

How to Resolve Application Errors

Tribal Training

June 15, 2022



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Housekeeping

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers
- The audience will remain on mute until we reach the open forum portion
- Enter questions at any time using the Q&A box
- If your audio or slides freeze, restart the webinar

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.



Tiffany Johnson

Communications Manager | Lifeline

Tiffany manages all communications for Lifeline, including state and federal partnerships.

Agenda

- Q1 Webinar Refresher
- How to Resolve Application Errors
 - How to Resolve Eligibility Errors
 - How to Resolve Address Errors
- Tribal Resources

Objectives

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



...be trained in:

- supporting consumers in resolving Lifeline application errors



...be able to:

- understand the steps needed to resolve various types of application and eligibility errors

Q1 Webinar Refresher

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.

Broadband Programs



Tribal Partnerships

- Tribal partners include:
 - Tribal governments
 - Tribal agencies
 - Nonprofits serving Tribal communities
- Tribal partners collaborate with USAC to educate consumers about Lifeline and assist eligible consumers with Lifeline program processes.

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



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

National Verifier Overview

National Verifier Overview

- The National Verifier is a centralized application system that determines a consumer's Lifeline program eligibility
- 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
- 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)

Methods to Apply

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

Option 1:

Apply Online

- The consumer visits nv.fcc.gov/lifeline
- Online application is accessible from any computer or mobile device

Option 2:

Apply by Mail

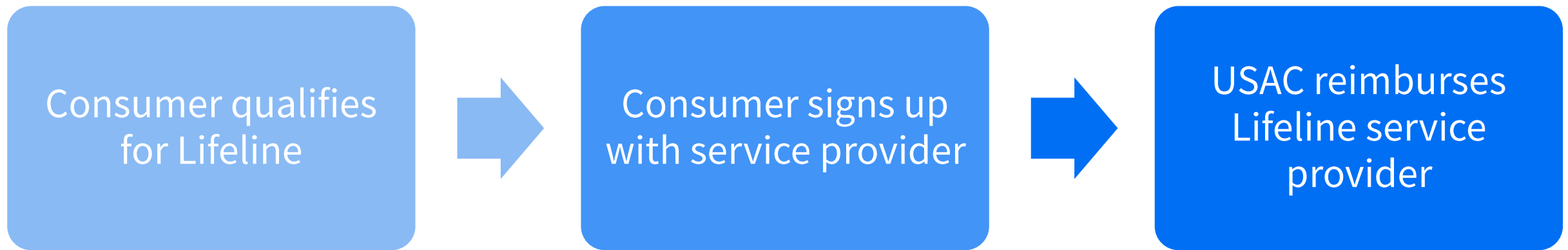
- The consumer fills out the Lifeline Application Form
 - [English Form](#)
 - [Spanish Form](#)
- The consumer mails the application and supporting documentation to the Lifeline Support Center

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 nv.fcc.gov/lifeline), or
- Through the [National Verifier Eligibility Check API](#) if the service provider has elected to use that option

Lifeline Program Review



Questions?

Resolving Application Errors

Resolving Application Errors



- During the application process, consumers will submit their:
 - First and last legal name
 - Date of birth
 - Physical address
 - Last four digits of their social security number or Tribal ID
 - How they qualify for Lifeline
- The information above is required for online and mailed applications as well as applications submitted with assistance of a service provider

Resolving Application Errors

Summary

When a consumer's information cannot be verified by [checking available databases](#), USAC notifies the consumer that more information or documentation is needed to resolve the error

- Documentation can be submitted online through the consumer or service provider portal or mailed to the Lifeline Support Center



- **Service providers can help the consumer** submit required documents directly through the **NV Service Provider Portal, or by mail**



- Submitting documentation to resolve application errors initiates a manual review process by agents at the Lifeline Support Center



- Consumers can **check their application status** or **enrollment status** online through the consumer portal, by contacting the Lifeline Support Center, or by checking with their service provider through whom they initially submitted their application

Resolving Application Errors

Error Codes

Error	Information Required
TPIV (identity verification)	Proof of identity
AMS (address validation)	Proof of address
Duplicate address	Household Worksheet
Under 18	Proof of emancipated minor
Eligibility	Proof of program or income
Deceased	Proof of life

* Visit our [Resolving Application Errors page](#) for more information on document requirements

Resolving Application Errors



- USAC will contact the consumer based on how they applied (mail or online)
- The consumer will also provide contact information on the application, which USAC may use to provide application status updates
 - The consumer may provide a mailing address, phone number, and/or email address as well as an alternate email address if they choose to do so
 - 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

