Lifeline Program: How to Apply for Lifeline

February 14, 2024
Housekeeping

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Disclaimer

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support!
Meet Our Team

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Winta creates website content and training for consumer advocates, consumers, and service providers.

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Linnita develops external communications and creates content about Lifeline systems and program changes.
Agenda

• Announcements
• Lifeline Program
  • Overview
• How to Apply
  • Application Process
  • Proof of Documentation
• Resources
Objectives

At the end of the session, you will...

...be able to:
• apply for the Lifeline benefit.

...understand:
• the steps needed to resolve various types of application and eligibility errors.
Announcements
Announcements
Reverification Group One: De-Enrollment Window Closing

All final documentation was due between February 5 - 10, 2024.

- **Group One Includes:** All states/territories (except PR, CA broadband only, FL, IL, MN, OH, and WI).
- USAC is actively conducting outreach to subscribers who require additional documentation to complete reverification.
- Consumers who fail to successfully complete the reverification process will be de-enrolled and mailed a de-enrollment notice.
- De-enrollments will occur February 9 through February 17, following the submission window deadline notified for each subscriber.
- Service providers are encouraged to monitor the Failed Reverification De-Enroll Report in NLAD to see which subscribers failed the reverification process and have been de-enrolled.
Announcements
Reverification Group Two: Postponed

- **Group Two Includes:** PR, CA broadband only, FL, IL, MN, OH, and WI.
- Document submission for Group Two is postponed.
- Additional time is needed to begin this collection process with service providers.
- USAC will notify service providers when the submission window is expected to open and up-to-date reporting is available.
Announcements
Hawaii Waiver Ending

- On August 25, 2023, the Federal Communications Commission adopted Order (DA-23-67A1) that temporarily waived Lifeline eligibility requirements in section 54.409(a)-(b) to allow consumers participating in FEMA’s Individuals and Households Program (IHP), as a result of the Hawaii wildfires, to apply for and enroll in the Lifeline program through February 25, 2024.

  - This waiver also confirmed that the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) can be treated the same as SNAP enrollment for Lifeline and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).
  
  - Consumers applying for Lifeline and relying exclusively on their FEMA-program participation are not permitted to enroll in the ACP.
Program Overview
Lifeline Program

Overview

• Lifeline is a federal program dedicated to making phone and internet service more affordable for low-income households.
  • The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) manages the Lifeline program on behalf of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
  • USAC is responsible for helping consumers apply for the program, understand eligibility requirements, and keep their benefit current through an annual recertification process.

A monthly discount for phone or internet service for eligible low-income consumers
Lifeline Program

Lifeline Benefit

- Eligible consumers can receive a monthly discount on qualifying phone, internet, or bundled services.
  - **Standard Benefit:** Monthly discount up to $9.25 for internet and bundled service and up to $5.25 for phone service.
  - **Enhanced Tribal Benefit:** Monthly discount up to an additional $25 for consumers living on Tribal lands.
- **Tribal Link Up:** Consumers who live on Tribal lands can receive a one-time discount up to $100 for the initial connection charges with certain Lifeline providers.
Lifeline Program
How to Qualify

There are **three ways** your household can qualify for the Lifeline program:

- Based on your **household income**.
- If you or your child or dependent participate in **certain government assistance programs** such as SNAP, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), federal housing assistance, or Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit.
- If you live on Tribal lands and you or your child or dependent participate in certain **Tribal assistance programs** such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Head Start, Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.
Lifeline Program
How to Apply

Option 1: Apply Online
- Visit LifelineSupport.org from any computer or mobile device to complete the electronic application and upload any required documentation.

Option 2: Apply by Mail
- Fill out a Lifeline Application Form (Spanish).
- Mail the application and supporting documentation to the Lifeline Support Center.
  - P.O. Box 9100
  - Wilkes-Barre, PA 18773

Option 3: Apply with a Participating Company
- Ask your phone or internet company if they participate in Lifeline or use our online tool to find a participating company near you.
- You may also be able to apply through the company’s website, if they make that option available.
Poll
Questions?
How to Apply for Lifeline
How to Apply
Access to Lifeline Application

• The Lifeline application is available online at LifelineSupport.org.

