
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
Lifeline/Link-Up Assistance Programs

FNS 630 Lifeline/Link-Up Assistance Programs
Change #2-2014
August 1, 2014

630.01 LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Lifeline Assistance Program is a government benefit program designed to promote universal service by helping low-income individuals afford telephone service in every state, territory, commonwealth and/or Tribal lands. Lifeline Assistance allows low-income customers to receive a credit on their monthly telephone bill. The FCC Lifeline Assistance Program is supported by the federal Universal Service Fund (USF). Customers may not receive both discounts at the same time.

In addition to the Lifeline Program, the Link-Up Program is another federal benefit program that provides a discount to subscribers living on Tribal lands. The Link-Up program provides a discount that reduces the installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary residence.

630.02 LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS REQUIREMENTS

A. The customers must have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines and receive assistance from one of these programs:

1. Food and Nutrition Services benefits;
2. LIHEAP, CIP, Weatherization;
3. Housing Authority or Section 8 Assistance;
4. Work First Family Assistance;
5. Medicaid;
6. Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
7. National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program;
8. Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance;
9. Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF);
10. Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR);
11. Head Start (if income eligibilty is met); or
12. State Assistance programs (SA)(if applicable)

B. Head of household must have the telephone service listed in his/her name; **and**

C. Receive the telephone bill.

NOTE: Verification of receipt of Food and Nutrition Services benefits or other low-income assistance must come from the authorizing agency.

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630.03 LIFELINE PROGRAM PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATIONS/REAPPLICATIONS

- A. Explain the Lifeline and Link-Up Assistance Programs to the applicant. Provide a brochure, if available.
- B. The customer can check for eligibility and locate a provider for the designated states by using the Lifeline Eligibility on the Universal Service Administrative (USAC) website www.lifelinesupport.org or call 1-888-641-8722 for how to apply.
- C. Verification of program eligibility, and proof of income for three consecutive months is needed when applying for the Lifeline Program.
- D. If agencies are contacted by Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETC) to provide information for a Lifeline applicant; only yes/no responses should be given. Personal identifiable information should not be shared with (ETC). Each agency must provide this verification by whatever means it obtains to be most efficient and cost-effective.
- E. Customers must be recertified once a year in order to determine eligibility/ineligibility for the Lifeline Program.
- F. Upon customers notification of ineligibility for a federal benefit program or income increase over the poverty income limit. The customer must contact the Lifeline provider within 30 days to de-enroll from the program to avoid penalties.