Resolving Application Errors

Notification and Submission Process

	Online	Mail (Paper Applications)
How does USAC notify the consumer if more information is needed?	A screen will populate asking the consumer to provide additional information to qualify for Lifeline	Consumers will receive a letter in the mail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining what information is needed to qualify for Lifeline • The cover sheet • A pre-paid envelope
How to submit additional information?	Click the “upload” button on the screen and attach any documentation that meets the requirements or complete the prompts that appear	In the pre-paid envelope the consumer should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send copies of the requested documents/complete form if requested • Complete and send the cover sheet
Manual review timeline (conducted by USAC Lifeline Support Center)	Reviewed in order of receipt, typically within minutes if submitted during business hours (9 a.m. – 9 p.m. ET)	Review decision sent via US Mail within 7 – 10 business days

Resolving Application Errors

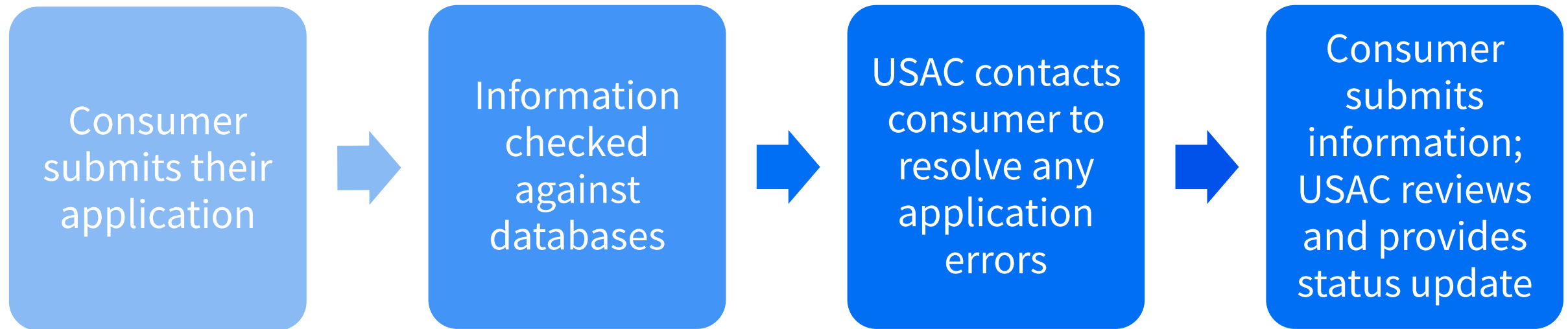
Additional Submission Requirements



- The consumer must submit all information requested by USAC within 45 days of when they initially applied to fully complete the application
- If the consumer needs to submit documentation to resolve application errors, the consumer should **always submit copies** of the documentation
 - Consumers should never submit original documentation

Resolving Application Errors

Additional Submission Requirements



Questions?

Resolving Eligibility Errors

Resolving Eligibility Errors

When Eligibility Errors Occur



- A consumer will receive an eligibility error when USAC cannot verify how the consumer qualifies for Lifeline
- The consumer can submit documentation online or by mail to prove participation in a qualifying program or to prove their income meets Lifeline's criteria

Resolving Eligibility Errors

Confirm Program Eligibility

- Documentation for **qualifying programs** must include:
 - The consumer's name, or the name of the consumer's benefit qualifying person (BQP),
 - Name of Lifeline-qualifying program, such as SNAP,
 - Name of the government or Tribal agency that issued the document, and
 - An issue date within the last 12 months or a future expiration date
- Examples of **qualifying program** documentation:
 - Award letter
 - Screenshot of government application or website showing eligibility
 - Benefit or case portal screenshot

Resolving Eligibility Errors

Confirm Income Eligibility

- Documentation for **income** must include:
 - The consumer's name, or the name of the consumer's BQP, and
 - Cover a full year of income or documentation covering three consecutive months of income within the previous 12 months
- ★ The FCC and USAC have created flexibility around income eligibility documentation during the pandemic so that, through June 30, 2022, consumers who do not have three consecutive months of income documentation may provide an official document that confirms their current income information

Resolving Eligibility Errors

Confirm Income Eligibility

- Examples of income documentation:
 - Prior year's state, federal, or Tribal tax return
 - Current income statement from an employer or paycheck stub
 - Social Security statement of benefits
 - Veterans Administration statement of benefits
 - Retirement/pension statement of benefits
 - Unemployment/worker's compensation statement of benefits
 - Federal or Tribal notice letter of participation in General Assistance
 - Divorce decree, child support award, or other official document containing income information

