Helping Consumers Use the National Verifier

March 2020
Housekeeping

• Audio is available through your computer’s speakers
• The audience will remain on mute
• Enter questions at any time using the “Questions” box
  • There is a large audience signed in today. We will accept as many questions as possible!
• If your audio or slides freeze, restart the webinar
• Copy of the slide deck in the “handouts” section of webinar panel
Today’s Presenters

Catie Miller  Delante Cherry  Linnita Hosten  Leah Sorini
Agenda

1. Overview
2. Apply Online
3. Apply with a Paper Application
4. How to Get Help
Overview
Who is USAC?

The Universal Service Administrative Company

• The Universal Service Fund exists to ensure that all people in the United States have access to quality, affordable connectivity services.

• USAC is an independent, not-for-profit organization designated by the FCC as the permanent administrator of the Universal Service Fund and its four programs.
The Mission of Universal Service

USAC works to ensure that all people in the United States have access to connectivity services through these four programs:

• High Cost Program
• Lifeline Program
• Rural Health Care Program
• Schools and Libraries Program (E-Rate)
Lifeline Overview

• Lifeline offers a monthly discount on phone or internet service.
• All eligible consumers can receive a discount of up to $9.25 per month.
• Consumers who live on qualifying Tribal lands can receive enhanced support up to $34.25 per month.
• Out of the eight million households that participate in Lifeline, 274,000 of those received enhanced support.
Lifeline Application Process

Consumer completes Lifeline application

Consumer provides supporting documentation for any errors that the application received

Consumer qualifies for Lifeline and chooses Lifeline company

Consumer informs Lifeline company of qualification status to enroll in the program
About the National Verifier

- The National Verifier (NV) checks a consumer’s Lifeline eligibility.
- After eligibility is determined by the NV, a consumer still works with the phone or internet company they select to enroll in the Lifeline program.
National Verifier

• All* states and territories have launched in the National Verifier.
• California, Oregon, and Texas will independently operate their eligibility verification processes while using the National Verifier for program integrity purposes.
Ways to Use the National Verifier

Option 1: Apply Through Consumer Portal
• The consumer visits CheckLifeline.org/lifeline from any computer or mobile device to create an account and complete the electronic application.
• The consumer contacts a service provider to enroll in Lifeline.

Option 2: Apply by Mail
• The consumer fills out the National Verifier Lifeline Application Form, One-Per-Household Worksheet, and provides proof of program eligibility and proof of identity.
• The consumer mails in their documentation to the Lifeline Support Center or delivers it to their service provider.

Option 3: Apply Through a Service Provider
• The consumer visits a service provider store or website
• The service provider will collect the consumer’s information via the National Verifier service provider portal or service provider website.
• The consumer can find service providers in their area using the “Companies Near Me” tool on USAC’s website.
Applying Through Consumer Portal
Apply Through Consumer Portal

Consumer Process Overview

1. Visit the National Verifier Web Portal and create a user account.

2. Log in using their account username and password.

3. Select the qualifying program(s) they participate in.

4. Review consumer information in the Application Form.

5a. Read, initial, and e-sign the certification and consent statements.

5b. Follow instructions to resolve errors.

6. View the eligibility result and follow directions to enroll in Lifeline.

No errors found

Errors found

© 2020 Universal Service Administrative Co. 1 Lifeline Program Webinar
Apply Through Consumer Portal
Step 1: Create an NV Web Portal User Account

Account Sign In

_qualify for Lifeline!

Lifeline is a federal benefit that lowers the monthly cost of phone or internet service. Qualifying is the first step to getting your Lifeline Benefit.

What is your state or territory?

Choose

Do you need to recertify?
If you already get Lifeline and received a notice that said you need to recertify, use the recertify button.

Recertify to keep Lifeline

Are you a service provider?
If you are a service provider and need to qualify your customer for Lifeline, use the service provider portal.

Sign in as a Service Provider >
## Apply Through Consumer Portal
### Step 1: Create an NV Web Portal User Account

**Your Information**

We will use this information to find out if you qualify for the Lifeline Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your full legal name?</th>
<th>What is your date of birth?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Middle Name (Optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Suffix (Optional)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First and last name may only consist of letters, hyphens, spaces, and single quotes. The first name should be the consumer’s legal name, not a nickname. The last name must be at least 2 characters.

Date of birth must be in the MM/DD/YYYY format.
Apply Through Consumer Portal
Step 1: Create an NV Web Portal User Account

What are the last 4 numbers of your Social Security Number (SSN)?

What is your Tribal Identification Number?
I want to give my Tribal Identification Number instead.

What is your home address?
The address where you will get service. Do not use a P.O. Box.

Street Number and Name
1234 Street Road

City
Your City or Town

State
00000

Zip Code

The consumer can input a descriptive address if they don't have a street number.