• Select “Apply Now,” to begin your application.
How to Apply
Landing Page

• This will redirect you to the application landing page.

• On the landing page, select the state or territory where you live from the drop-down menu.

• Then select “Get Started” to begin the application.
How to Apply
Personal Information

• Type in your full first and last name as it appears on your official documentation.
• Enter your date of birth.
• Select if you wish to be identified through your SSN4 or Tribal ID number, then type in that number.
• Fill in your home address then press next.
How to Apply
Consumer Information

• Tell us if you **qualify** for the benefit through yourself or through a child or dependent.
  • Select no, if you qualify by yourself.
  • Select yes, if you qualify through your child or a dependent.
How to Apply
Create Account

• Choose a **username** and **password** in order to create an account and sign in.
  • Your username can be an email address or a unique ID.
  • Establish a password that is a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols.
  • Repeat the same password again to confirm it.

• **Note**: Don’t let your browser store your username and password. Enter your username and password each time you log in.

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 you can easily remember like your email address or your name in some form. Save this information somewhere secure because you will need to use it again.

**Username**

Choose your password.

Make sure it is something you can remember. Save this information somewhere secure because you will need to use it again.

**Password Requirements**
- At least 8 characters long
- At least 1 capital letter
- At least 1 number (0-9)
- At least 1 special character (!@#$%^&*)
- No restricted phrases

**Password**

**Confirm Password**

Type the same password again.
How to Apply
Create Account

• Begin filling out your contact information.

• Enter your email address. You can also provide an alternate email address.
  • Notifications about your application will go to the email address you provide.

• Type in your phone number. This step is optional.

• If your mailing address is different than your home address, you can enter that information here.

• You may also choose your preferred language, English or Spanish.
How to Apply
Consumer Portal Interface

- Next, select **Start Lifeline Application** on your account homepage to continue with your application.
How to Apply
Qualifying Programs

• Tell us how you qualify. Select all the programs you participate in.
  • If you do not participate in any of the listed programs, you can also qualify based on income or through a child or dependent.

Tell Us Which Program You Are In
To qualify for Lifeline, we need to know which government assistance program you 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)
- FHEW’s Individuals and Households Program (IHP) due to Hawaii Wildfire
- 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.

You may be asked to submit documents about the program(s) you select.

Back Next
How to Apply

Review Information

• Review the information you have entered.
  • If you need to correct your information, select Edit to update.
• Review the consent statement to confirm the information you provided will be used to check if you are eligible.
  • Select Submit.

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: Test Test
Date of Birth: January 1, 1991
Last 4 Numbers of SSN: 2222
Address: 123 Street Rd
Washington, DC 20000

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 Lifeline.

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Submit
How to Apply
Confirm Address

• You may be asked to confirm your address by locating where you live on the map.
  • To show us where you live, click on the map to move the pin to your address.
How to Apply
Proof of Date of Birth

• You may be asked to upload documents that confirm your date of birth.

• Documents must include:
  • Your first and last name, and
  • Date of birth.

Share proof of your date of birth

Your document must include:

• Your first and last name: Test Test
• Your date of birth: 1/1/1991

Here are common examples:

• A Driver’s license that is not expired
• A Passport that is not expired
• A birth certificate
• A U.S. government, military, state or Tribal issued ID that includes your date of birth and is not expired
• A Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of U.S. Citizenship, or Consular Matriculation ID

How to add your photo or scanned copy

Please attach a picture or scanned copy of your document. Files must be less than 20 MB and one of the following file types: .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .pdf, or .gif.

• Make sure your image is not blurry
• Make sure your document is not cut off and you can see all four sides
• Make sure you have good lighting

Choose a file

Back  Next
How to Apply
Proof of SSN

• You may be asked to upload documents that confirm your Social Security number (last 4 digits).

• Documents must include:
  • Your first and last name, and
  • The last 4 digits of SSN.

Share proof of your Social Security number (SSN)

Your document must include:

• Your first and last name:

Here are common examples:

• A Social Security Card
• A Social Security Benefit Statement (SSA-1699)
• A W-2 from the last 2 years
• A prior year’s state, federal, or Tribal tax return

How to add your photo or scanned copy

Please attach a picture or scanned copy of your document. Files must be less than 10 MB and one of the following file types: .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .pdf, or .gif.

