

Lifeline 101

Tribal Training
March 15, 2023



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

DISCLAIMER

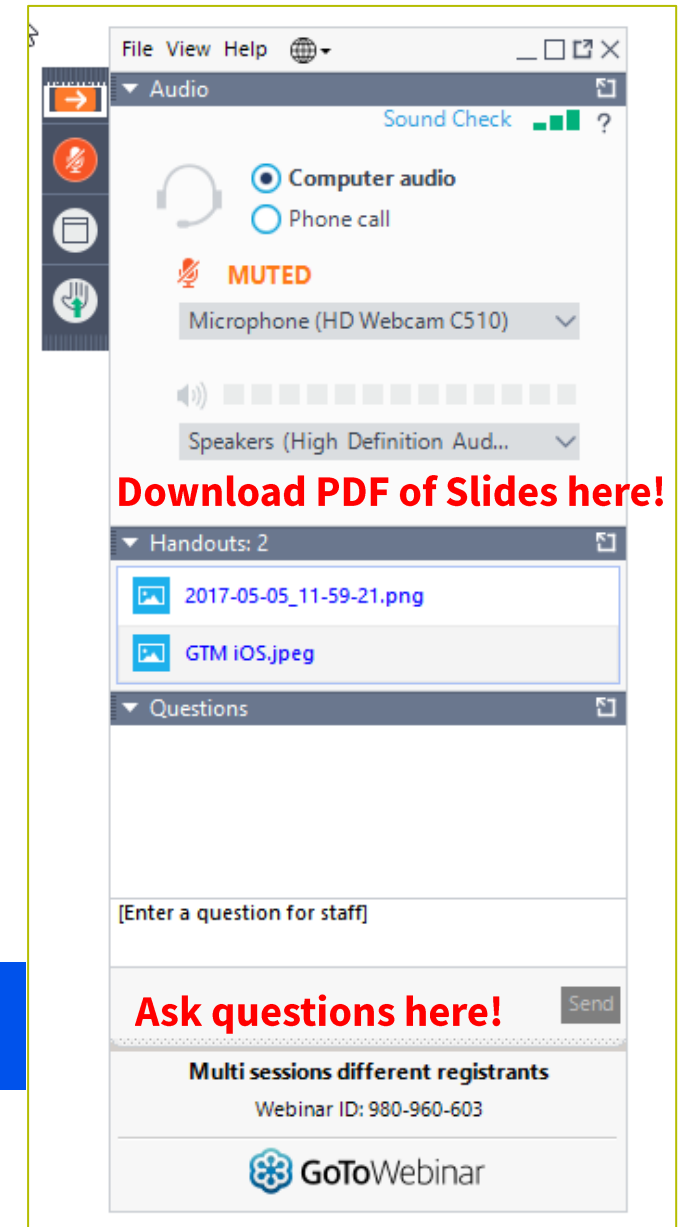
To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

Housekeeping

Audio is available through your computer's speakers

- The audience will remain on mute
- Enter questions at any time using the “**Questions**” box
- If your audio or slides freeze, restart the webinar
- A copy of the slide deck is in the “**Handouts**” section of webinar panel

Please indicate if you are a Tribal leader as we will answer Tribal leader questions first.



Meet Our Team



Winta Woldu

Communications Specialist | Lifeline

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

The criteria and the process to qualify and apply for the Lifeline program

Objectives

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



...be trained in:

- The basic functions of the Lifeline program
- The mission of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)
- How to apply to the Lifeline program via mail using the National Verifier



...be able to:

- Assist consumers with applying for the Lifeline program

Agenda

- Program Updates
- USAC Overview
- Lifeline Program Introduction
- National Verifier Overview
- Resources

Program Updates

Announcements

COVID-19 Relief for Tribal Subscribers Extended

- On [January 30, 2023](#), the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) released a waiver order that further extends the waiver of Lifeline recertification and reverification requirements for subscribers residing on Tribal lands through April 30, 2023. WCB anticipates that this will likely be the final extension of these waivers.
 - This order also extends the waiver of the Affordable Connectivity Program's (ACP) recertification for Tribal subscribers that participate in Lifeline and ACP. ACP recertification will commence for these subscribers after they have had an opportunity to complete the Lifeline recertification process.

