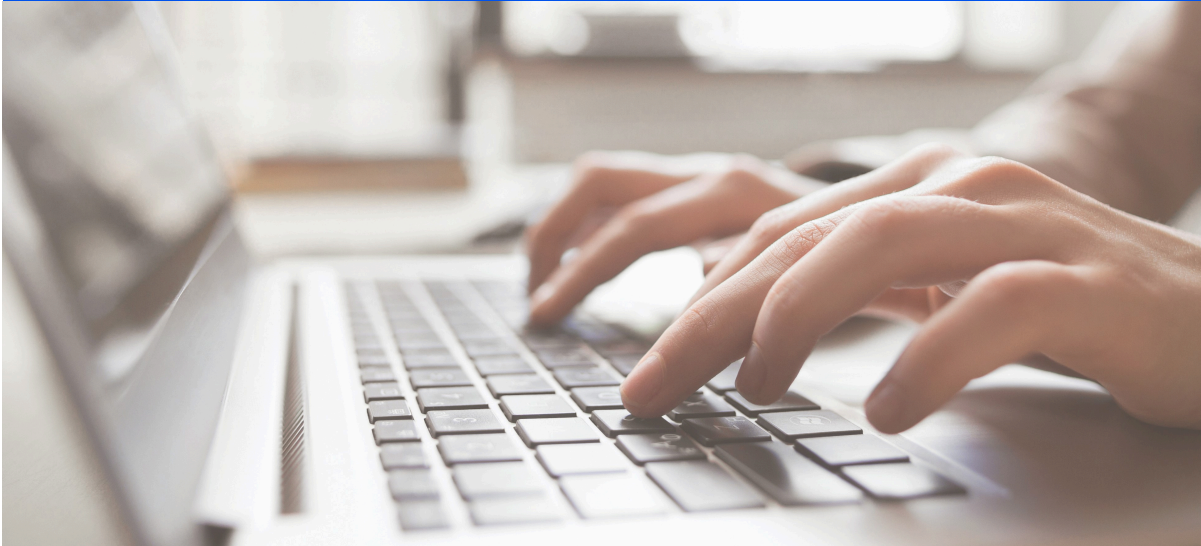




Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Lifeline Newsletter 2024 October

October 31, 2024



FCC Response to Recent Disasters

In October, the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued several Orders in response to recent natural disasters. These Orders included waivers of certain Lifeline requirements for existing Lifeline consumers and temporarily extended the Lifeline eligibility criteria to allow consumers receiving FEMA's Individuals and Households Program (IHP) support to enroll in Lifeline. WCB and FCC also built in provisions for waiving some Lifeline rules for certain future disaster declarations through the end of 2024 and extending the IHP eligibility criteria to any major disasters within the next six months. The specific Orders and current affected disaster areas are as follows:

Helene Weather Events Order

On October 1, 2024, the WCB adopted an [Order](#) temporarily waiving the non-usage, de-enrollment for non-usage, and annual recertification requirements for participants requiring federal disaster assistance in areas affected by Helene Weather Events. These disaster areas include parts of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

The waiver period under this order is until November 30, 2024. Lifeline's non-usage rules will be reinstated on December 1, 2024, at which time consumers residing in the affected disaster areas will have thirty days to use their Lifeline service. Consumers who

do not use their Lifeline service during the 30-day period will be de-enrolled from the program, following the 15-day notice period.

Helene Weather Events Further Order

On October 2, 2024, the FCC issued an additional [Order](#) that allows consumers receiving FEMA's IHP support or Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP), due to the Helene Weather Events, to apply for and enroll in the Lifeline program. Affected individuals can use this waiver to enroll in Lifeline until April 2, 2025.

Milton Weather Events Order

On October 9, 2024, WCB adopted an [Order](#) to temporarily waive the non-usage, de-enrollment for non-usage, and annual recertification requirements for participants requiring federal disaster assistance in certain parts of Florida until December 15, 2024.