All fields must be complete before pressing “Next.”
**Apply Through Consumer Portal**

**Step 1: Create an NV Web Portal User Account**

The consumer will create their username and password and log in to the NV Web Portal.

**Part 1**

**Create Your Account**

Making an account will let us keep your information safe. It will also let you save it and come back to it any time.

**Choose your username.**

Choose something that you can easily remember. If it helps, use your name in some form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Username</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Choose your password.**

Make sure it is something you can remember. It has to follow the requirements below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Password</th>
<th>Password Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least 8 letters or numbers long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least 1 capital letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least 1 number (0-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least 1 special character (!@#$%^&amp;*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confirm Password</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type the same password again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The consumer will see the username and password requirements. They will be notified if:

1) A username is unavailable; 2) A username does not meet requirements; and / or 3) A password does not meet requirements.
Apply Through Consumer Portal

Step 1: Create an NV Web Portal User Account

Consumers will then be asked to provide answers to the security questions to help the consumer reset their password and/or username in the future, if necessary.

Part 2

Help us secure your account. Choose 3 security questions that only you know the answers to.

Make sure you can remember these answers. These will help you get back into your account if you forget your username or password.

Security Question 1
Select one
Your Answer to Security Question 1

Security Question 2
Select one
Your Answer to Security Question 2

Security Question 3

What is the best way to reach you?
We will use this to contact you when you need to reset your password and to let you know when there are updates to your application status.

- Email
- Phone
- Mail

What is your email address?

example@email.com

Back
Next
Apply Through Consumer Portal
Step 2: Log in to the NV Web Portal

Sign In To Your Account

If a consumer forgets their username or password, they can reset them by clicking these links. They enter in their e-mail to recover their username or answer security questions to reset their password.

Note: Consumers will need to complete a CAPTCHA when they log in.
Apply Through Consumer Portal
Step 2: Log in to the NV Web Portal

Welcome Jane Mary Smith
Lifeline is a federal program that lowers the cost of phone or internet services.

My Applications
Here are all your applications from the last 180 days. You can start a new application when your last one expires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application ID</th>
<th>Application Status</th>
<th>Expiration Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q42004-000011</td>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td>05/07/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submit new application

Apply or Transfer Your Service
Complete a new application if you’d like to sign up for Lifeline again or want to transfer your benefit to a different company.

Option to update address

Update Your Address
If you already get Lifeline but have moved recently, update your address here and let your company know as soon as possible.

Find a Company Near Me
Lifeline is a federal benefit. If you are not happy with your Lifeline service, you can move to another phone or internet company.
Apply Through Consumer Portal

Step 3: Select the Qualifying Program

Tell Us Which Program You Are In

To qualify for Lifeline, we need to know which government assistance program you are in.

The consumer should check the box next to all the programs that they are in.

Are you in any of these?

Check all that apply.

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs
- Tribal Specific Program (only choose if you live on tribal lands)
- I don’t participate in any of these programs, I want to qualify through my income.
- I am not in any of these, but my child or dependent is in one of these programs. 🎉
Apply Through Consumer Portal
Step 4: Review the Application Form

Review Your Information

Before we check if you qualify for Lifeline, make sure your information is right.

Double check the information below.

Full Legal Name: Jane Mary Smith
Date of Birth: March 10, 1959
Last 4 Numbers of SSN: 1234
Address: 123 Main Street, Apt 206
Chicago, IL 60789

The consumer can edit information if needed.

The information you gave us will be used to check if you qualify for Lifeline. Please confirm that it is okay.

By checking this box you are consenting that all of the information you are providing may be collected, used, shared, and retained for the purposes of applying for and/or receiving the Lifeline program benefit.

The consumer will need to read and check the box for the statement in order to proceed to the next page.
Apply Through Consumer Portal  
Step 5a: Initial Statements and E-Sign

A person assisting a consumer cannot initial or enter the e-signature for the consumer. The benefit recipient must be the one to enter their initials, even when applying with a Benefit Qualifying Person (BQP).

The consumer must input their first and last initials here.

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Agreement

You are almost done qualifying. Please initial next to each statement and sign this form to finish the process.

I understand that it is against the law to lie on this form and agree, under penalty of perjury, to the following statements:

- [ ] Initial: I (or my dependent or other person in my household) currently get benefits from the government program(s) listed on this form or my annual household income is 135% or less than the Federal Poverty Guidelines (the amount listed in the Federal Poverty Guidelines table on this form).

Your Signature

Type your full legal name (the same as you gave us before) below.

Jane Mary Smith

- [ ] I understand this is a digital signature, and is the same as if I signed my name with a pen.

Back  Submit
Automatic Qualification
Apply Online
Apply Online

Step 6: Qualified, Next Steps | Follow Instructions to Enroll

You Qualify for Lifeline

Sign up for Lifeline by Apr 30, 2018 (Based on US Eastern Time)

You have 90 days from today to sign up for Lifeline with a phone or internet company.