USAC 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.



Lifeline Program

Discounted phone and internet service to eligible low-income consumers.



E-Rate Program

Funding for broadband services to eligible schools and libraries.



Rural Health Care Program

Funding for telecom and broadband services for eligible rural health care providers.



High Cost Program

Reduced rates for telecom and broadband services in eligible high-cost areas.

USAC Overview

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

USAC Broadband Programs



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
 - Not yet completed the application or enrolled in the program

USAC Overview

Lifeline Program Stakeholders

- **Tribal Partners**

- 
- Tribal governments, agencies, and nonprofits serving Tribal communities
 - Tribal partners 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

Poll

Lifeline Program Introduction

Lifeline Program

Lifeline Benefit

- Eligible program participants can receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month, for qualifying fixed **or** mobile services
 - Can be applied to broadband or bundled voice and broadband services that meet the minimum service standards
- Eligible participants can receive up to \$5.25 for voice-only services
- Program participants who live on qualifying Tribal lands can receive enhanced support of up to an additional \$25 per month
 - Can receive up to \$34.25 per month for broadband service or up to \$30.25 for voice-only service
- **Link Up:** a Tribal lands one-time benefit up to \$100 for initial set up fees at residences in specific areas



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

Lifeline Program

Lifeline Benefit



Current Minimum Service Standards (MSS)

| Mobile Voice | Mobile Broadband | Home (Fixed) Broadband |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 1000 Minutes/month | Speed: 3G or better; Usage Allowance: 4.5 GB/month | Speed: 25/3 Mbps; Usage Allowance: 1,280 GB/month |

Lifeline Program

Lifeline Benefit

Service Options

| Service Type | Description | Lifeline Support Amount |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Voice (mobile or landline) | Voice only that meets MSS | \$5.25 |
| Broadband (internet) | Broadband only that meets MSS | \$9.25 |
| Bundled Voice | Voice and broadband that meets the voice MSS only | \$5.25 |
| Bundled Broadband | Voice and broadband that meets the broadband MSS only | \$9.25 |
| Bundled Voice and Broadband | Voice and broadband that meets both service type MSS | \$9.25 |

***Note:** MSS and support amounts are effective from December 1, 2022 until December 1, 2023.

Lifeline Program

Eligibility

- Consumer's income is at or below **135% of the federal poverty guidelines**
- Consumer participates in at least one of the following **government programs**:
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
 - Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit

Lifeline Program Overview

Eligibility: Tribal Lands

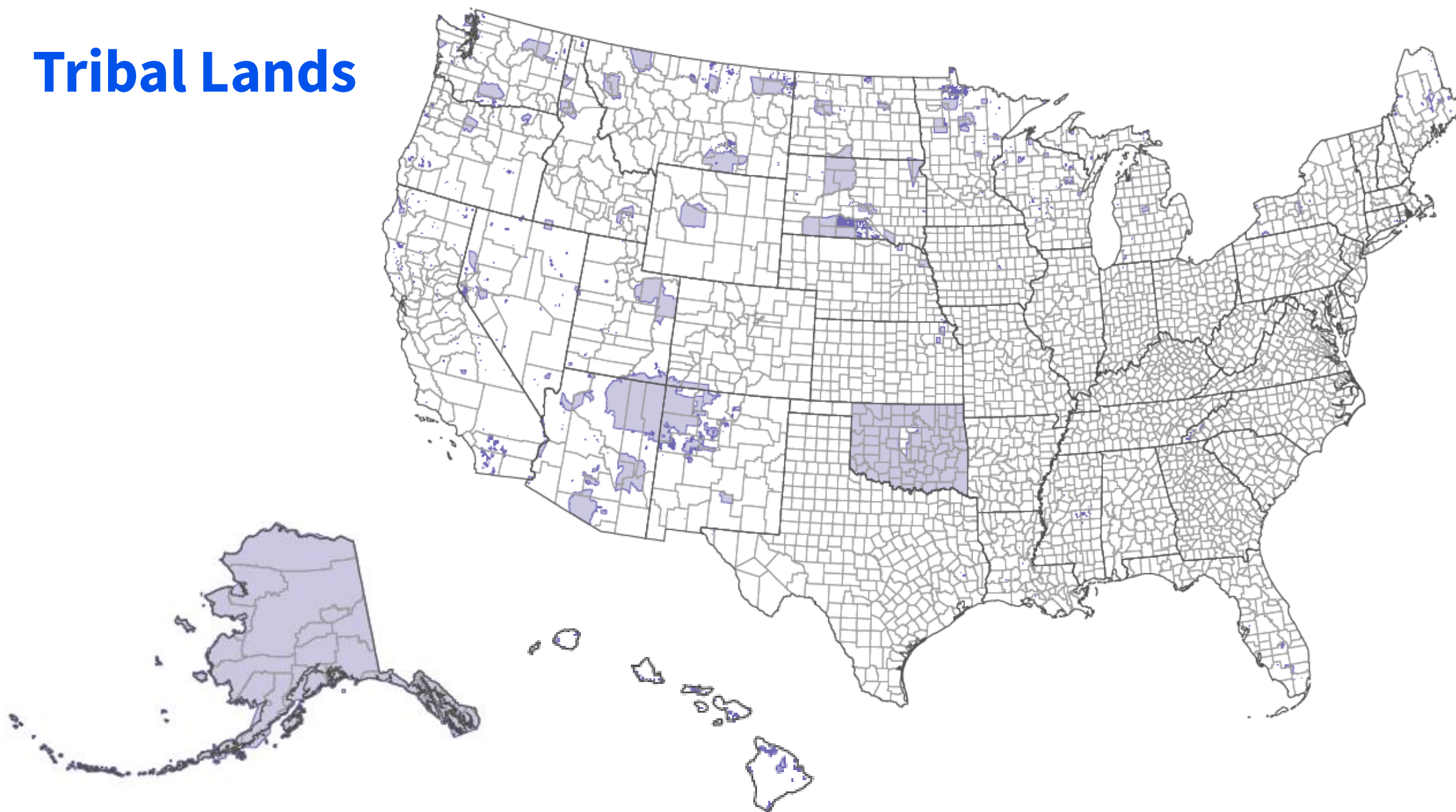
Consumers living on qualifying Tribal lands can get Lifeline if their household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or if they participate in:

- Any of the federal assistance programs listed on the previous slide
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance (BIA-GA)
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Tribal Head Start (must meet qualifying income standard)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

Tribal Lands

- Definition for “Tribal lands” used by Lifeline program ([47 CFR 54.400\(e\)](#)):
 - “For purposes of this subpart, ‘Tribal lands’ include
 - any federally recognized Indian tribe’s reservation, pueblo, or colony, including former reservations in Oklahoma;
 - Alaska Native regions established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688);
 - Indian allotments;
 - Hawaiian Home Lands – areas held in trust for Native Hawaiians by the state of Hawaii, pursuant to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920 July 9, 1921, 42 Stat. 108, et. seq., as amended; and
 - **Any land designated as such by the Commission for purposes of this subpart pursuant to the designation process in § 54.412.”**

Tribal Lands



Lifeline Program Overview

Additional Qualification Information



- One Lifeline benefit is allowed per "independent economic household" (household)
 - Defined as a group of people who live together and share income and expenses (even if they are not related to each other)



- Benefit qualifying person (BQP): If an individual is not eligible for Lifeline but has a dependent that is eligible (e.g., a child), the individual may qualify for Lifeline based on the status of their dependent

National Verifier Overview

National Verifier Overview

Centralized Application System

- 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 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

National Verifier Overview

Centralized Application System

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

Option 1:

Apply Online

- The consumer visits <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](#)
 - [Spanish Form](#)
- 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>), or
- Through the [National Verifier Eligibility Check API](#) if the service provider has elected to use that option

Lifeline Application

Apply Online

Returning consumers
sign in below

 An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ✓

FC Federal Communications Commission **National Verifier**

Choose your language **English** | Español **Consumer Sign In**


i On this site you can apply for Lifeline and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which help low-income households pay for internet service and internet connected devices. Visit [AffordableConnectivity.gov](#) to learn more about ACP and visit [LifelineSupport.org](#) to learn more about Lifeline.