This order also temporarily waives the Lifeline non-usage and annual recertification requirements for 60 days for all future Emergency or Major Disaster Declarations through the end of 2024 for consumers in affected areas. The Bureau will clarify any such waiver timelines as appropriate.

Hurricane Milton and Future Tropical Weather Systems Order

On October 10, 2024, the FCC adopted an [Order](#) that allows consumers who participate in FEMA's IHP because of Hurricane Milton, to qualify and enroll in the Lifeline program until April 10, 2025. This Order will also extend to all future tropical weather systems that lead to a Presidential declaration of emergency or major disaster within the next six months. Once a disaster is declared, the waiver will remain in effect for six months from the date of that declaration.

Applications Open for Consumers Qualifying Through FEMA's IHP

On October 10, USAC updated its systems to allow consumers who receive FEMA's IHP support to qualify for Lifeline. Applicants will need to provide documentation showing that they are enrolled in IHP to receive the Lifeline benefit.

Resources

Consumers who have recently been affected by a disaster can refer to USAC's [Disaster Assistance](#) page on [LifelineSupport.org](#) for more information on how they may qualify for Lifeline. Service providers can review our recent office hours for information on [how consumers can now qualify through IHP](#).

Reminder: Continued Eligibility for SCA Benefit and Upcoming System Changes to NLAD

On November 12, USAC will implement system changes to the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) production environment to allow Safe Connections Act (SCA) subscribers to complete the continued eligibility process. Part of these changes include updated NLAD error codes, a new SCA Subscriber Status Report, and new outreach types for both SCA subscribers and service providers. The system changes

were made available in the [staging environment](#) on October 29.

Service providers can refer to the "Continued Eligibility for SCA Benefit and Upcoming System Changes to NLAD" bulletin issued by USAC on October 22 or the [Continued Eligibility](#) page for detailed information on the SCA continued eligibility process. Providers are invited to [register](#) for USAC's office hour on SCA continued eligibility on November 6 between 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. ET.

Support Center: Operating Schedule Through Year-End

The Lifeline Support Center will be closed on the following days: November 28, 2024, December 25, 2024, and January 1, 2025. Lifeline applications requiring manual review will not be reviewed and approved on these days.



Lifeline Program Compliance Reminder: Available Resources for Service Providers

To ensure Lifeline service providers have the necessary resources they need to remain in compliance with Lifeline program requirements, USAC has compiled the following educational materials and resources:

- Lifeline's [Get Started](#) page,
- Lifeline's [Join Lifeline as an ETC](#) page,
- Lifeline's [Systems](#) page, and
- Lifeline's [Service Provider Toolkit](#) which outlines information on how service providers can get set up in Lifeline's systems, participate in the program, and find assistance.

For additional information on program rules and requirements, all service providers should:

- Review the [federal rules](#) governing the Lifeline program, and
- Visit Lifeline's [Rules and Requirements](#) page.

November Webinars

Resolving National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) Common Errors

Join us on **Wednesday, November 13 at 3 p.m. ET** for our next Lifeline program webinar to learn how to resolve common National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) system

errors. The session will also cover some frequently asked NLAD questions.

Recordings of previous webinars are available on our [Lifeline Learn: Webinars](#) page.

[Register](#)



November Maintenance Schedule

As part of continual system improvements, USAC conducts regular system maintenance. Scheduled maintenance dates are available on the [National Lifeline Accountability Database Maintenance Schedule](#) and the [National Verifier Maintenance Schedule](#) pages.

National Verifier and NLAD System Maintenance

November 22

National Verifier, NLAD, Lifeline Claims System (LCS), Affordable Connectivity Claims System (ACCS), and Representative Accountability Database (RAD) will be unavailable due to a scheduled monthly maintenance from Friday, November 22 at 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. ET on Saturday, November 23.

Need Help? Contact Us!

For questions about Lifeline, including technical issues and program resources or rules, email LifelineProgram@usac.org. Review all appropriate program contacts on USAC's Lifeline [Contact Us](#) webpage.

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