• Make sure your image is not blurry
• Make sure your document is not cut off and we can see all four sides
• Make sure you have good lighting
How to Apply
Proof of Life

• You may be asked to upload documents that confirm you are alive.

• Documentation must include:
  • Your first and last name, and
  • An issue date within the last three months.
How to Apply
Proof of Eligibility

- If your eligibility cannot be confirmed, you’ll need to select which program you qualify through or if you qualify through income.
- Documents must include:
  - Your name or your child or dependent’s name,
  - The name of the program,
  - The name of issuing agency, and
  - An issue date within the last 12 months or expiration date in the future.

We Could Not Confirm Your Eligibility

Are you or someone in your household in any of these?
Choose one.
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Housing Assistance
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Program
- Federal Pell Grant in the current award year
- Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch or Breakfast Program
- USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) School
- Special Nutrition Program for Infants, Toddlers, and Children (WIC)
- 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.

Here are common document examples:
- A benefit award letter
- A statement of benefits
- A benefit verification letter
- A screenshot of an online benefits portal

How to add your photo or scanned copy
Please attach a picture or scanned copy of your document. Files must be less than 10 MB and one of the following file types: .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .pdf, or .gif.
- Make sure your image is not blurry
- Make sure your document is not cut off and we can see all four sides
- Make sure you have good lighting

Available for Public Use
How to Apply
Proof of Income

- You may be asked to upload documents that confirm your income.

- Documentation **must** include:
  - Your name or your child or dependent’s name,
  - Your annual income, and
  - An issue date within the last 12 months.

Share more information to see if you qualify
With your help, we can confirm you qualify in a few more steps.

Do you have a document that shows your income?
- Yes. I have a document such as pay stubs, last year’s tax return, or a social security statement.
- No. I do not have a document that shows I (or my child or dependent) participate in a program such as SNAP or Medicaid.

Share proof of your income
Your document must include:
1. Your name, or your child or dependent’s name
2. Your annual income is at or below $20,160
3. An issue date within the last 12 months

Here are common examples:
- Your prior year’s state, federal, or Tribal tax return
- Current annual income statement from your job
- A Social Security statement of benefits
- An unemployment or worker’s compensation statement of benefits
- A Federal or Tribal notice letter of participation in General Assistance
- A divorce decree or child support award
- An official document with a date in the last 12 months that shows your annual income. Or official documents showing your income for three months in a row. This could be pay stubs that have dates within the last 12 months.
How to Apply
Signature Page

- You must initial each box and consent to the information in each statement. Then, electronically sign with your first and last name.

- Once you have pressed submit you have finished your application!
How to Apply

Application Status

• If you were required to submit documentation, you will receive a message that says we are checking your documents.

• After we review your documents, you will receive an email about the status of your application. You can also sign into your account to check the status of your application.
  • If we cannot confirm your information, you will receive instructions on how to submit additional documentation.
  • If your application is approved, you will receive a message that says you’re approved and instructions for how to start receiving your benefit.
How to Apply
Qualified Page

• You have officially qualified for Lifeline!
• Once your application is approved, you need to sign up with a participating phone or internet company by the deadline provided on your application.

Note: If you do not sign up by your designated deadline you will need to fill out the application again. The application deadline will vary based on how long their app has been open, the deadline is available on the qualified page.
How to Apply
Choose a Company

• Use USAC’s Companies Near Me tool to find a provider to apply with.
  • Enter your zip code or city and state.
  • Select Lifeline and search to receive a list of your local providers.
Questions?
Resources
Resources
Lifeline Support

- USAC has various ways you can receive support.
  - Lifeline’s consumer website: LifelineSupport.org
- Contact LifelineSupport@usac.org for questions, assistance, and general application inquiries.
- The Lifeline Support Center:
  - Available via telephone 7 days a week, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET at (800) 234-9473.
Resources
Consumer Educational Materials

• For more information on the application process:
  • How to Apply Flyer
  • How to Apply [Spanish] Flyer
• Video demonstration of how to apply online.
Thank You!
Take Our Survey

- We want to hear about your webinar experience!
- The survey will automatically populate after the completion of the webinar.
- We appreciate your feedback.