

TARIFF DISTRIBUTION

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STATE: SOUTH CAROLINA

EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/22/2020

TYPE OF DISTRIBUTION: Approved

PURPOSE: Lifeline change due to implementation of National Verifier

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A3. BASIC LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

A3.31 Lifeline

A3.31.1 Description of Service

- A. Effective October 12, 2017, Lifeline service is available only to qualifying subscribers who reside in Connect America Fund II (CAF II) Funded Census Blocks, shown in the Petition of AT&T South Carolina for Order Confirming Relinquishment of Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designation In Specified Areas, Exhibit B: AT&T Carolina's Retained ETC Service Area, Docket No. 2017-109-C, Order No. 2017-276, dated May 3, 2017.
- 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 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"), *including implementation of a National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier*. (C)
- C. Lifeline is supported by the federal universal service support mechanism.
- D. Federal uniform support of seven dollars and twenty five cents (\$7.25) is available for each Lifeline service and is passed through to an eligible customer via a monthly Federal Lifeline credit. An additional three dollars and fifty cents (\$3.50) credit is provided by the state. The total Lifeline credit available to an eligible customer in South Carolina is ten dollars and seventy-five cents (\$10.75). The amount of credit will not exceed the charge for local service.

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, if elected, will be provided at no charge to the Lifeline subscriber.
 4. No deposit will be required of 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. Neither the Federal Universal Service Charge nor the South Carolina Intrastate Universal Service Surcharge will be billed to Lifeline customers.
 6. A Lifeline subscriber's local service will not be disconnected for non-payment of toll charges. Local service may be denied for non-payment of local calls in accordance with A2. Access to toll service may be denied for non-payment of toll charges. A Lifeline subscriber's request for reconnection of local service will not be denied if the service was previously denied for non-payment of toll charges.
 7. 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 one of the following low income assistance programs:¹
 - a. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - b. Medicaid
 - c. Federal Public Housing Assistance
 - d. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - e. Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
2. All applications for service are subject to verification with the state agency responsible for administration of the qualifying program.
3. Additionally, a customer with total net annual income that does not exceed one hundred thirty five percent (135%) of the Federal Poverty Guidelines qualifies for Lifeline.

C. *Eligibility Determination, Certification and Re-Certification*

Effective January 22, 2020, the Company will no longer be responsible for determining Lifeline eligibility. At this time, the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier) will determine subscriber eligibility, conduct annual recertification and populate the Lifeline Eligibility Database. The National Verifier will collect the customer's application, determine eligibility and give an approval or denial for a Lifeline discount. Once approved, the National Verifier will retain the approval for 90 days, during which time the Company may use the eligibility to provide a Lifeline discount. The Lifeline credit will not be established until the customer's eligibility has been determined by the National Verifier and the customer contacts the Company to apply the Lifeline credit.

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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 October 12, 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.