[Instructions](#) to complete the ACP Application online are available in English and 9 other languages.

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 

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

New consumers start by
selecting where they live

Lifeline Application

Apply with Paper Form

- Consumers must complete all sections of the [application](#) (excluding page 7)
- USAC recommends that consumers write clearly, using black ink and capital letters

The image displays three overlapping copies of the FCC Form 5629, Lifeline Program Application Form. The forms are titled 'Lifeline Program Application Form' and 'OMB APPROVAL EDITION 3060-0813'. The visible sections include:

- Section 2: Your Information** (Page 2 of 8): This section contains fields for 'What is your full legal name?' (First, Middle (optional), Last), 'What is your phone number (if you have one)?', 'What is your date of birth?' (Month, Day, Year), 'What is your email address?', 'What are the last 4 numbers of their Social Security Number (SSN)?', and 'What is the best way to reach you?' (email, phone, text, mail).
- Section 2: Your Information (continued)** (Page 4 of 8): This section contains fields for 'What is your home address?' (Street Number and Name, Apt., Unit, etc., City, State, Zip Code), 'Is this a temporary address?' (Yes/No), 'Check if you live on Tribal Lands' (Yes/No), 'Check if you are qualifying through a child or dependent in your household. If so, answer the following questions:', 'What is their full legal name?' (First, Middle (optional), Last, Suffix (optional)), 'What is their date of birth?' (Month, Day, Year), and 'What are the last 4 numbers of their Social Security Number (SSN)?'.

The forms also feature the FCC logo and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) logo. The bottom of the forms includes contact information for USAC and the Lifeline Support Center.

Lifeline Application

Apply with a Service Provider

- The Companies Near Me tool can help consumers find companies offering Lifeline in their area
- The tool is available on LifelineSupport.org

Companies Near Me

This tool can help you find companies in your area that offer [Lifeline](#) and the [Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#) service. These programs can reduce the cost of phone or internet service by providing a monthly discount.

ACP service providers may have their own application process, so consumers should contact their preferred service provider for more information. Consumers may also be eligible for a one-time discount on a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet through ACP. Ask your service provider if they offer devices or use this tool to see a list of providers who offer discounted devices.

Find a Company

Enter Your Zip Code

Example: 12345

OR

Enter Your City and State

Select A Program:

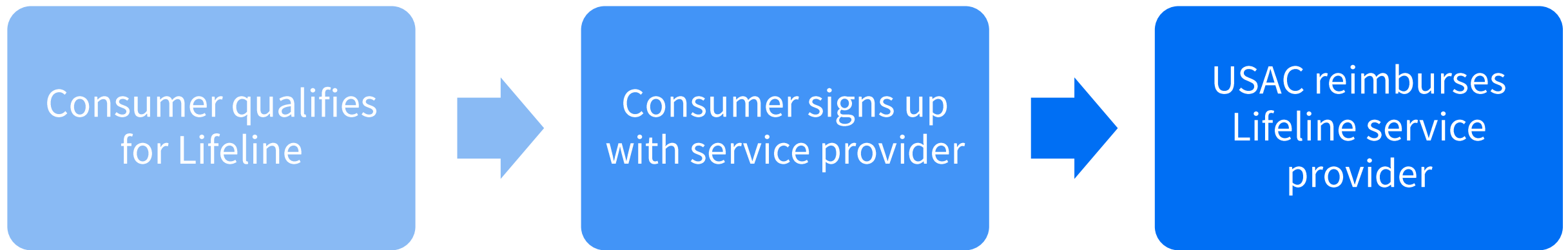
☐ ACP

☐ Lifeline

Search

[Clear Results](#)

