

Lifeline Fact Sheet

What is Lifeline

Lifeline is a government program that helps low-income families afford a telephone or cell phone connection. Through a modest monthly subsidy (\$9.25) and participating providers, eligible families are able to select the service they need most. This program was established in 1980 under the Ronald Reagan administration to close the divide among families without access to a landline. In 2005, Lifeline was updated to include mobile service as an eligible part of the program. There are currently around 12 million Lifeline subscribers.

What is happening to the Lifeline program

Recently, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced its intention to modernize the program to add broadband as an eligible Lifeline service. That means that low-income families who meet the requirements for Lifeline soon might be able to have an Internet connection at home.

Why is it important for the LifeLine Program to expand to broadband

Like the telephone in the 1980s, today the Internet is an increasingly pivotal part of our day to day lives. From applying for a job, finishing up our homework for school, or even staying in touch with loved ones near and far, the Internet is a critical tool. As more of our lives are directed online, those left behind face the consequences. There are close to 100 million people in the United States who don't have Internet access at home. For many of them, the cost of an Internet connection is too financially prohibitive. In households that make less than

What should the FCC do?

The FCC should modernize the Lifeline program by expanding it to broadband. That said, millions of people still depend on the program to afford a telephone connection. As the FCC modernizes to broadband, it should ensure that families need a telephone connection are still able to maintain it under the new modernized Lifeline. The FCC must also ensure that Lifeline subscribers get access to a first class Internet connection that meets the needs of how these families will use the Internet.

What can I do?

Join our Campaign and [sign our petition](#) urging the FCC to modernize the Lifeline program.