Lifeline Program
An Overview of the Lifeline Benefit for Low Income Native and Tribal Consumers
USAC: Who We Are
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.
USAC: Who We Are
The Mission of Universal Service

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

- Connect America
- Lifeline Program
- Rural Health Care Program
- Schools and Libraries Program (E-Rate)
Lifeline Program Details
Lifeline Program Details

- A monthly discount on phone, broadband, or bundled service
- Eight million U.S. households participate in Lifeline today
- Of those, 274,000 are Tribal households
- All eligible consumers can receive a discount of up to $9.25 per month
- Consumers who live on qualifying Tribal lands can receive up to $34.25 per month
Lifeline Program Details
Lifeline Benefit

The Lifeline discount is provided directly to the carrier. The service provider offers a package for the consumer, taking into account the discount for any of the following services:

- Broadband
- Mobile/Fixed Voice-Only
- Bundled
  - Voice or Broadband
  - At least one has to meet the minimum standards
Lifeline Program Details

How to Qualify

Government program:

• Medicaid
• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
• Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
• Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
• Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit

Income:

• At or below 135 percent Federal Poverty Guidelines
Lifeline Program Details
How to Qualify (Tribal Residents)

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance (BIA-GA)
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance of Needy Families (TTANF)
- Tribal Head Start (must meet qualifying income standard)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
Lifeline Program Details
Program Rules

- Lifeline is available only to consumers who can document their eligibility.
- Only one Lifeline benefit is permitted per independent economic household (economic household is a group of people that share income and expenses).
- Consumers are required to recertify their eligibility every year.
Lifeline Program Details
Eligible Tribal Lands

[Map of the United States highlighting eligible tribal lands]

Legend
- State Outline
- County Outline
- Tribal Lands - Consumers residing in these areas can receive enhanced support and Link Up, and they can qualify using a Tribal program.

For more information about the Lifeline Tribal Enhanced Subsidy visit: www.usac.org/tribal-lands

Lifeline Program Details
Numbers in Washington

- 135,500 subscribers
- Of those subscribers 1,500 live on tribal lands
- This year no consumers have utilized Link Up support on tribal lands

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<th>Year</th>
<th>WA Support Claimed Annually</th>
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<tr>
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<th>2018 Disbursements Total</th>
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- Data on disbursement funding can be found [here](#)
- FCC filings can be found [here](#)
Lifeline Program Details
Numbers in Idaho

- 15,000 subscribers
- Of those subscribers 270 live on tribal lands
- This year no consumers have utilized Link Up support on tribal lands

<table>
<thead>
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</table>

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- FCC filings can be found [here](#)
National Verifier Overview
National Verifier Overview

• The National Verifier:
  • Determines consumer eligibility
  • Conducts annual recertification

• USAC partners with states, federal, and tribal agencies to utilize existing data sources that contain Lifeline eligibility information (e.g. participation in SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing, Tribal TANF etc.).
In 2019, USAC successfully brought all remaining states and territories into the National Verifier.
National Verifier Overview
Application Process

Consumers in National Verifier states have three options they can choose from when applying for the Lifeline benefit:

**Service Provider Portal**

A service provider can assist a consumer in-person through the National Verifier service provider portal at CheckLifeline.org/lifeline.

(https://www.checklifeline.org/lifeline?id=nv_sp_bpo_login)

**Mail - in**

Consumers can apply on their own by mailing in their documentation and application form to the Lifeline Support Center, and they will contact the consumers to let them know if they qualify for Lifeline.

**Consumer Portal**

Consumers can also apply on their own through consumer portal, CheckLifeline.org/lifeline.
Consumers who do not have a company can find one using this tool.
National Verifier Overview

Addressing

- Consumers must enter a residential address or identify where they live, per Lifeline program rules, and to confirm whether a consumer lives on tribal lands so they can receive the enhanced subsidy.

- Consumers may enter a descriptive address or the intersection near where they reside.
National Verifier Overview

Addressing

After creating the application, the consumer will have an opportunity to update their address before submission.

• The online tool will try to locate the consumer’s home based upon the address they enter into the portal.
• The tool will drop a pin that can be moved to the location of the consumer’s residence.
• Latitude and longitude are calculated based on the location of the pin.
Consumers can mail in images to USAC to show their address, including:

- A hand drawn document that identifies the consumer’s home address by identifying the nearest cross roads (or mile markers), identifiable landmarks, and distance between the locations, or
- A printed satellite image with a mapping tool icon (pin) identifying the consumer’s residence and the latitude and longitude coordinates displayed from a mapping tool.
- Consumers can also mail in copies of documentation such as an unexpired driver's license or utility bill. For a full list, visit the Acceptable Documentation for the National Verifier page or review the AMS Resolutions PDF.
National Verifier Overview

Resources

Need help? Contact us!

• **General:** LifelineSupport@usac.org or call the Lifeline Support Center at (800) 234-9473

Trainings and Reference Materials

• Please email us at LifelineProgram@usac.org to be added to the consumer support training distribution list or the National Verifier training and outreach launch specific lists for states that you do business in.

• Sign up for general Lifeline Program email updates and upcoming events:
  • Visit [www.usac.org/lifeline](http://www.usac.org/lifeline) and click “Subscribe” in the upper right hand corner
  
• Visit USAC’s [Lifeline National Verifier](http://www.usac.org/lifeline) web pages.

• Visit USAC’s [Lifeline Learn](http://www.usac.org/lifeline) page for monthly webinar and National Verifier training recordings and slide decks.

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Thank You!

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