How to Apply for Lifeline Tribal Training

September 20, 2023
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Housekeeping

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Meet Our Presenter

Winta Woldu
Communications Specialist

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

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

...be trained in:
• the necessary steps to complete a Lifeline application to help eligible consumers apply for the program

...be able to:
• help consumers successfully apply for the Lifeline benefit
Agenda

• Program Updates
• USAC Overview
• How to Apply for Lifeline
• Tribal Resources
Program Updates
Program Updates
FCC Response to Hawaii Wildfires

• On **August 25, 2023**, the Federal Communications Commission adopted Order **23-67A1** to temporarily and on a limited basis waive the 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. New enrollments are permitted through February 25, 2024.

• On September 5, 2023, USAC released updates to the National Verifier service provider portal, consumer portal, Eligibility Check API to ensure that qualifying consumers who are participating in IHP can submit appropriate documentation to apply for Lifeline consistent with the Commission’s waiver.
Program Updates
National Verifier Legacy URLs

- The On May 4, 2023, USAC transitioned the National Verifier portal from nv.fcc.gov to GetInternet.gov
- At the end of August, USAC retired legacy National Verifier URLs to the online applications for the Lifeline Program and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
Program Updates
National Verifier Legacy URLs

• Consumers can access the online application for the Lifeline program at LifelineSupport.org using the “Apply Now” button
Program Overview
USAC Overview

• Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC): administers the Lifeline program and educates stakeholders on processes, systems, and rules and requirements

• The Federal Communications Commission (FCC): develops policies and regulations for the Lifeline program and provides guidance to USAC

• The Universal Service Fund (USF): exists to ensure that all people in the United States have access to quality, affordable connectivity service.
USAC Overview

- The FCC designated USAC to administer other programs with similar missions to the universal service programs and supported through appropriated funding.

USAC Broadband Programs

- Affordable Connectivity Program
- Emergency Connectivity Fund Program
- COVID-19 Telehealth Program
USAC Overview
Lifeline Program Stakeholders

• **Service Providers**
  • Provide subscribers with Lifeline-supported services
  • Comply with program rules and requirements

• **Lifeline Subscribers**
  • Receive Lifeline-supported services
  • Keep information up to date

• **Lifeline Eligible Consumers**
  • Individuals eligible for the benefit
  • Have not completed the application or enrolled in the program
USAC Overview
Lifeline Program Stakeholders

• **Tribal Partners**
  • Tribal governments, agencies, and nonprofits serving Tribal communities
  • Collaborate with USAC to educate consumers about Lifeline and assist eligible consumers with Lifeline program processes.

• **State and Federal Partners**
  • Public utility commissions and agencies that provide Lifeline-qualifying government programs
  • Educate consumers about Lifeline
  • Facilitate data sharing with USAC

**Consumer Advocates**
• Nonprofits, shelters, and foodbanks
• Educate consumers about Lifeline
• Share feedback with USAC/FCC to further program goals
Lifeline Benefit

• All eligible program participants can receive a discount of up to $9.25 per month
• Program participants who live on qualifying Tribal lands can receive enhanced support of up to $34.25 per month for broadband service and up to $30.25 for voice service
• Discount may apply to qualifying fixed or mobile services
  • Can be applied to voice, broadband, or bundled services that meet the minimum service standards
• **Link Up**: a Tribal lands one-time benefit up to $100 for initial set up fees at residences in specific areas
National Verifier Overview
National Verifier Overview

• The National Verifier is a centralized application system that determines a consumer’s Lifeline program eligibility

• Use of the National Verifier is required in all 56 states and territories (with the exception of the **NLAD opt-out states**: Texas, Oregon, and California, where the National Verifier leverages the state administrator’s Lifeline eligibility verification process)

• After qualifying for Lifeline, the consumer’s service provider must enter them in the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) to enroll them in the Lifeline program
Questions?
How To Apply for Lifeline
Methods to Apply

Consumers may apply through the NV using one of the three options:

**Option 1: Apply Online**
- The consumer visits [https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline](https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline)
- Online application is accessible from any computer or mobile device

**Option 2: Apply by Mail**
- The consumer fills out the Lifeline Application Form
  - [English Form](https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline)
  - [Spanish Form](https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline)
- The consumer mails the application and supporting documentation to the Lifeline Support Center

**Option 3: Apply Through a Service Provider or Tribal Partner**
- The consumer may apply with the assistance of a service provider or Tribal partner
- Service providers or Tribal partners may submit an online application on the consumer’s behalf using the NV service provider portal (also available at [https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline](https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline)), or
- Through the [National Verifier Eligibility Check API](https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline) if the service provider has elected to use that option
Lifeline Program Review

1. Consumer qualifies for Lifeline
2. Consumer signs up with service provider
3. USAC reimburses Lifeline service provider
Step One
Start Application

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 [Dropdown]

Get Started If you do not want to qualify online, you can use a paper form.