How to sign up

1. Choose a company
   Find one using the list of service providers near you.

2. Tell them you qualified for Lifeline online, and ask them to sign you up.

   Bring the following with you:
   - A form of identification (like a driver's license)
   - Your confirmation number: N318-2U1-23WN

3. After they sign you up, you will start getting your phone or internet service.

The consumer’s “Qualified” eligibility result will expire in 90 days. They must sign up with a service provider by the listed date.
Supporting Documentation
Apply Online
## Providing Supporting Documentation

If a consumer receives any of the following errors, they can resolve them by submitting documentation or additional information to the portal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error</th>
<th>Document Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TPIV (Identity Verification Error)</td>
<td>Proof of identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMS (Address Verification Error)</td>
<td>Proof of residential address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicate Address</td>
<td>Household Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>Proof of emancipated minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Eligibility</td>
<td>Proof of program/income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceased Subscriber</td>
<td>Proof of life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Apply Online
Step 6: Resolve Errors– Address Error

We Didn't Recognize Your Address
The U.S. Postal Service could not find the address you gave us.

Show us that your address is right.
This is the information you gave us.
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors– Program Eligibility

We Need More Information
To qualify for Lifeline, you need to show that you qualify through a government assistance program or through your income.

Are you in any of these?
You will need to show proof that you are in the program you choose.

Choose one.
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans/Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs
- Tribal Specific Program (only choose if you live on tribal lands)
- I don't participate in one of these programs, I want to qualify through my income.
- I am not in any of those, but my child or dependent is in one of these programs.

Show That They Are in SNAP
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) used to be called Food Stamps.
Their state might use a different name for SNAP. Look it up on this list of SNAP names by state.

We need to see a copy of one of these:
NOTE: All documents must be issued by the state or federal government.
- Approval letter that shows:
  - Name of the participant
  - Eligibility dates
- Benefits statement or letter that shows:
  - Name of the participant
  - Eligibility dates
- Verification letter that shows:
  - Name of the participant

Give us your documents.
Upload the file here
Choose file
Step 5b: Resolve Errors – Program Eligibility

We Need More Information
To qualify for Lifeline, you need to show that you qualify through a government assistance program or through your income.

Are you in any of these?
You will need to show proof that you are in the program you choose.

Choose one.

- [ ] SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or Food Stamps
- [ ] Medicaid
- [ ] Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- [ ] Federal Public Housing Assistance
- [ ] Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs
- [x] Tribal Specific Programs (only choose if you live on tribal lands)
- [ ] I don’t participate in one of these programs, I want to qualify through my income.
- [ ] I am not in any of these, but my child or dependent is in one of these programs.

Which tribal specific programs do you have? (Choose one.)

- [ ] Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- [ ] Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- [ ] Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- [ ] Tribal Head Start (only if you qualified for it through your income)

Back Next

If a consumer is eligible through a Tribal program, they must select the specific program and provide supporting documentation (i.e. Tribal letter) as proof.
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors– Program Eligibility

We Need More Information
To qualify for Lifeline, you need to show that you qualify through a government assistance program or through your income.

Show That You Qualify Through Your Income

If the consumer qualifies based on their income, they can still submit documentation to prove their eligibility. But first, the consumer will need to answer a few questions. The first asks for the number of people who live in the consumer’s household.
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors– Program Eligibility

Show That You Qualify Through Your Income

How many people live in your household?
A household is a group of people who live together and share income and expenses (even if they are not related to each other):

- [ ] 1
- [ ] 2
- [ ] 3
- [ ] 4
- [ ] 5
- [ ] 6
- [ ] 7
- [ ] 8
- [ ] More than 8

Is your annual household income the same or less than:
You can find this on your taxes under “Gross Annual Adjusted Household Income.”

$34,763

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Once the consumer answers how many people live in their household, they will need to confirm if their annual income is more or less than the number that displays. After selecting “Yes” or “No” based on the consumer’s response, they will then click the “Next” button.
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors– Program Eligibility

If the consumer chose “Yes”, they must submit proof of their income eligibility.

Show That You Qualify Through Your Income

We need to see one of these:

- The prior year’s federal, state, or Tribal tax return
- 1 pay stubs or a current income statement from your employer
- Social Security statement of benefits
- Veterans Administration statement of benefits
- Unemployment or Workers’ Compensation statement of benefits
- Federal or Tribal notice of participation in General Assistance
- Divorce decree
- Child support award, or
- Other official document containing income information

Give us your documents.
Upload the file here

If the consumer chose “No”, they will not be able to prove eligibility through their income. They still have the option to prove their eligibility through a government program.

