



Tribal Outreach across USAC

2018 Tribal Applicant Training

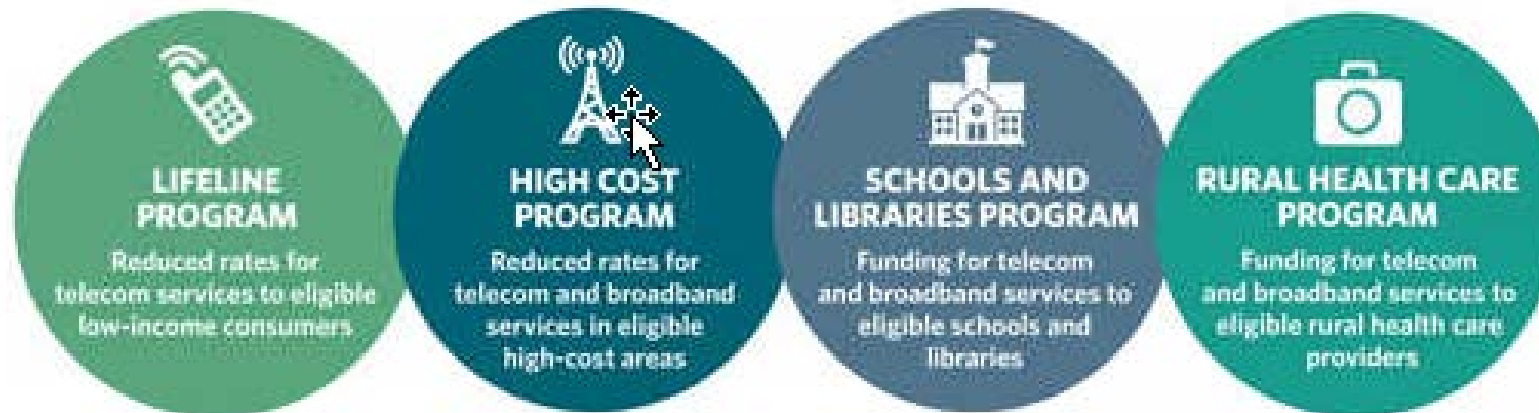


Universal Service
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Agenda

1. Rural Health Care
2. Lifeline
3. High Cost – Connect America Fund

The Four Universal Service Programs



The background image is a photograph of a healthcare setting, overlaid with a solid blue color. It depicts a healthcare worker, a woman with short dark hair, leaning over a patient who is lying in a hospital bed. The worker is holding a small object, possibly a pill or a piece of equipment, and appears to be interacting with the patient. The patient is an older woman with light-colored hair. In the background, various medical devices and equipment are visible, including a monitor and some tubing. The overall scene conveys a sense of care and medical attention.

Rural Health Care Program

Connecting health care facilities across America



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Overview of the RHC Program

- The RHC Program provides discounts for telecommunications and broadband services to eligible health care providers (HCPs).
- The RHC Program is authorized by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to commit up to \$581M for FY2018 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019) and adjusts for inflation every year.
 - [Order 18-82](#) released June 25, 2018 raised the RHC Program cap from \$400M.
- This amount includes administrative expenses for Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the administrator of the programs, to administer the RHC Program per funding year.

What Does the Rural Health Care Program Do?

The RHC Program discounts support getting the facility connected; the money goes directly to the service provider who then offsets the facilities' costs by applying the discount to their bill or a check.

Three Criteria for Eligibility

1. Status

- Not for Profit
- Public

2. Eligibility Category

3. Rural Location

- Telecom Program: HCP applicants must be located in an FCC-approved rural location to be considered rural.
- HCF Program: Individual HCP applicants must be located in an FCC-approved rural location to be considered rural. Non-rural HCP applicants may apply as part of a majority-rural consortium.
- Use the [rural look-up tool](#) on the USAC website.