Consumer visits https://nv.fcc.gov/lifeline, chooses the state or territory where they live, and selects “Get Started”

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 >
Step Two
Submit Personal Information

Your Information

We will use this information to find out if you qualify for the Lifeline Program and/or the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). We are committed to protecting your information. This information will only be used to find out if you qualify and send you important reminders about your application.

What is your full legal name?
The name you use on official documents, like your Social Security Card or State ID. Not a nickname.

First Name

Middle Name (Optional)

Last Name(s)
If you have multiple last names put them all into the box below.

Consumer enters their **first** and **last legal name**

What is your date of birth?

Month

Day

Year

Choose

DD

YYYY
Step Two
Submit Personal Information

How do you want us to check your identity?
We’ll use this information to see if you’re eligible. It won’t affect your credit status.

- Social Security Number (SSN)
  This is the fastest option if you know the last 4 digits of your SSN.
  Enter last 4 digits of your SSN
  XXX - XX -
  This is required if you’re applying for Lifeline.

Other government identification
A photo of your Driver’s License, passport, consular ID, birth certificate, or other government ID issued by the United States or another country.

Which type of ID do you want us to use?
- Driver’s License
- Military ID
- Passport (U.S. or foreign)
- Taxpayer Identification Number
- Other Government ID (Consumer ID, birth certificate, or state photo ID card)

Attach a photo of the ID.

Select photo

Consumers applying for Lifeline must enter their SSN4 or Tribal ID Number.

Number on Tribal ID
Look for this number on your card or documentation.

Enter your Tribal identification number.
Step Two
Submit Personal Information

What is your home address?
The address where you will get service. Do not use a P.O. Box. You will be able to add a mailing address later.

Street Number and Name
- Red House in the Middle Of Town
- Apt, Unit, etc.

City
- Sample Town

State
- WA

Zip Code
- 12345

Do you qualify for Lifeline or the Affordable Connectivity Benefit through your child or a dependent?
If you do not qualify on your own, you can sign up for Lifeline or the Affordable Connectivity Benefit through your child or dependent if they participate in any of the qualifying programs.

- No, I qualify by myself.
- Yes, I qualify through my child or dependent.

Consumer may enter a **descriptive address** or the intersection near where they reside if they don’t have a street number and/or name

Consumer selects if they **qualify through themselves** or through a benefit qualifying person (BQP, i.e., a dependent)
**Step Three**
Create Your Account

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. You can also use your email address or your name in some form.

Username

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

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.

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**Your Contact Information**

What is your email address?

example@email.com

☐ I want to provide an alternate email.

What is your phone number? (Optional)

( )

By providing a phone number, you consent to letting USAC contact you at that phone number via artificial or prerecorded voice message or text for important reminders and updates about your Lifeline or ACP benefit. For text messages, message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to end messages.

☐ I have a mailing address that is different than my home address.
Step Three
Create Your Account – Alternate Email

- The consumer may provide **an alternate email address**
- The consumer may include someone like a caseworker or family member as their alternate contact
- The alternate contact will receive any status or application updates that the consumer receives

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Your Contact Information

**What is your email address?**

- I want to provide an alternate email.

**What is your alternate email address?** (Optional)

Use this option for a secondary contact person such as a caseworker or family member. Make sure the person whose email address is provided is aware. You agree that any communications sent to your primary email will also be sent to this alternate email.

example@email.com

**What is your phone number?** (Optional)

- 

- I have a mailing address that is different than my home address.
Step Four

Login

Sign In To Your Account

Your Account is Created!
Please sign back in so we know it is still you and then you can complete the process.

Username

Password

Forgot your password?

By signing in, I accept the terms and conditions of the National Verifier system.

Create an Account

Don't Have an Account?
Find out if you qualify for the Lifeline program by creating an account.

Print an application to mail in?
If you want to fill out an application on paper, you can print a Lifeline Form or an Affordable Connectivity Benefit Form to mail in.
Step Five
Select Eligibility

Welcome TEST TEST

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.

Select “Start Lifeline Application”

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)
- 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.