You Do Not Qualify for Lifeline Based on Your Household Income

With a household of [4] you must have an annual income of less than or the same as [$33,210].

Do you participate in a government assistance program?

- Yes
- No
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors

Note: Consumers can upload photos taken with a phone and/or PDF files.
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors – Pending Review

We Are Checking Your Documents

We need to check your documents to make sure you qualify. When we finish, this page will refresh and tell you if you qualify for Lifeline.

This will take a few minutes.

If you need to leave and come back later, this page will be available until [mm/dd/yyyy].

If you qualify…
You will have 90 days to find a company and sign up for service.

If you do not qualify…
We’ll ask you for more information or tell you what to do next. You will have until [mm/dd/yyyy] to send us the information or complete the next steps.
Apply Online
Step 5b: Resolve Errors – Duplicate Subscriber

Eligibility Result: “Already Enrolled in Lifeline.”

Our Records Show That You Already Have Lifeline

You are signed up with [company name].

If you don’t have a Lifeline benefit now, you had one in the past and you are still in our system.

Decide if you want to:

Stay with [company].
If you are happy with the service you are getting, you do not need to do anything else.

If you need to start your service again, call them at [(xxx) xxx-xxxx]. You can also visit their website at www.website.com.

Transfer your service.
1. Find a new company using the list of phone or internet companies near you.
2. Call or visit them, and ask them to transfer your service.

Cancel your benefit.
Call [company] at [(xxx) xxx-xxxx] and ask them to cancel your Lifeline benefit.

If you think this is fraud, call USAC.

If you think this message is wrong, call USAC at (800) 234-9473. For example:

- If you never had a Lifeline benefit and think someone else is using your information.
- If you think you already cancelled your benefit.

If the consumer received this eligibility error and would like to transfer their Lifeline benefit, they are able to complete this process with their new chosen service provider.
Apply For Lifeline with a Paper Form
Apply with a Paper Form

Required Fields

- Consumers must complete all sections of the application.
- Write clearly, using black ink and capital letters.
- Required fields include:
  - Full name
  - Home address
  - Billing address (if different)
  - Date of birth
  - Last four digits of SSN or Tribal identification number
  - Name of qualifying program or number of household members
Apply with a Paper Form

Qualification

• Applicants must show how they qualify for the Lifeline Program, either through a government program or based on their income.

• Only one method – an eligibility program or income eligibility – is required.

• The income table is based on 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. This table is updated annually, typically in January.
Apply with a Paper Form

Signature

• Consumer must review and initial next to each statement
• Then, the consumer must sign and date the application at the bottom of the page

A person assisting a consumer cannot initial or sign for the consumer. The benefit recipient must be the one to initial with their initials, even when applying with a BQP.
Apply with a Paper Form
Representative Information

• If a service provider enrollment representative assists a consumer with completing their application, the service provider enrollment representative will need to complete this section.

• If a service provider enrollment representative does not assist a consumer with completing their paper application, this page can be left blank.
Apply with a Paper Form

Submission

• Consumers mail completed applications to:

  USAC Lifeline Support Center
  P.O. Box 7081
  London, KY 40742

• USAC will send an eligibility decision via mail from the Lifeline Support Center.
• Most eligibility decisions will be made in 7 – 10 days.
• Consumers can call the Lifeline Support Center to check their application status at (800) 234-9473.
Apply with a Paper Form

Tips for consumers applying via paper:

• If consumers have access to email, we encourage them to include this information on their application.

• Include copies of eligibility and identity documents as well as the one-per-household worksheet to reduce processing time.
  • The household worksheet can be found on LifelineSupport.org
Questions?
How to Get Help
Managing the Benefit

- **Recertification**: annual process of confirming continued eligibility for the Lifeline benefit via self-certification
  - Consumers must confirm their program eligibility every year, if the National Verifier cannot do so through an automated check
- **Non-usage**: if a customer’s Lifeline voice or internet service is free, they must use it at least once every 30 days to keep the benefit
Managing the Benefit

- **Address Update**: consumers must inform their company if they move or change residential addresses
  - If their company cannot automatically verify the consumer’s new address, the consumer will need to verify it through the National Verifier
- **Transfer benefit**: consumers can switch to a different company by re-applying through the National Verifier
Resources for Consumers

- Lifeline Support Center
  - (800) 234-9473
  - LifelineSupport@usac.org
  - 9 a.m.– 9 p.m. ET, Monday – Sunday

- LifelineSupport.org
  - Consumer instructions
  - National Verifier one-pager
  - Consumer Videos
Questions?
Lifeline National Verifier

• Thank you for joining us!
• Keep watching the consumer web page for more updates
  • www.LifelineSupport.org
• Want to stay up to date on Lifeline?
  • Sign up for the Lifeline newsletter
• Need help? Contact us!
  • LifelineSupport@usac.org