

## Resource: Lifeline



# Lifeline

Available telephone, cellular and Internet services

## What is Lifeline?

Lifeline is the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) program to help make communications services more affordable to qualifying low-income consumers. Congress supported and strengthened Lifeline through the Telecommunications Act of 1996, requiring that affordable telephone communications services, including traditional telephones, cellular, or broadband Internet, be available to low-income consumers across the country. Lifeline is supported by universal service fund surcharges from telecommunication service providers or paid by their customers.

## How do I qualify for Lifeline?

Lifeline is available to eligible low-income subscribers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on tribal lands. To participate in the program, subscribers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines, or participate in certain assistance programs (see back page). To see if you are eligible with the **Lifeline Eligibility Pre-Screening Tool**, go to the Universal Service Administrative website at [www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org).

## How does Lifeline work?

Lifeline provides a discount for monthly services to eligible low-income subscribers. Subscribers may receive a Lifeline discount on either a traditional telephone or a cellular service, but may not receive a discount on both services at the same time. In the future, Lifeline will support broadband and broadband-voice bundles. FCC rules prohibit more than one Lifeline service per household.

*See back page*



# What steps do I need to take?

## 1 SELECT A PHONE COMPANY

- Go to the following website and select Alaska: [lifelinesupport.org/lis/companies/companies.aspx](http://lifelinesupport.org/lis/companies/companies.aspx)
- Select any phone company and its phone number from the list.
- If you do not have Internet access, call your preferred local phone company and ask about its Lifeline program.
- Typically, larger Alaskan communities have more than one Lifeline provider.

## 2 FILL OUT AN APPLICATION

The phone company will give you a Lifeline Program application form to complete.

You **must** contact the phone company you selected to request this form.

## 3 IDENTITY VERIFICATION AND ENROLLMENT

Once you submit your completed application and documentation to your phone company, your application will be processed, and you will be enrolled in the Lifeline Program. Your information will be entered into a federal database that will verify your identity and that your household is not already receiving a Lifeline Program discount.

### Below is a list of assistance programs\* that qualify a participant for Lifeline:

- Medicaid;
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;
- Supplemental Security Income;
- Federal Public Housing Assistance;
- Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit; or
- Tribal-specific federal assistance programs:
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs general assistance;
  - Tribally administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; –
  - Head Start (only those households meeting its income qualifying standard); or
  - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

**\* NOTE:**

Beginning July 1, 2017, all subscribers enrolled in the Lifeline Program will need to be recertified every 12 months thereafter.