Lifeline Program Review



Application Process

Path 1

Input

Enter consumer data
– name, SSN4 or Tribal ID,
DOB, address –
into the National Verifier;
initial certifications



National Verifier searches
for consumer in
State/Federal
databases and NLAD



If consumer eligibility
record **is found**, consumer
is approved



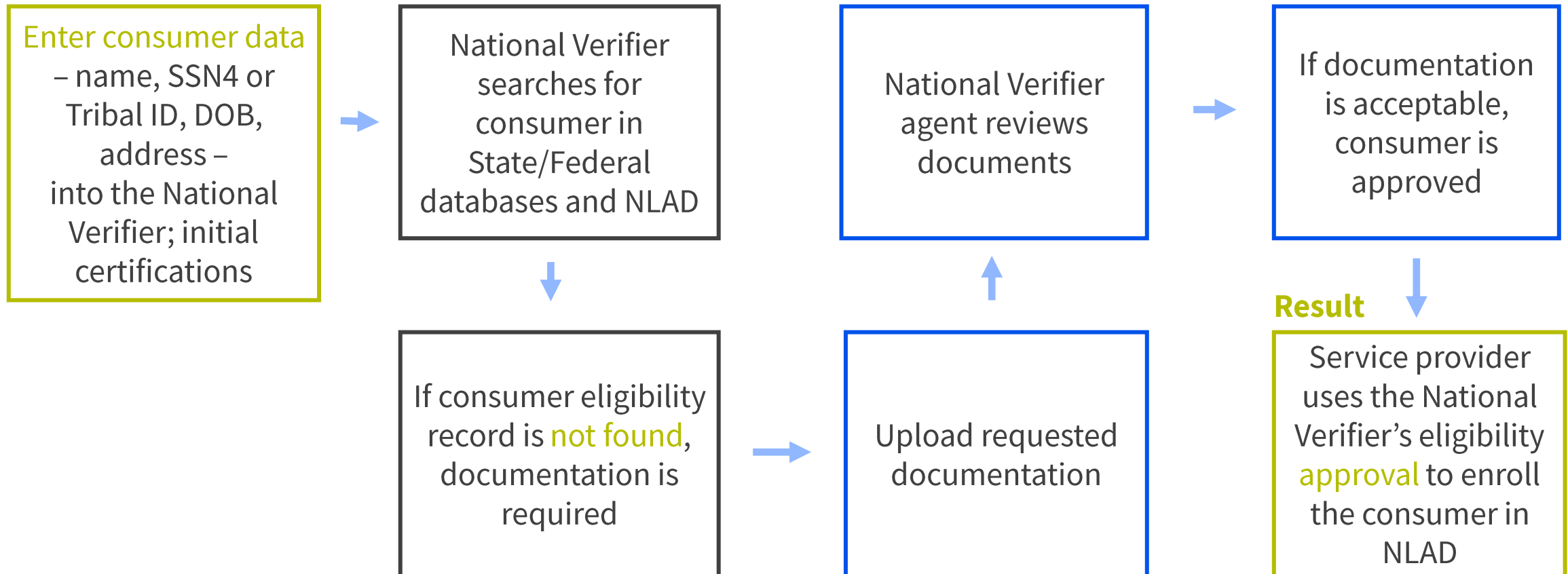
Result

Service provider uses the
National Verifier's eligibility
approval to enroll the
consumer in NLAD

Application Process

Path 2

Input



Poll

Questions?

Resources

Lifeline Tribal Webinars



- Review 2022 Tribal training slides:
 - [Tribal Q3 Webinar: How to Apply for Lifeline](#)
 - [Tribal Q4 Webinar: How to Apply for Lifeline via Mail](#)

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



- **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.**

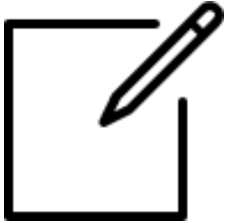
Resources

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!

