

Blue Fiber Lifeline Policies and Procedures



(April 1, 2026)

Lifeline is a government assistance program that provides subsidies to help defray the cost of a voice or broadband subscription provided to qualifying low-income customers. The subsidy provided to the Company reduces the rate charged to end user customers for qualifying service. All employees should familiarize themselves with these requirements so that we can implement this program consistent with all requirements.

The 2026 monthly subsidy is \$9.25/month for qualifying broadband (internet) service, or \$5.25 for qualifying voice service. (An additional amount is available for customers living on Tribal lands.)

Customers are eligible for Lifeline if their household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or if a member of the household participates in one of the following federal programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
- One of several Tribal assistance programs, and the household lives on federally recognized Tribal lands
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
 - Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
 - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
 - Tribal Head Start (only households that meet the income qualifying standard)

Each household is eligible for only one Lifeline benefit; the customer can choose whether to apply the benefit to voice or broadband service. This benefit cannot be transferred to another person or household.

All employees will take the following steps to comply with Lifeline program requirements:

Enroll the customer: Employees must use USAC's National Verifier to determine customer eligibility. Employees may assist a customer in-person, through the National Verifier service provider portal, or the consumer may apply on their own online at <https://nationalverifier.servicenowservices.com/lifeline>, or by mailing in a paper application.

After the National Verifier verifies that the household is eligible for Lifeline, an employee must enter the customer's name into the NLAD. NLAD confirms that the customer has

qualified through the National Verifier and prevents subscribers from claiming more than one discount. We cannot claim reimbursement for a customer unless that subscriber's information is entered in NLAD. The Company is required to update NLAD every time a customer status changes, including changes to their information (for example, a change of address).

De-enroll ineligible customers: If a customer is no longer eligible for Lifeline, an employee must de-enroll the customer in NLAD. FCC rules require that a customer be de-enrolled within five business days.

Seek reimbursement: The Company will obtain reimbursement for offering Lifeline service through USAC's Lifeline Claims System, based on the number of qualifying customers as shown in NLAD as of the first of the month.

USAC recertification process: Each year, customers must recertify by their "anniversary date" (as shown in NLAD) to confirm that they are still eligible for Lifeline. The National Verifier now handles the recertification process, and subscribers that are not recertified automatically will receive outreach from USAC to recertify online, on the phone, or by mailing in a recertification form.

For the annual re-certification process, USAC will check automated data sources to see if the customer remains eligible. In cases where that information is not available, USAC will provide the customer with three (3) options for recertification: a paper form (FCC Form 5630), an interactive voice response, or recertification by the subscriber online. As with the initial eligibility determination, this process is conducted by USAC, and not by the Company.

USAC will automatically de-enroll from Lifeline any subscriber that is not verified and will notify the Company that the customer has been de-enrolled from Lifeline through the Failed Recertification De-Enrollment Report in NLAD.

Submit annual filings: Each year, the Company must report the results of the annual recertification process conducted by USAC on FCC Form 555, which is submitted electronically to USAC through an online portal (due January 31st). The Company must also file a copy of the annual FCC Form 555 in the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System, Docket 14-171, and with the state regulatory commission. Each year, the Company will also submit to USAC FCC Form 481 (due July 1), which includes certain annual certifications regarding Lifeline program participation.