

**TARIFF DISTRIBUTION**

FILE PACKAGE NO.: FL-17-0080

DATE: December 5, 2017

STATE: FLORIDA

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/05/2017

TYPE OF DISTRIBUTION: Approved

PURPOSE: This project proposes to change our Lifeline offer due to ETC  
relinquishment.

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## A3. BASIC LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

### A3.31 Lifeline

#### A3.31.1 Description of Service

- A. Effective December 5, 2017, Lifeline service is available only to qualifying subscribers who reside in Connect America Fund II (CAF II) Funded Census Blocks, shown in the Request for relinquishment of partial eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) status, by BellSouth Telecommunications, LLC d/ b/a AT&T Florida, Docket No. 20170082-TP, approved by the Florida Public Service Commission in Order No. PSC-2017-0329-CO-TP, dated August 16, 2017. (N)
- B. The Lifeline program is designed to increase the availability of telecommunications services to low income subscribers by providing a credit to monthly recurring local service to qualifying low income residential subscribers. Basic terms and conditions are in compliance with FCC rules and regulations including the FCC Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in WC Docket No. 11-42, adopted January 31, 2012, and the Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization Third Report And Order, Further Report And Order, and Order on Reconsideration, WC Docket No. 11-42 (rel. April 27, 2016) ("Lifeline Reform and Modernization Order"). (T)
- C. Lifeline is supported by the federal universal service support mechanism. (T)
- D. Federal uniform support of \$9.25 is available for each Lifeline service, and is passed through to an eligible customer via a monthly Federal Lifeline credit. The amount of credit will not exceed the charge for local service. (T)

#### A3.31.2 Terms and Conditions

- A. General
  - 1. One low income credit is available per household and is applicable to the primary residential connection only. Lifeline support is limited to a single subscription per household where household is defined to be any individual or group of individuals who are living together at the same address as one economic unit. For the purposes of this rule, an economic unit consists of all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household.
  - 2. A Lifeline customer may subscribe to any local service offering available to other residence customers.
  - 3. Toll blocking will be provided at no charge to the Lifeline subscriber.
  - 4. The deposit requirement is not applicable to a Lifeline customer who subscribes to toll blocking. If a Lifeline customer removes toll blocking prior to establishing an acceptable credit history, a deposit may be required. When applicable, advance payments will not exceed the connection and local service charges for one month.
  - 5. A Lifeline customer is exempt from the Installment Billing Service Fee in Section A4.
  - 6. The Federal Universal Service Charge will not be billed to Lifeline customers.
  - 7. A Lifeline subscriber's basic local service will not be disconnected for non-payment of toll charges or ancillary services, but may be disconnected for non-payment of basic local service charges, taxes and fees. Access to toll service may be denied for non-payment of toll charges. Access to ancillary services may be denied for non-payment of basic or non-basic local charges. A Lifeline subscriber's request for reconnection of basic local service will not be denied if the service was previously denied for non-payment of toll or ancillary charges. Partial payments will first be applied to basic local service.
  - 8. Lifeline eligible customers who have previously been disconnected for nonpayment of local charges may obtain local service equipped with toll blocking upon payment of outstanding debt for non-toll charges, taxes and fees. Toll blocking shall not be removed prior to receipt of full payment of all outstanding toll charges.
  - 9. The outstanding non-toll balance may be paid in up to twelve installment payments with a minimum per month payment of \$5.00. This installment option is separate from any other installment arrangements (such as Installment Billing of non-recurring charges in Section A4). Should the customer default on this payment arrangement, service will be disconnected and the customer must pay the outstanding non-toll balance in full before local service will be re-established. Installment payments are not available on defaulted amounts previously installment billed.
  - 10. Payment for other outstanding debt will be pursued in the same manner as for non-Lifeline customers.
  - 11. Lifeline is not available for resale.

## A3. BASIC LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

### A3.31 Lifeline (Cont'd)

#### A3.31.2 Terms and Conditions (Cont'd)

##### B. Eligibility

1. To be eligible for Lifeline, a customer must be a current recipient of any of the following low income assistance programs<sup>1</sup>.
  - a. (DELETED)
  - b. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  - c. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - d. Medicaid
  - e. Federal Public Housing Assistance
  - f. (DELETED)
  - g. (DELETED)
  - h. Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
2. Additionally, customers not receiving benefits under one of the preceding programs, and whose total gross annual income does not exceed one hundred and thirty-five percent (135%)<sup>2</sup> of the Federal Poverty Guidelines are eligible for Lifeline.
3. All applications for service are subject to verification with the state agency responsible for administration of the qualifying program.