Each HCP site or location is considered an individual HCP for purposes of calculating support under the RHC Program. Each site must thus demonstrate that *by itself* it is an eligible entity.

Health Care Provider (HCP) Type

- Post-secondary educational institutions offering health care instruction, teaching hospitals, and medical schools
- Community health centers or health centers providing health care to migrants
- Local health departments or agencies
- Community mental health centers
- Not-for-profit hospitals
- Rural health clinics
- Dedicated emergency departments of rural for-profit hospitals
- Part-time eligible entities
- Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs)
- Consortia of the above entities

The Two Components of the RHC Program

There are two “subprograms” of the RHC Program:

1. Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program

- Supports broadband connectivity and broadband networks for eligible health care providers (HCPs)
- Eligible services and equipment receive a 65% discount

2. Telecommunications (Telecom) Program

- Funds urban/rural rate difference for telecommunications services for eligible rural HCPs.
- Remained in place after adoption of the HCF Program.

HCF and Telecom Programs Comparison

Category	HCF Program	Telecom Program
Discount	65% flat rate discount on all eligible expenses	Calculated as urban-rural differential of cost of services
Rurality	HCP can be located in a non-rural location as a member of an eligible consortium, as long as consortium is majority rural	HCP must be in a rural location
Off-Site Expenses	Connections associated with off-site data centers and off-site administrative offices used by eligible HCPs for health care purposes are eligible for funding	No off-site associated connections are eligible for funding

HCF and Telecom Programs Comparison

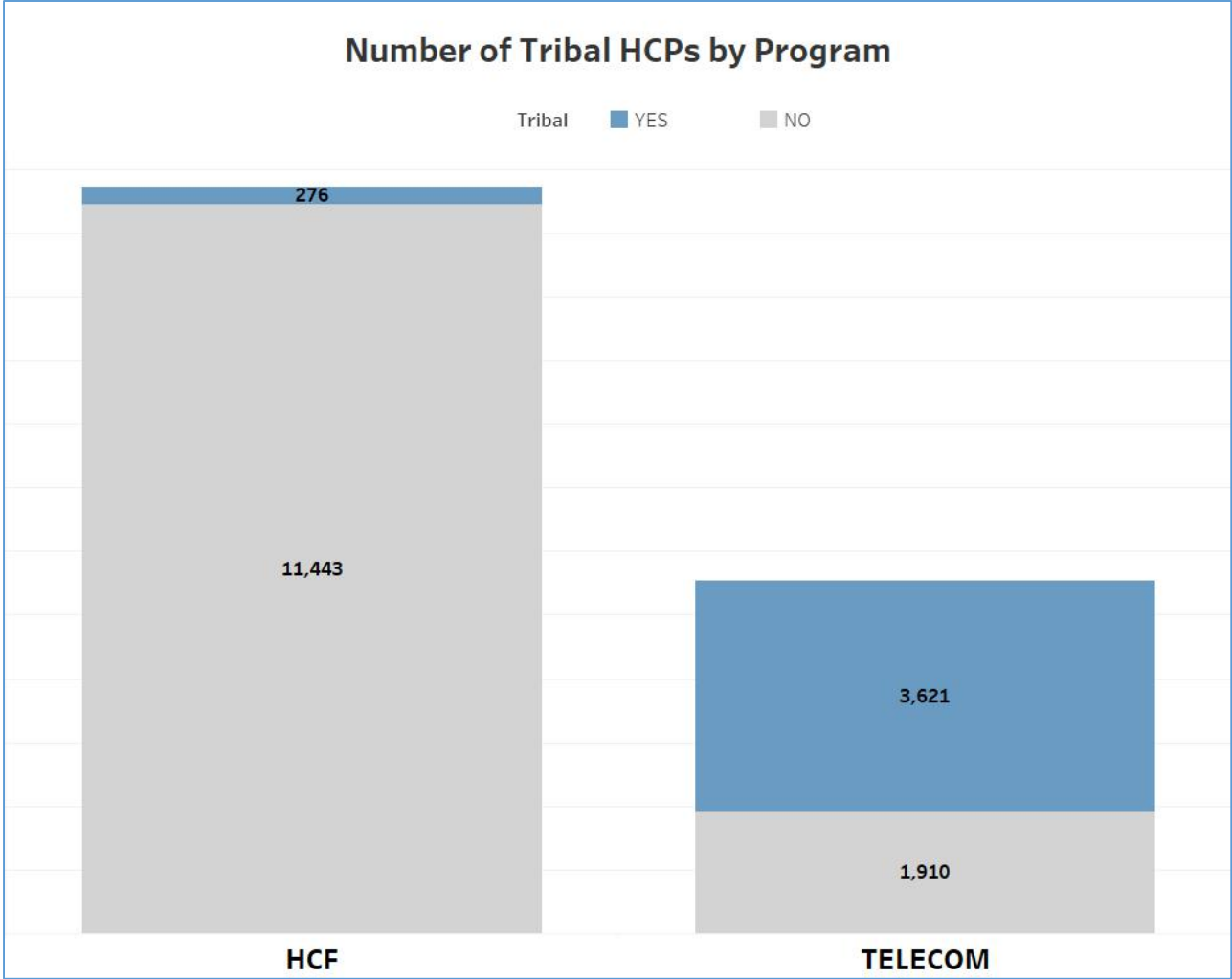
Category	HCF Program	Telecom Program
Eligible Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broadband services• Network equipment• HCP-constructed and owned network facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telecommunications services
Application Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply as an individual HCP or as a part of a consortium• Can obtain a multi-year funding commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply as an individual HCP• Must seek new funding commitment for each funding year

