

Affordable Connectivity Program: 101

March 17, 2022



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Meet Our Team

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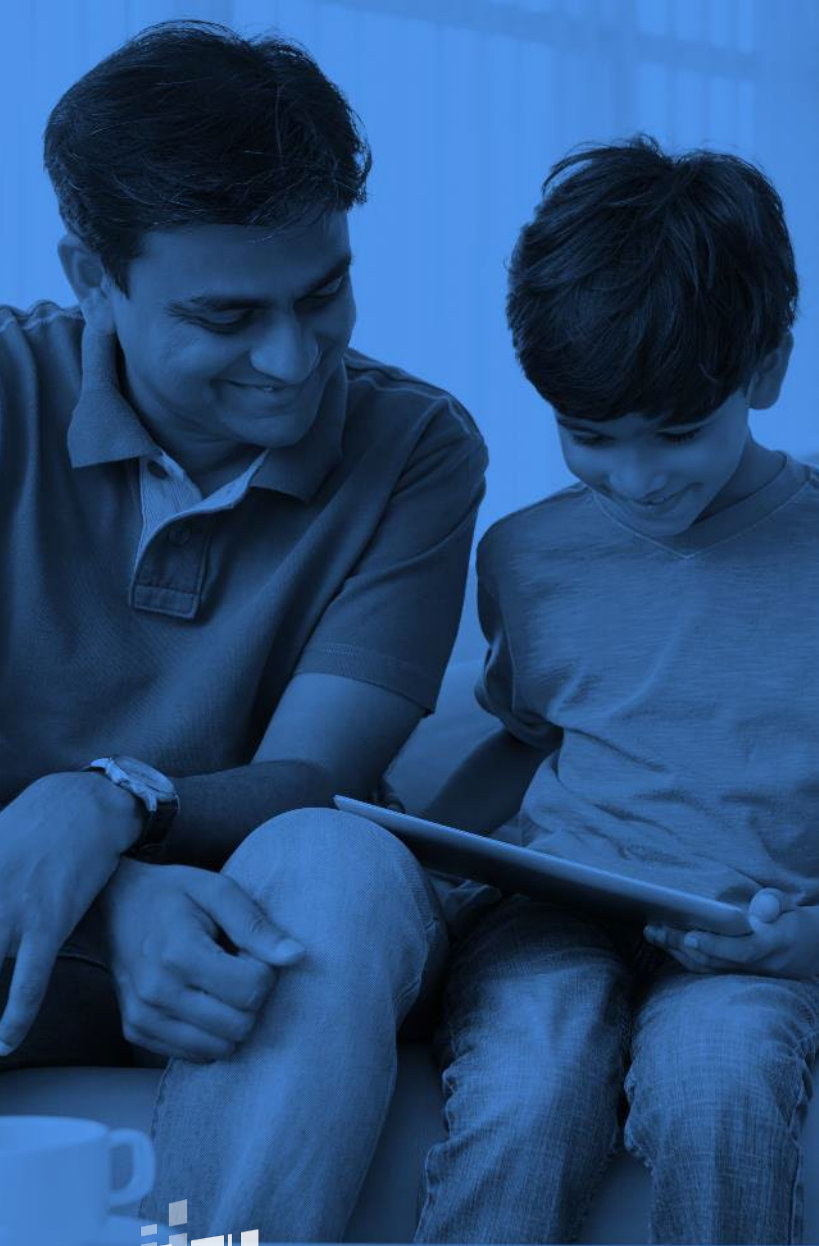
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Agenda

- Program Overview
- Consumer Eligibility Criteria
- Systems Overview
- Verify & Enroll Eligible Consumers
- Household Usage Requirements



Program Overview



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Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a Federal Communications Commission benefit program that helps low-income households pay for broadband service and connected internet devices

Eligible households can receive:



\$30 Standard Discount

Up to \$30/month discount for broadband services



\$75 Tribal Discount

Up to \$75/month discount for broadband services for households on qualifying Tribal lands



Device Discount

A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet (consumer co-pay of \$10-\$50 required)

ACP benefit is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household

Consumer Eligibility Criteria



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Eligibility Criteria (1 of 2)

Households can qualify for the ACP by showing that at least one member of their household meets **one** of the following criteria:

- Participates in the FCC's [Lifeline Program](#)
- Has household income at or below **200%** of federal poverty guidelines
- Participates in a Lifeline-qualifying government program
- Received a Federal Pell Grant in the current award year
- Participates in free & reduced-price school lunch program or school breakfast program
- Participates in the Special Supplemental Nutritional Program for Woman, Infants and Children (WIC)
- Qualifies for a participating provider's existing low-income program, subject to FCC approval of that provider's eligibility process

Eligibility Criteria: Lifeline-Qualifying Programs (2 of 2)

