or through income eligibility. For customers living on Tribal lands, the additional qualifying programs for Tribal Lifeline remain unchanged.

### **Changes to Timing and Process for Annual Customer Re-certifications**

Starting in July 2017, you will be required to re-certify your eligibility for Lifeline discounts during the 60-day period that ends with the anniversary of the date that you initiated Lifeline service with CenturyLink. For example, if you started receiving discounts on September 1, you will be required to recertify during July or August in 2017. You still must re-certify every year.

Also, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is the organization that manages the Lifeline program for the FCC. USAC manages the recertification process today for some states. Over the next few years, USAC will take on the responsibility for recertifying customers in all states. So, please watch for your annual recertification notice to come from either Centurylink or USAC.

### **Lifeline Discounts on Internet Service**

Beginning December 2, 2016, the Lifeline discount is available for internet service at speeds of 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload or higher (10x1). A household is still permitted to have only one Lifeline discount. Your current federal Lifeline discount of \$9.25 will not change at this time. However, if you have qualifying CenturyLink internet service (10x1 or higher) after December 2nd, your federal Lifeline discount will be applied to your internet service. This may result in an increase to the fees and taxes on your account.

### **Lifeline Discount Transfer Restrictions**

Starting December 2, 2016, Lifeline discounts on qualifying internet service include a transfer restriction (port freeze) for 12 months. This means that a customer who receives Lifeline discounts for broadband service from one company cannot receive Lifeline discounts for 12 months from a different company even if that customer switches internet providers. If you have qualifying CenturyLink internet service (10x1 or faster speeds) on December 2nd, a 12-month transfer restriction will begin once your qualifying information is updated in the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD).

Lifeline discounts on voice services continue to have a transfer restriction (port freeze) for 60 days. This means you are unable to obtain the Lifeline discount on service with another provider for 60 days from the date that your current voice service Lifeline discounts began. This is not a change to the current program rules.

There are certain exceptions to the transfer restrictions including if you move (change your residential address). For further information regarding transfer restrictions see <http://www.usac.org/li/program-requirements/benefit-port-freeze.aspx>.

There are many resources available with additional information regarding these and other changes to the Lifeline Program. Those resources include:

**FCC** - [www.fcc.gov/general/lifeline-program-low-income-consumers](http://www.fcc.gov/general/lifeline-program-low-income-consumers)

**USAC** - [www.usac.org/ls/change-my-company.aspx](http://www.usac.org/ls/change-my-company.aspx) or [www.lifelinesupport.org/ls/](http://www.lifelinesupport.org/ls/)

**CenturyLink** - [www.centurylink.com/lifeline](http://www.centurylink.com/lifeline)

Thank you for being a CenturyLink customer.