Resolving Address Errors

Resolving Address Errors

When Address Errors Occur



- A consumer will receive an address error when USAC cannot verify the consumer's address against USPS's Address Matching System (AMS)
 - This often occurs because a consumer submits a descriptive address or lives at an address that is not yet recognized by the USPS
- The consumer can submit information that verifies where they live

Resolving Address Errors

Examples of Descriptive Address

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

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

Street Number and Name		Apt, Unit, etc.
<input type="text" value="Red House in the Middle Of Town"/>		<input type="text"/>
City	State	Zip Code
<input type="text" value="Sample Town"/>	<input type="text" value="WA ✓"/>	<input type="text" value="12345"/>

[Clear All](#) [Next >](#)

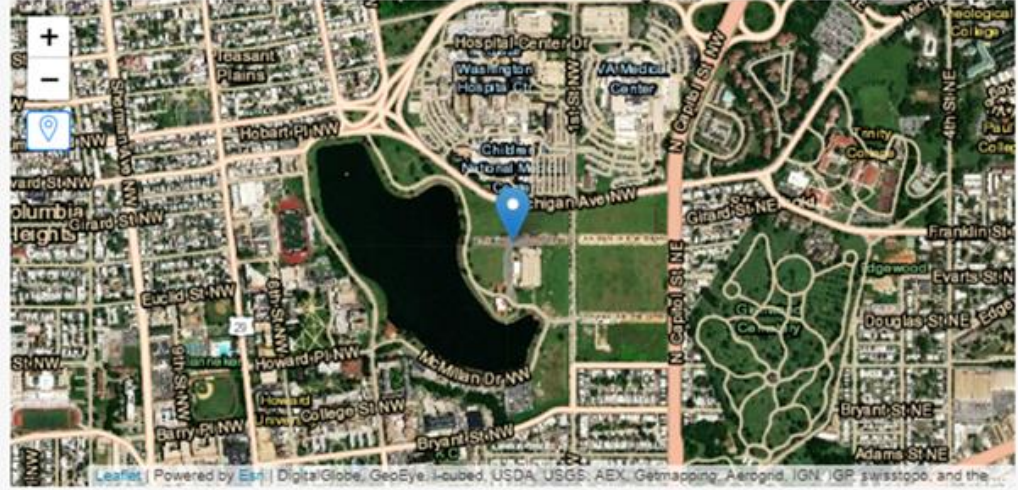
Resolving Address Errors

Verify Address Online

- The consumer will use the mapping tool
- 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

Note: USAC recently added an instructional video to demonstrate how to utilize the mapping tool located inside the National Verifier

We need to confirm where you live on the map below. Please double click on the map or use the (+) button on the top left to zoom in on the map. You can drop a pin once you have found your address on the map.



Note: If you have not zoomed in far enough on the map, you will not be able to drop a pin on the map.

Latitude	Longitude
<input type="text" value="38.92529"/>	<input type="text" value="-77.01403"/>

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Resolving Address Errors

Verify Address by Mail

- **Option 1:** If a consumer has access to the internet but does not want to submit an online application, USAC recommends that they use a mapping tool (e.g., Google maps) to drop a pin where they live
 - Take a screenshot of the mapping tool (include the dropped pin and the consumer's coordinates) and print it
- Consumers must mail this information to USAC's Lifeline Support Center and the completed cover sheet within 45 days of initially submitting their application