Households can qualify for the ACP by showing that at least one member of their household participates in **one** of the following programs:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
- Tribal Programs for Households on Qualifying Tribal Lands
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
 - Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Tribal Head Start (only those households meeting its income qualifying standard)
 - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

ACP Household Eligibility

ACP determines eligibility by household

- A household is defined as a group of people who live together and share income or expenses, whether related or not
- If more than one household resides at the same address as an existing ACP subscriber, consumers must complete a [Household Worksheet](#) to show eligibility for the ACP

Households that are eligible for ACP and Lifeline may apply for and receive both benefits on the same or separate service

Benefit Qualifying Person (BQP)

- Households can qualify for the ACP through an eligible child or dependent (Benefit Qualifying Person or BQP)
 - For example, a household member with a child or dependent who is approved for the free and reduced-price school lunch program or school breakfast program or who attends a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school, is eligible for ACP
- The application should be completed by an adult member of the household, identifying the child or dependent as the BQP
 - If a household is qualifying through an eligible dependent, then the name on the supporting documentation should match the name of the BQP
- Children under the age of 18 are not eligible to apply for the ACP themselves unless the government has declared them an Emancipated Minor

Questions?

Systems Overview



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USAC ACP Systems

- The **Lifeline National Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier)** is a centralized system that determines whether consumers are eligible for the ACP
- The **National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD)** allows service providers to enroll qualified ACP consumers in the program and transfer consumers (with the consumer's consent) to their company
- The **Affordable Connectivity Claims System (ACCS)** is the online filing system that service providers use to submit claims for reimbursement for offering ACP-supported services to ACP subscribers
- The **Representative Accountability Database (RAD)** is a registration system that validates the identities of service provider representatives performing transactions in the National Verifier and NLAD

National Verifier

- The [National Verifier](#) is available through USAC's One Portal system, which is a single portal dashboard that allows users to access all of their Universal Service Fund and ACP systems through the same portal
- The National Verifier checks consumer eligibility to participate in the ACP and accepts documentation to help consumers resolve eligibility errors
- Service providers also use the National Verifier to check the status of a consumer's eligibility application (with the consumer's permission)
- Consumers apply for the ACP directly through the National Verifier or with the help of a service provider
- Service provider representatives need credentials to use the National Verifier service provider portal

National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD)

- [NLAD](#) is available through USAC's One Portal system
- NLAD allows service providers to manage their ACP subscribers, including enrolling consumers in the program and transferring subscribers
- All account types for NLAD and the National Verifier are created in NLAD
- For more information about NLAD, visit the [NLAD section](#) of USAC's website

Affordable Connectivity Claims System (ACCS)

- The [ACCS](#) is available through USAC's One Portal system
- Service providers use the ACCS to claim ACP subscribers for reimbursement and to certify reimbursement claims
- USAC provides a “snapshot” of each providers' eligible subscribers on the first of each month
- Service providers claim the monthly service reimbursement amount for each eligible subscriber, as well as any device benefit reimbursement
- Service providers must certify the claim by the 15th of the month to receive payment at the end of the same month
- Providers will be able to submit revised claims within six months of the snapshot date, starting with the March data month (April 1 snapshot) and on

Representative Accountability Database (RAD)

- Service provider representatives must register for a Representative ID through [RAD](#) before the representative can provide information directly or indirectly to the NLAD or National Verifier
- RAD registration is a two-step process:
 - Representatives **self-register** for a Representative ID, which is needed to perform transactions in NLAD and the NV
 - Representatives provide their Representative ID number to each service provider for which they work
 - Service providers use the Representative ID to link the representative's NLAD and/or National Verifier account credentials
 - Service providers can find detailed instructions on how to link Representative IDs in the “How to Link a Rep ID” and “Data Input Templates” section of the [RAD Resources](#) page
- For more information about RAD, visit the [RAD section](#) of USAC's website

Questions?

Verify & Enroll Eligible Consumers



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Application Process – National Verifier (1 of 2)

Option 1:

Apply Online

- The consumer visits [ACPbenefit.org](https://www.acpbenefit.org) from any computer or mobile device to complete the electronic application and upload any required documentation
- If approved, the consumer contacts a participating service provider to enroll in ACP

Option 2:

Apply by Mail

- The consumer fills out and signs the ACP Application Form
- The consumer mails the application and supporting documentation to the ACP Support Center
- Service providers may assist consumers with the paper application and mail it on the consumer's behalf

Option 3:

Apply with a Service Provider

- The consumer may apply with the assistance of a service provider
- Service providers may submit an online application on the consumer's behalf (only with the consumer's consent) using the National Verifier service provider portal
 - This is an in-person interaction, where the service provider asks the consumer questions in an interview style approach
 - The consumer must sign and certify the application
- Consumers may also apply through the service provider's website, if the service provider has elected to use the National Verifier API

