



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

For Immediate Release:
July 26, 2005

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FCC AND NARUC LAUNCH “LIFELINE ACROSS AMERICA” TO RAISE AWARENESS OF LIFELINE AND LINK-UP PROGRAMS

Discount Programs Help Low-Income Households Afford Phone Service

Austin, TX – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Association of Regulatory Commissioners (NARUC) today launched "Lifeline Across America," a nationwide program to draw more low-income consumers into federal and state Lifeline and Link-up programs.

These programs provide for discounts to low income households for both the initial installation of phone service (Link-Up) and monthly phone bills (Lifeline.)

FCC Chairman Kevin J. Martin said, “Lifeline Across America’ is a fine example of how the FCC and NARUC, working with the states, industry and consumers, can make a real difference in peoples’ lives. Lifeline and Link-Up are excellent programs with proven track records and this new initiative will help ensure that everyone eligible is aware of them.”

Consumers qualifying for Link-Up America support are eligible to save up to 50% on initial installation fees, not to exceed \$30 per household. In other words, up to \$30 of the first \$60 of their initial hook-up bill. Consumers living on American Indian or Alaskan Native tribal lands may also qualify for an additional \$70 to defray initial connection charges. Participants may also work with their telephone company to establish a deferred payment schedule for remaining costs of up to \$200.

The Lifeline Assistance Program enables eligible low-income consumers to save from \$5.25 to \$10.00 on their basic monthly telephone service fee depending on the state where the consumer lives. Residents of tribal lands may be eligible for an additional \$25 in savings on their basic monthly phone bill.

The “Lifeline Across America” initiative includes:

- **A Best Practices Working Group** that will develop guidelines to help carriers target consumers who are eligible for participation in the Lifeline and Link-up programs. The working group is comprised of representatives from the FCC and

NARUC, and will include input from state and local government entities, industry, tribes and consumer groups;

- **Joint Outreach Materials** in English and Spanish that will be distributed and available to targeted audiences, including: consumer-friendly fact sheets, an eligibility checklist, as well as other publications and marketing materials. The FCC and NARUC will be working with state and local government entities, industry, tribes and consumer groups to distribute information in order to maximize outreach efforts to eligible consumers;
- **FCC and NARUC Web Site Enhancements** that will highlight the Lifeline and Link-up programs and provide information in a consumer-friendly and informative manner; and
- **Train-the-Trainer Program** to educate state and local government stakeholders about Lifeline and Link-up eligibility requirements and procedures. Such program may be web-based to maximize cost efficiencies. The FCC and NARUC will partner with relevant state and local government entities, industry, tribes and consumer groups to facilitate the training effort.