Which Tribal specific programs do you have? (Check all that apply.)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Head Start (only if your household meets the Head Start income qualifying standard)

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

Back
Next
Step Five
Review Information

Consumer information will populate here to review
Step Six
Verify Address

• If the consumer entered a descriptive address, the consumer will be able to use the mapping tool to provide additional details

• The map will try to locate the consumer’s home
  • The consumer can move the pin around to locate where they live
  • The coordinates automatically populate
Step Seven (a)
Certify and Sign

- The consumer **must** be the person who is certifying to each statement by entering their first and last initial in each box and signing their application by entering their name.
Step Seven (b) Confirmation Screen

You Qualify for Lifeline

Sign up for Lifeline 4/13/2023 (Based on US Eastern Time)
How to sign up

1. Choose a company
   - Find one using the list of companies provided on the website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Legal Name</th>
<th>Child/Dependent’s Full Legal Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Application ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saul Rabb</td>
<td>Zack Xand</td>
<td>234 WEST ALBERMARLE ST, Nome, AK 23456-4321</td>
<td>Q61842-91463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Live on Tribal lands? Press the button below to see if you qualified for Tribal benefits:

   Consumer’s address and Tribal information will display here

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

   Consumer’s Application ID will display here

   Live on Tribal lands? Press the button below to see if you qualified for Tribal benefits:

   Need help? Call the Lifeline Support Center at 1-800-234-9475.

3. If you do not sign up by 4/13/2023 (Based on US Eastern Time) you will need to come back to this site and fill this form out again.
Step Eight
Contact a Lifeline Provider

• After a consumer successfully completes the Lifeline application and qualifies for Lifeline, they must contact a service provider so that the company can enroll them in the program
• Consumers can use Lifeline’s Companies Near Me tool to search for providers that serve their area
Step Eight
Contact a Lifeline Provider

- Consumers type in their zip code or city and state to find a list of Lifeline companies, the companies’ contact information, and service types offered.

- The Lifeline service provider will then enroll that consumer in Lifeline so they can start receiving the discounted service.
Application Timeline and Contact from USAC

• USAC will contact the consumer based on the same method they used to apply

• If a consumer applied online and does not need to submit any additional information, a screen will populate letting them know if they qualified, usually within minutes
Application Timeline and Contact from USAC

• If a consumer applied online and they need to submit more information, a screen will populate asking the consumer to provide additional information to qualify for Lifeline
  • The consumer will click the “upload” button on the screen and attach any documentation that meets the requirements or complete the prompts that appear
• If a consumer needs to submit more information and they applied online, the information will be reviewed in the order it was received
  • An update is usually available with 24 hours
Poll
Questions?
Resources
Lifeline Tribal Webinars

- Review previous Tribal training slides:
  - Tribal Q1 2023 Webinar: Lifeline 101
  - Tribal Q2 Webinar: How to Resolve Application Errors
Resources
USAC’s Websites

• USAC has two websites available:
  • Lifeline’s consumer website: LifelineSupport.org
  • USAC’s Lifeline website for service providers, state and federal partners, consumer advocates, and Tribal partners: usac.org/lifeline
Resources
Consumer Educational Material

How to Apply – Click to View

How to Apply [Spanish] – Click to View

Manage Your Benefit – Click to View

Manage Your Benefit [Spanish] – Click to View
Resources
Consumer Educational Material

Tribal Flyer – Click to View

Tribal Toolkit – Click to View
Resources
Lifeline Support Center

- **Email**: [LifelineSupport@usac.org](mailto:LifelineSupport@usac.org)
- **Call**: (800) 234-9473 (press 1 for English; press 2 for Spanish)
Resources
Lifeline Support Center

- **Hours:** 7 days a week, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET
- **Support:**
  - Consumers with disabilities who need help submitting a Lifeline application may contact the support center for assistance
  - Consumer support representatives are able to provide assistance in English and Spanish
  - USAC offers a translation services vendor to provide assistance in up to an additional 200 languages in instances where the service is needed
Resources
Lifeline Program Team

- Service providers, state and federal partners, consumer advocates, and Tribal partners who need assistance outside of helping consumers with the application process should email LifelineProgram@usac.org to connect with a program analyst about:
  - Technical issues or system questions
  - Processes, rules, and requirements.
Resources
USAC Tribal Liaison

For Tribal Partners

• If you do not know where to direct your inquiry for any USAC program
  • The USAC Tribal Liaison can help guide you to public resources, call centers, or program teams.
Take Our Survey

- We want to hear about your webinar experience
- Expect an email with a unique survey link in 1-2 business days
- We appreciate your feedback
Thank You!