Rural Healthcare Program Application Process



TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM
HEALTHCARE CONNECT FUND

Participation by Program



RHC Program Help Desk

- Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org
 - Email at any time to request a one-on-one appointment to learn more about the application process or ask specific questions.
- Phone: **(800) 453-1546**
 - Hours are 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET





Lifeline Program

People across the United States rely on phone and internet to stay connected to family, work, education, and essential services. The Lifeline Program provides a monthly discount for the cost of these services for qualified, low-income households.

About the Lifeline Program

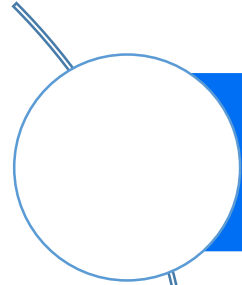


As of September 2018, 9.3 million U.S. households participate in the federal Lifeline program, including 234,000 Tribal participants

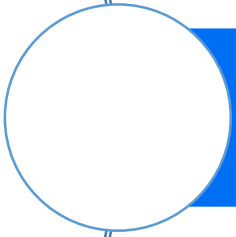
Subscribers prove eligibility through participation in a qualifying assistance program or demonstrating income at or below 135% of federal poverty guidelines

Available in every state, territory, commonwealth & on Tribal lands

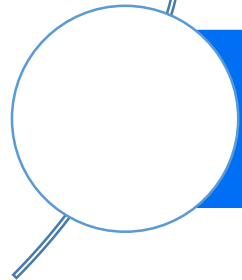
Program Rules



Subscribers must be able to prove that they qualify for the program



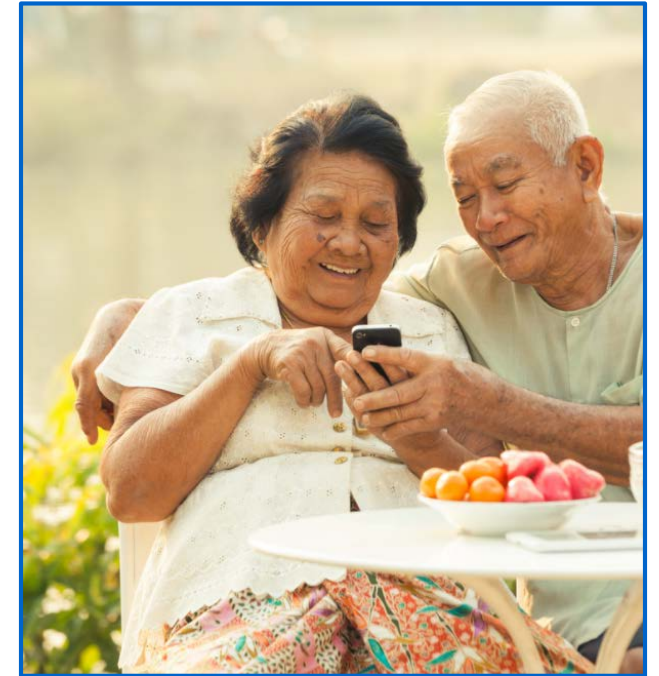
Only one Lifeline benefit is permitted per household



Subscribers are required to recertify that they are still eligible once per year

About the Lifeline Program

- Lifeline is a federal benefit of \$9.25/month toward phone, internet, or bundled service
- Goal: To make communications services more affordable for low-income customers so they can
 - Have access to emergency services, find/keep a job, and stay connected with loved ones
- Other Lifeline benefits are available:
 - Up to \$25/month extra is available for subscribers on qualifying Tribal lands
 - Up to \$100 “Link Up” benefit to connect telecommunications services from a carrier receiving high-cost support on qualifying Tribal lands once per residential address
 - Many states offer an additional Lifeline discount of \$2-4/month



How to Qualify for the Lifeline Subsidy

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
- Demonstrate income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines



How to Qualify for the Lifeline Subsidy

- Consumers may also qualify if participating in one of the following Tribal assistance programs:
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance (BIA-GA)
 - Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance of Needy Families (TTANF)
 - Head Start (must meet income qualifying standard)
 - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)



Eligibility Checking

- Consumers apply for the Lifeline program through their service provider, state or the National Verifier