Resolving Address Errors

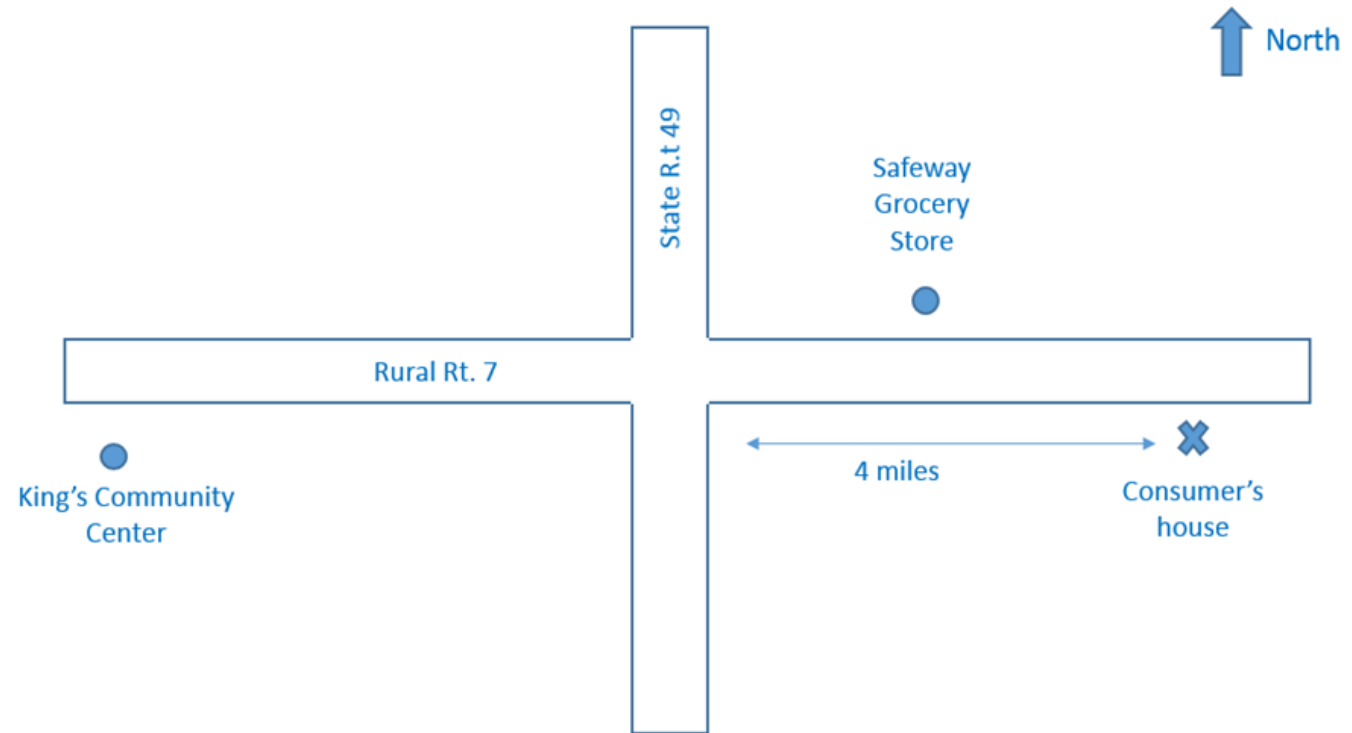
Verify Address by Mail

- **Option 2:** Consumer uses a map from their community (e.g., from a gas station, phone or internet company, or Tribal government)
 - The consumer must circle their home
 - If coordinates are known, the consumer should write them on the map
- Consumers must mail this information to USAC's Lifeline Support Center and the completed cover sheet within 45 days of initially submitting their application

Resolving Address Errors

Verify Address by Mail

- **Option 3:** Consumer draws a map
- This map should include cross roads, identifiable landmarks, and distances
- If coordinates are known, the consumer should write them on the map
- Consumers must mail this information to USAC's Lifeline Support Center and the completed cover sheet within 45 days of initially submitting their application



Resolving Address Errors

Tips to Confirm Address through Mail



- USAC needs a way to obtain the consumer's coordinates to verify they are eligible for the enhanced Tribal benefit
 - Options 1 – 3 allow USAC to do so, even if the consumer does not include the coordinates on their submission
 - If the consumer does not include coordinates, it may take longer for USAC to verify the consumer's address
- If a consumer applies through the mail with a descriptive address, they should include one of these options with the application submission to reduce processing time

Questions?

Resources

Lifeline Tribal Webinars



- Review 2022 Tribal training slides:
 - [Tribal Q1 Webinar: Lifeline Overview and Open Forum](#)

Educational Material

- Additional educational materials include:
 - Tribal Resources
 - [Tribal Lifeline Flyer](#) - handout for consumer living on Tribal lands on how to apply and manage benefits
 - [Tribal Toolkit](#) - contains educational resources for Tribal partners to adapt
 - General Resources
 - [How to Apply](#) - One-Pager for communities outside of Tribal lands
 - [Manage your Benefit](#) - One-Pager for communities outside of Tribal lands
 - Instructional Videos
 - [How to Apply Online](#)
 - [How to Apply by Mail](#)
 - [How to Submit Documentation by Mail](#)

Lifeline Websites



- Lifeline offers two websites:
 - Lifeline's consumer website available at LifelineSupport.org
 - USAC's service provider website available at USAC.org/Lifeline

Lifeline Support Center



- **Email:** LifelineSupport@usac.org



- **Call:** (800) 234-9473

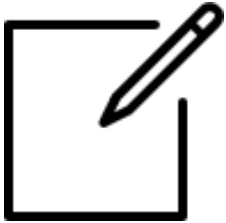
Lifeline Support Center

- **Hours:** seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET
- **Support:**
 - Consumers with disabilities who need help submitting a Lifeline application may contact the support center for assistance
 - The Lifeline Support Center can assist consumers in 200 different languages (in addition to English and Spanish)



Thank You!

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- 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!





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