



Follow the Path to Lifeline – Get Discounts on Your Telephone Bill

What is Lifeline?

Lifeline is a government benefit program that provides discounts on monthly telephone service for eligible low-income consumers to help ensure they have the opportunities and security that telephone service affords, including being able to connect to jobs, family, and 911 services. Lifeline is supported by the federal Universal Service Fund (USF).

How Do I Qualify for Lifeline Discounts?

The Lifeline program is available to eligible low-income consumers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands. You must be eligible to enroll. To participate in the program, consumers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the following assistance programs:

If you participate in one of these programs you are eligible:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP);
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met)
- State assistance programs (if applicable)

2016 Income Guidelines

Household Size	135% of Federal Poverty Levels
1	\$16,038
2	\$21,627
3	\$27,216
4	\$32,805
Each additional person after 4	\$5,616

Do I need to verify my eligibility?

Yes – Once a year. If you already enrolled in Lifeline, you must verify your continued eligibility on an annual basis. If you become ineligible for the benefit, either because your income has increased, you no longer qualify for a federal benefit program, or someone else in your household gets a Lifeline service, you must contact your provider immediately to de-enroll from the program, otherwise you may be subject to penalties.

What are the benefits under the Lifeline Program Discounts?

Lifeline provides discounts on monthly telephone service (landline or wireless) for eligible consumers. These discounts average \$9.25 per month, and may be more depending on the state.

Can I get more than one discounted service?

No. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than **ONE** Lifeline discount per household. An eligible consumer may receive a discount on either a landline or wireless service, but **NOT** both. If you are currently receiving more than one monthly Lifeline service, you must select one provider to provide your Lifeline service and you must contact the other provider to de-enroll from their program.

How do I enroll?

You can apply for Lifeline through your local telephone company or designated state agency. To locate a Lifeline provider in your state go to www.lifelinesupport.org.

Who Pays for the Lifeline Program?

All telecommunications service providers and certain other providers of telecommunications must contribute to the federal USF based on a percentage of their end-user telecommunications revenues. These companies include landline telephone companies, wireless telephone companies, and certain Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers.

Some consumers may notice a “Universal Service” line item on their telephone bills. This line item appears when a company chooses to recover its USF contributions directly from its customers by billing them this charge. The FCC does not require this charge to be passed on to customers. Each company makes a business decision about whether and how to assess charges to recover its Universal Service costs.

For More Information

To find more information about eligibility and how to apply for Lifeline benefits contact your local telephone company, the PA PUC at 1-800-692-7380 or FCC’s toll-free customer service number at 1-888-CALL-FCC.

For further information, contact the Public Utility Commission:

Write

PA Public Utility Commission
Bureau of Consumer Services
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

Call

1-800-692-7380
For people with speech or hearing
loss, dial 7-1-1 (Telecommunications
Relay Service)

Visit our website

www.puc.pa.gov



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