- Many states have their own eligibility checking process
- In general when applying:
 - Consumer fills out a Lifeline application and initials the Lifeline certifications
 - Currently, Tribal consumers self-certify that they are eligible for the enhanced tribal benefit
 - Service provider, state, or the National Verifier checks the consumer's Lifeline eligibility by checking a database or reviewing documents
 - If consumer is eligible, the service provider begins phone or internet service

FCC FORM 5629

OMB APPROVAL EDITION 3060-0819

Lifeline Program
Application Form

FCC

Universal Service
Administrative Co.

3. Qualify for Lifeline

Fill out this section to show that you, your dependent, or someone in your household qualifies for Lifeline.

You can qualify through some government assistance programs or through your income (you do not need to qualify through both).

Qualify through a government program:

Check all programs that you or someone in your household have:

- ☐ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Food Stamps)
- ☐ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- ☐ Medicaid
- ☐ Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- ☐ Veterans Pension or Survivors Benefit Programs

Tribal Specific Programs

- ☐ Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) General Assistance
- ☐ Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF)
- ☐ Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- ☐ Tribal Head Start (only households that meet the income qualifying standard)

Or

Qualify through your income:
(Only fill this out if you do not qualify through a government program.)

Including you, how many people live in your household? (check one)	Is your income the same or less than the amount listed for your state and household size? (only check yes or no next to your household size)				
	All 48 States & DC (not Alaska and Hawaii)	Alaska	Hawaii		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	\$16,389	\$20,493	\$18,846	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	\$22,221	\$27,783	\$25,555.50	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	\$28,053	\$35,073	\$32,265	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	\$33,885	\$42,363	\$38,974.50	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	\$39,717	\$49,653	\$45,684	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	\$45,549	\$56,943	\$52,393.50	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 7	\$51,381	\$64,233	\$59,103	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	\$57,213	\$71,523	\$65,812.50	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> If more than 8, add this amount for each extra person:	Add \$5,832	Add \$7,290	Add \$6,709.50	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

139% of the 2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines
*The Federal Poverty Guidelines are typically updated at the end of January.

