



DID YOU KNOW?

SAVINGS ON BASIC PHONE SERVICE are Available to Low-Income Consumers



Lifeline & Link-Up Telephone Discounts

www.lifeline.gov

Lifeline gives consumers a discount on monthly charges for basic local telephone service.

Link-Up pays for part of the consumer's connection or activation charge for new telephone service.

Both programs are available throughout the U.S. Most, but not all, carriers offer the discounts. VoIP companies currently do not. Money for both programs comes from a surcharge on the phone bills of all consumers, except for those receiving Lifeline and Link-Up.

? How Much Can I Save

Lifeline: It depends on where you live. The basic federal program provides a discount as high as \$10 per month, but most states provide an additional savings. Residents of tribal lands may receive up to \$35 under the federal discount.

Link-Up: The program pays up to half the installation/connection charge (with a \$30 cap). You may ask for a year to pay off the other half of the connection or activation charge, without interest. For residents of tribal lands, Link-Up will cover 50% of installation costs up to \$60, and all costs between \$60 and \$130.

? How Do I Qualify

Federal discounts are available to all eligible consumers in the United States. Some states offer additional discounts.

Nine states offer only the federal discounts and follow the federal eligibility criteria:

Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and the following territories: American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands. In these states and territories, a consumer may qualify in one of two ways:

- (1) If a consumer takes part in one (or more) federal programs including: Medicaid, Food Stamps, SSI, Federal Public Housing Assistance, LIHEAP, TANF, or National School Lunch Program FREE Lunch;

OR

- (2) If a consumer's **total household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.**
If a consumer qualifies based on income, he or she will be asked to provide proof of income.

States that offer additional discounts set the eligibility qualifications for their programs. Call the public utility commission, the phone company, or the FCC to determine the particular criteria for your state.

? How Do I Apply

In most states, you may apply directly through your phone company. In others, applications go to the state government. Call your public utility commission, your phone company, or the FCC for more information. Individual state requirements are also posted online at www.lifelinesupport.org.

? Do I Have to Pay a Deposit

If you have financial or credit problems, a phone company may require you to pay a deposit **before** connecting your service. One way to avoid a deposit is to ask the phone company to block or limit your long-distance service. If your telephone service has been disconnected for non-payment, consider asking the company to reconnect you on the condition that it blocks access to everything except basic local service.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Lifeline and Link-Up discounts cannot be applied to past due telephone bills.

Once you begin receiving Lifeline discounts, you may periodically be asked to verify you remain eligible. If you do not respond, the phone company will stop your discounts.

It can take up to two months for the discounts to show up on your bill, but you must pay the bill in full until that time.

Lifeline is available on only one line per household.

If you are qualifying based on participation in a federal aid program, in most cases the phone must be in the name of the person who receives the benefits. However, if you qualify based on the National School Lunch Program, the phone must be in the name of an adult.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE FCC

CALL: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)

TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322)

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