Application Process – National Verifier (2 of 2)

- The National Verifier performs the following automated checks:
 - Eligibility check
 - Identity check
 - Address check
 - Duplicate subscriber check
 - Duplicate address check
 - Tribal eligibility check
 - Deceased subscriber check
- If any of these checks return errors, the consumer will be directed to either resolve the error in the portal or to provide additional documentation

Enroll Consumers in NLAD – National Verifier (1 of 2)

- After a consumer is found eligible for the ACP using the National Verifier, the consumer must be enrolled using the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD)
- Service providers enroll consumers by using the [APP ID](#) feature or entering:
 - First and last name
 - Date of Birth
 - Last 4 digits of Social Security Number (if entered on the application)
 - Address
 - Email address or phone number
 - Service type
 - Intent to provide a device (if applicable)
 - Device type, make and model (if applicable)
 - Expected service rate and device rate (if applicable)
 - Benefit Qualifying Person's information (if applicable)
 - School Name (If qualifying through a free and reduced price lunch or breakfast program, or CEP School)

Enroll Consumers in NLAD – National Verifier (2 of 2)

- NLAD will use the consumer information to check for a qualified application in the National Verifier
 - If found, the provider can complete the enrollment in NLAD
 - If not found, the consumer must return to the National Verifier to complete an application
- Service providers must receive affirmative consent (can be verbal or written) from all consumers acknowledging that having reviewed the required disclosures about the ACP, the household consents to enroll in the ACP
- Service providers in all states, including the Lifeline opt-out states California, Oregon, and Texas, must use NLAD for ACP enrollments

Application Process – Approved Alternative Verification Process (AVP)

- For FCC-approved alternative verification processes (AVPs), including for existing low-income programs, service providers must retain documents used to verify consumer eligibility
- If a provider is interested in becoming an AVP provider, visit the [FCC website](#) for more information

Enroll Consumers in NLAD – Alternative Verification Process (AVP)

- After a consumer is found eligible for the ACP using the service provider's AVP, the consumer must be enrolled using the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD)
- Service providers enroll consumers in NLAD by entering:
 - First and last name
 - Date of Birth
 - Last 4 digits of Social Security Number (if entered on the application)
 - Address
 - Email address or phone number
 - Service type
 - Intent to provide a device (if applicable)
 - Device type, make and model (if applicable)
 - Expected service rate and device rate (if applicable)
 - Benefit Qualifying Person's information (if applicable)
 - School Name (If qualifying through a free and reduced price lunch or breakfast program, or CEP School)
 - A confirmation flag indicating that the service provider is using an AVP for enrollment

Enroll Consumers in NLAD – Alternative Verification Process (AVP)

- NLAD will run several checks
- Errors can be resolved in NLAD
- Service providers using an AVP must certify that they confirmed eligibility of the consumers they enroll and retain documentation
- Upon completion, the provider can complete the enrollment in NLAD

Questions?

Household Usage Requirements

Household Usage Requirements

Service providers are responsible for **tracking the usage of subscribers** who are not charged a monthly fee for their ACP service

- A monthly fee is the amount that remains on a customer's bill after the ACP benefit (and Lifeline benefit, if applicable) has been applied
- Subscribers subject to the non-usage rule must use their ACP-supported service at least once every consecutive 30 days
 - Usage includes making outbound calls, answering incoming calls (excluding calls from their ACP service provider), using data, buying minutes or data for their service, responding to their service provider, and sending a text message
 - If the subscriber does not use their service for 30 consecutive days (non-usage), the service provider must give the subscriber a 15-day notice that if they do not use the service in the next 15 days, their service will be terminated.
 - Service providers must de-enroll subscribers who fail to cure their non-usage
- Service providers are also responsible for **retaining usage documentation** to show compliance with the ACP usage rules

Questions?

ACP Rules



- ACP requirements are based on the FCC program rules
 - [47 C.F.R Sections 54.1800 – 54.1812](#) are the rules governing the Affordable Connectivity Program
 - The [FCC's Public Notice](#) (DA 22-152) outlines the effective dates for specific ACP rules

Stay Informed About the ACP

- [Sign up](#) for ACP email updates and upcoming events
- Visit [USAC's website](#) for service provider updates
- Find upcoming trainings and other resources on the [ACP Learn page](#)
 - March 22 - ACP Getting Started with the National Verifier
 - March 24 – ACP Getting Started with NLAD

Questions? Email ACProgram@usac.org

- Consumers who have questions can visit ACPbenefit.org or contact USAC's ACP Support Center



ACPsupport@usac.org



(877) 384-2575

7 Days a Week, 9:00 am – 9:00 pm ET

Thank You!





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