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Universal Service Administrative Company | www.usac.gov
Need help? Call the Lifeline Support Center at 1-800-234-9473

Eligibility Checking

- Currently consumers living in Colorado, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming are required to apply for Lifeline through the National Verifier. Other states will be added in the coming months.
- Consumers in the six states listed above can apply online through the Consumer Portal at CheckLifeline.org, by mail using a paper application or in person through a service provider.
- For help and step-by-step instructions, consumers can visit LifelineSupport.org
- Additional states will be added to the National Verifier in 2018 and 2019

FCC FORM 5629

Lifeline Program
Application Form

OMB APPROVAL EDITION 3060-0819

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Administrative Co.

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- ☐ Medicaid
- ☐ Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
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Need help? Call the Lifeline Support Center at 1-800-234-9473

How Lifeline Works

- When a consumer enrolls in the program, the service provider must enter the consumer in NLAD (National Lifeline Accountability Database)
 - Service providers must indicate that a consumer is eligible for the enhanced Tribal benefit in NLAD
- Phone and internet companies provide service to eligible consumers at a discounted rate
- Each month, USAC uses NLAD to create a list of consumers who are eligible for reimbursement for each provider, providers cross check that list and identify anyone who isn't eligible for reimbursement
- USAC pays service providers \$9.25 per eligible consumer who received Lifeline service that month, or up to \$34.25 for consumers who live on qualifying Tribal lands
- Service providers must pass the full benefit amount onto consumer

How to Identify Phone or Broadband Companies in Your Area that offer Lifeline:

- USAC's "Companies Near Me" tool helps subscribers find a service provider near them
- Search by zip code for a printable list of phone and broadband carriers in your area

Companies Near Me

See the [Do I Qualify?](#) page to find out if you qualify for a Lifeline Program discount.

Find a Company

Enter Your Zip Code

Example: 12345

Search

[Clear Results](#)

Note: The search results may not show every company that is near you. A company may still offer Lifeline even if it is not on this list. Please ask the service provider if they offer Lifeline in your area.

Companies near 59855

The order of this list is random and may change next time you search. The results will still be the same.

Showing 1 of 1 companies



[Print List](#)

Download List:



Company Name	Phone	Type of Service ▲	State
Ronan Telephone Company	406-676-2751	Home Phone	MT

If you want to see more companies, [see the list of companies in MT.](#)

About the National Verifier

- The National Verifier will determine consumer's Lifeline eligibility
- Service providers will no longer determine consumer eligibility for Lifeline
- The National Verifier will make eligibility determinations, and service providers must enter a consumer into NLAD to enroll the subscriber in Lifeline
- The National Verifier will handle the annual recertification process
- The National Verifier has been fully launched in six states and has been “soft launched” in an additional five states and one territory.
- The National Verifier is expected to be implemented in all states and territories by December 31, 2019.



Information, Feedback, and Updates

- For more information, visit LifelineSupport.org
- Webinars: Monthly [Lifeline Program Update Webinars](#)
- Send us Feedback: You can submit feedback any time via email to LifelineProgram@usac.org, or as a comment on the [National Verifier Blog](#). And sign up for program updates.

The screenshot shows a blog post titled "National Verifier Update" from the "lifelineprogram" on April 14, 2017. The post text states that USAC is pleased to share that the National Verifier build is underway and that they are making progress developing the infrastructure and processes that will allow USAC to assume the responsibility of confirming eligibility of Lifeline subscribers. It also mentions that USAC has enlisted the help of a systems integrator to support their state and federal partners with all technical aspects of the National Verifier implementation. A second paragraph emphasizes the importance of stakeholder feedback to the development and build process, stating that USAC will be reaching out shortly to set up National Verifier feedback conversations. At any time, users can share National Verifier feedback through the comments below. The author is identified as "lifelineprogram" with a bio stating they help families in need afford voice and broadband connectivity services, with a link to "View all posts by lifelineprogram".

