



ICC Issues Resolution on FCC Lifeline Program to Help Low-Income Consumers Stay Connected Through COVID-19 Pandemic

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Chicago, IL- As residents practice social distancing to stop the spread of the Coronavirus, access to affordable internet and cell phone service has proven to be essential. To help eligible low-income consumers financially impacted by the pandemic, the Illinois Commerce Commission recently approved a resolution to raise awareness about the federal Lifeline program which offers discounts on broadband and phone services.

“COVID-19 is having a dramatic effect on families, communities and the economy. To stay safe, many residents depend on internet service at home to telework or participate in remote learning. There’s also a large population who are now without a job and need technology to look for work. Staying connected has never been more important. Fortunately, there is help available,” said ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski.

Lifeline is the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Universal Service Fund program that provides eligible low-income customers with monthly discounts on Internet or phone service (up to \$9.25). Those eligible to receive the discount must already participate in certain federal benefits programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Federal Public Housing, or the Veterans Pension and Survivor’s Benefit; or have a household income at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. The Lifeline discount is limited to one benefit per household. Additionally, in Illinois, a program funded entirely through voluntary donations subsidizes the cost of phone installation for Lifeline participants. To learn more about this program, please visit <http://linkupillinois.org/to-enroll/>.

“So many residents suddenly found themselves out of work due to COVID-19 and may not be aware of programs such as Lifeline because they didn’t previously qualify. To make it even easier for those new to the program, the FCC has temporarily eased the documentation requirements for those seeking to apply for the Lifeline benefit based on their income,” said Commissioner Sadzi Martha Oliva.

For more information about the Lifeline program, including downloadable materials and fact sheets on how to apply in both English and Spanish, visit <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>. For a copy of the ICC Lifeline resolution click [here](#).