##### C. Certification

1. Proof of eligibility in any of the qualifying low income assistance programs should be provided to the Company at the time of application for service. The Lifeline credit will not be established until the Company has received proof of eligibility. If the customer requests installation prior to the Company's receipt of proof of eligibility, the requested service will be provided without the Lifeline credit. When eligibility documentation is provided subsequent to installation, the Lifeline credit will be provided on a going forward basis. Re-certification is required periodically consistent with the federal requirements in 47 C.F.R. 54.
2. The Company reserves the right to periodically audit its records, working in conjunction with the appropriate state agencies, for the purpose of determining continuing eligibility. Information obtained during such verification audit will be treated as confidential information to the extent required under State and Federal laws. The use or disclosure of information concerning enrollees will be limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of the Lifeline plan.
3. When a customer is determined to be ineligible as a result of verification, the Company will contact the customer. If the customer cannot provide eligibility documentation, the Lifeline credit will be discontinued and at such time the customer will be transitioned to the Lifeline Transitional Discount (LTD), as set forth in A3.23 of this Guidebook.

**Note 1:** Effective December 2, 2016, in compliance with the FCC "Lifeline Reform and Modernization Order", Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and National School Lunch Program's free lunch program are no longer criteria for the federal Lifeline program. Existing Lifeline subscribers qualified under these programs prior to December 2, 2016, and who remain qualified for these programs, may retain the Lifeline discount until such time as they must re-certify under current FCC rules and criteria. *Effective December 5, 2017, Lifeline discounts noted this paragraph apply only to Lifeline subscribers who reside in CAF II Funded Census Blocks, as noted in A3.31.1, A.* (C)

**Note 2:** Effective December 2, 2016, in compliance with the FCC "Lifeline Reform and Modernization Order", the income criterion is Income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Existing Lifeline subscribers qualified prior to December 2, 2016, under the previous income criterion, Income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, and who remain qualified under the previous income criterion, may retain the Lifeline discount until such time as they must re-certify under current FCC rules and criteria. *Effective December 5, Lifeline discounts noted this paragraph apply only to Lifeline subscribers who reside in CAF II Funded Census Blocks, as noted in A3.31.1, A.* (C)

### A3. BASIC LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

#### A3.31 Lifeline (Cont'd)

##### A3.31.3 Rates and Charges

- A. General
  - 1. Lifeline is provided as a monthly credit on the eligible residential subscriber's bill for local service.
  - 2. Service Charges in Section A4 are applicable for installing or changing Lifeline service.
  - 3. The Secondary Service Charge in Section A4. is not applicable when existing service is converted intact to Lifeline service.
- B. The Lifeline credit consists of one Federal credit.
  - 1. Federal credit<sup>1,2</sup>

	<b>Monthly Credit</b>
(a) (DELETED)	
(b) Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	\$ 9.25
(c) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	9.25
(d) Medicaid	9.25
(e) Federal Public Housing Assistance	9.25
(f) (DELETED)	
(g) Income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines	9.25
(h) (DELETED)	
(i) Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit	9.25

##### A3.31.4 Tribal Lifeline

- A. Description of Service
 

Qualified residents of federally recognized tribal lands may receive up to twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per month in additional federal Lifeline support for their residential service
- B. Terms and Conditions
  - 1. Tribal Lifeline support is in addition to traditional Lifeline support.
  - 2. All Lifeline terms and conditions are applicable to Tribal Lifeline.
- C. Eligibility
 

To qualify, in addition to meeting the tribal land residency requirement, the customer may be a current recipient of any of the programs identified for Lifeline, or may be a recipient of one of the following federal programs:

  - 1. BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) general assistance
  - 2. Tribally administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - 3. Head Start (income eligible)
  - 4. Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

##### D. Rates and Charges

- 1. General
  - a. The Tribal Lifeline credit is in addition to the Federal Lifeline credit.

**Note 1:** Effective December 2, 2016, in compliance with the FCC “Lifeline Reform and Modernization Order”, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and National School Lunch Program’s free lunch program are no longer criteria for the federal Lifeline program. Existing Lifeline subscribers qualified under these programs prior to December 2, 2016, and who remain qualified for these programs, may retain the Lifeline discount until such time as they must re-certify under current FCC rules and criteria. *Effective December 5, 2017, Lifeline discounts noted in this paragraph apply only to Lifeline subscribers who reside in CAF II Funded Census Blocks, as noted in A3.31.1, A.* (C)

**Note 2:** Effective December 2, 2016, in compliance with the FCC “Lifeline Reform and Modernization Order”, the income criterion is Income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Existing Lifeline subscribers qualified prior to December 2, 2016, under the previous income criterion, Income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, and who remain qualified under the previous income criterion, may retain the Lifeline discount until such time as they must re-certify under current FCC rules and criteria. *Effective December 5, 2017, Lifeline discounts noted in this paragraph apply only to Lifeline subscribers who reside in CAF II Funded Census Blocks, as noted in A3.31.1, A.* (C)