On the right side of the post, there are three sections: "CATEGORIES" with a link to "Uncategorized"; "RECENT COMMENTS" with three entries: "Lori Miranda on The National Verifier Draft Plan", "Kelley, Dye and Warren, LLP on The National Verifier Draft Plan", and "On Communications (Dana Law-Hsu) on The National Verifier Draft Plan"; and "BROWSE BY TAG" with links for "Comments" and "NV Plan".

Below the post is a "Leave a Reply" section with a note: "Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *". It includes a large text area for the "COMMENT", and input fields for "NAME", "EMAIL", and "WEBSITE". A "POST COMMENT" button is at the bottom of the form.

At the bottom right of the sidebar, there is an "ARCHIVES" section with links for "April 2017", "January 2017", and "November 2016".

High Cost and the Connect America Fund

Expanding access to modern communications networks across rural America



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Connect America Program

Program Goals

- Preserve and advance universal availability of voice service
- Drive universal availability of modern networks capable of providing voice and broadband service to homes, businesses and community anchor institutions
- Drive universal availability of modern networks capable of providing advanced mobile voice and broadband service
- Ensure that rates for broadband and voice services are reasonably comparable in all regions of the nation
- Contain administrative costs and minimize the universal service contribution for consumers and businesses through efficient, effective program management

Connect America Program

Modernization of the High Cost Program Creates the **Connect America Fund**

Since 2011, a series of FCC modernization orders has radically transformed the High Cost Program to create the **Connect America Fund**

Legacy

- High Cost
- Voice
- Maintaining service
- Cost-based funding
- Forms-based reporting requirements
- Beneficiary audits
- Compliance

Modernized

- Connect America
- Voice and broadband
- Maintaining and expanding service
- Incentive-based support
- Systems-based portal
- In-program deployment verification
- Success

Connect America Program

CAF Funding in Price Cap Areas

CAF Phase I Incremental	CAF Phase II Model	CAF Phase II Auctions	Rural Broadband Experiments (RBE)	CAF Inter-carrier Compensation (ICC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interim program to spur broadband deployment• \$486 million• Build out to locations unserved by 4/1 Mbps• 523,753 locations deployed over two rounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides support based on a cost model• \$1.7 billion annually• Six-year support term• Provide locations with speeds of at least 10/1 Mbps• Deployed by Dec 2020, 3.5 million locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides support through a reverse auction to areas declined in CAF II, extremely high-cost areas and certain other census block that were removed from model offer• Ten-year term of support• Build out to unserved locations with speeds of at least 10/1 Mbps to 1GB/500Mbps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided support in Price Cap areas through an auction• \$41 million over ten years• Build out to unserved locations with speeds between 10/1 Mbps and Mbps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows recovery of revenues reduced due to ICC reforms in 2012• Support intended to invest in broadband infrastructure• Program will phase out for Price Cap carriers in July 2019

Connect America Program

CAF Funding in Rate-of-Return Areas

Alternative Connect America Cost Model (A-CAM)

- Support based on cost model
- Provide locations with speeds of at least 10/1 Mbps and 25/3 Mbps
- Some 4/1 Mbps and reasonable request
- 714,000 locations deployed by 2026

High Cost Loop Support (HCLS)

- Legacy program to support voice
- Provides support for the last mile of connection in areas where the cost to provide service exceeds 115 percent of the national average cost

Connect America Broadband Loop Support (CAF BLS)

- Supports voice, voice and broadband, and broadband-only services
- Replaced ICLS
- Five-year deployment obligation milestone

CAF Inter-carrier Compensation (ICC)

- Allows recovery of revenue reduced due to ICC reforms in 2012
- Support intended to invest in broadband infrastructure
- CAF ICC support recipients must provide broadband with minimum speed requirements of 4/1 Mbps

Connect America Program

CAF Funding in Non-Contiguous Areas

Alaska Plan

- Aims to provide 10/1 Mbps service to as many Alaskans as possible
- Given unique climate conditions and geographic challenges, deployment obligations are tailored to each Alaska carrier's circumstances
- Filing obligations include both last-mile wireline locations served, as well as middle mile infrastructure (including fiber and microwave network maps)

Uniendo a Puerto Rico And Connect USVI Fund

- Almost \$900 million in medium and long-term support to restore communications networks following 2017 storms and improve broadband access on the islands
- Immediate infusion of almost \$64 million for near-term restoration efforts
- Proposing fixed broadband investment of \$444.5 million for Puerto Rico and \$186.5 million for the Virgin Islands over next decade
- Proposing investment of \$259 million to expand 4G LTE service in Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands

Connect America Program

CAF Funding – Mobile Services

Mobility Fund Phase I

- \$300 million in non-tribal areas
- **\$50 million in tribal lands – Tribal Mobility Fund**
- Build-out of networks to support:
 - 3G – 50/200 Kbps
 - 4G – 200/768 Kbps
- Voice and broadband Services
- Letter of credit requirement

Mobility Fund Phase II

- \$4.53 billion over 10 years
- Will reserve at least \$340 million for tribal lands
- Will support build-out of 4G LTE wireless networks
- Will target funding at places that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service with at least 5 Mbps-minimum-download speeds
- Voice and broadband services
- Letter of credit requirement

High Cost Universal Broadband (HUBB) Portal

A system that collects the geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude) of locations where carriers are deploying broadband using Connect America support

- A tool for collecting location-specific service availability data from carriers across all Connect America Fund (modernized) programs – millions of individual records
- Real-time validation of data submissions
- Serves as a platform for verification and compliance
- Provides the foundation for a public map that will show the impact of CAF funding on broadband expansion across rural America
- Began with the July 2017 filing for Price Cap carriers, followed by March 2018 filing for carriers in multiple modernized funds

HUBB Resources

For more information about the HUBB,
please visit the HUBB Resources Page
on the High Cost Website:

<http://www.usac.org/hc/tools/hubb.aspx>

Resources include:

Links to FCC Public Notices and Orders

FAQs

A Guide to Geolocation Practices

Data Formatting Instructions

CAF Map

USAC has launched a new public map that shows the impact of Connect America Fund support on broadband expansion across rural America. The CAF Map:

- Displays the geographic areas eligible for CAF support, as well as the specific fixed locations where carriers participating in the program have built out broadband service (by latitude and longitude)
- Uses broadband deployment data submitted by carriers to the HUBB
- Displays USF-funded broadband network availability by location, technology, speeds
- Displays summary data by state, as well as individual broadband deployment location

The CAF Map is linked to USAC's Open Data platform, which is where the data resides.

Broadband Deployment Data in the CAF Map

- CAF Map currently reflects broadband deployment as of Dec. 31, 2017, as certified in the HUBB as of March 1, 2018, by carriers participating in four funds:
- Connect America Fund (CAF) Phase II Model-based Support
- Alternative Connect America Cost Model (A-CAM)
- Alaska Plan
- Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support (CAF-BLS - less than 80 percent deployed)

Broadband Deployment Data in the CAF Map

- USAC will independently verify deployment to a sample of reported locations each year to monitor carrier compliance with CAF build-out obligations. The data currently in the map has not yet been subject to this process.
- CAF Map will be updated with additional broadband deployment information as it is filed and certified by carriers participating in these four funds and as more CAF programs are added
- Data currently displayed on the map is subject to change as carriers increase speeds offered, refine latitude/longitude and address information and correct inaccuracies

Questions?

