

## Federal Communications Commission

## § 54.403

upon consultation with the tribal governing body of those reservations, as locales appropriate for the extension of financial assistance and/or social services, on the basis of such general criteria as: Number of Indian people native to the reservation residing in the area; a written designation by the tribal governing body that members of their tribe and family members who are Indian residing in the area, are socially, culturally and economically affiliated with their tribe and reservation; geographical proximity of the area to the reservation, and administrative feasibility of providing an adequate level of services to the area.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (e): The Commission stayed implementation of paragraph (e) as applied to qualifying low-income consumers living "near reservations" on August 31, 2000 (15 FCC Rcd 17112).

(f) *Income*. "Income" is all income actually received by all members of the household. This includes salary before deductions for taxes, public assistance benefits, social security payments, pensions, unemployment compensation, veteran's benefits, inheritances, alimony, child support payments, worker's compensation benefits, gifts, lottery winnings, and the like. The only exceptions are student financial aid, military housing and cost-of-living allowances, irregular income from occasional small jobs such as baby-sitting or lawn mowing, and the like.

[62 FR 32952, June 17, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 2128, Jan. 13, 1998; 65 FR 47905, Aug. 4, 2000; 65 FR 58663, Oct. 2, 2000; 68 FR 41941, July 16, 2003; 69 FR 34600, June 22, 2004]

### § 54.401 Lifeline defined.

(a) As used in this subpart, *Lifeline* means a retail local service offering:

(1) That is available only to qualifying low-income consumers, and no qualifying consumer is permitted to receive more than one Lifeline subsidy concurrently.

(2) For which qualifying low-income consumers pay reduced charges as a result of application of the Lifeline support amount described in § 54.403; and

(3) That includes the services or functionalities enumerated in § 54.101 (a)(1) through (a)(9). The carriers shall offer toll limitation to all qualifying low-income consumers at the time such

consumers subscribe to Lifeline service. If the consumer elects to receive toll limitation, that service shall become part of that consumer's Lifeline service.

(b) [Reserved]

(c) Eligible telecommunications carriers may not collect a service deposit in order to initiate Lifeline service, if the qualifying low-income consumer voluntarily elects toll limitation service from the carrier, where available. If toll limitation services are unavailable, the carrier may charge a service deposit.

(d) The state commission shall file or require the eligible telecommunications carrier to file information with the Administrator demonstrating that the carrier's Lifeline plan meets the criteria set forth in this subpart and stating the number of qualifying low-income consumers and the amount of state assistance. Eligible telecommunications carriers not subject to state commission jurisdiction also shall make such a filing with the Administrator. Lifeline assistance shall be made available to qualifying low-income consumers as soon as the Administrator certifies that the carrier's Lifeline plan satisfies the criteria set out in this subpart.

(e) Consistent with § 52.33(a)(1)(i)(C), eligible telecommunications carriers may not charge Lifeline customers a monthly number-portability charge.

[62 FR 32948, June 17, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 2128, Jan. 13, 1998; 64 FR 60358, Nov. 5, 1999; 65 FR 47905, Aug. 4, 2000; 69 FR 34600, June 22, 2004; 76 FR 38046, June 29, 2011]

### § 54.403 Lifeline support amount.

(a) The Federal Lifeline support amount for all eligible telecommunications carriers shall equal:

(1) *Tier One*. The tariffed rate in effect for the primary residential End User Common Line charge of the incumbent local exchange carrier serving the area in which the qualifying low-income consumer receives service, as determined in accordance with § 69.104 or §§ 69.152(d)(1) and 69.152(q) of this chapter, whichever is applicable;

(2) *Tier Two*. Additional federal Lifeline support in the amount of \$1.75 per

month will be made available to the eligible telecommunications carrier providing Lifeline service to the qualifying low-income consumer, if that carrier certifies to the Administrator that it will pass through the full amount of Tier-Two support to its qualifying, low-income consumers and that it has received any non-federal regulatory approvals necessary to implement the required rate reduction.

(3) *Tier Three.* Additional federal Lifeline support in an amount equal to one-half the amount of any state-mandated Lifeline support or Lifeline support otherwise provided by the carrier, up to a maximum of \$1.75 per month in federal support, will be made available to the carrier providing Lifeline service to a qualifying low-income consumer if the carrier certifies to the Administrator that it will pass through the full amount of Tier-Three support to its qualifying low-income consumers and that it has received any non-federal regulatory approvals necessary to implement the required rate reduction.

(4) *Tier Four.* Additional federal Lifeline support of up to \$25 per month will be made available to an eligible telecommunications carrier providing Lifeline service to an eligible resident of Tribal lands, as defined in § 54.400(e), to the extent that:

(i) This amount does not bring the basic local residential rate (including any mileage, zonal, or other non-discretionary charges associated with basic residential service) below \$1 per month per qualifying low-income subscribers; and

(ii) The eligible telecommunications carrier certifies to the Administrator that it will pass through the full Tier-Four amount to qualifying eligible residents of Tribal lands and that it has received any non-federal regulatory approvals necessary to implement the required rate reduction.

(b) For a qualifying low-income consumer who is not an eligible resident of Tribal lands, as defined in § 54.400(e), the federal Lifeline support amount shall not exceed \$3.50 plus the tariffed rate in effect for the primary residential End User Common Line charge of the incumbent local exchange carrier serving the area in which the qualifying low-income consumer receives

service, as determined in accordance with § 69.104 or § 69.152(d) and (q) of this chapter, whichever is applicable. For an eligible resident of Tribal lands, the federal Lifeline support amount shall not exceed \$28.50 plus that same End User Common Line charge. Eligible telecommunications carriers that charge federal End User Common Line charges or equivalent federal charges shall apply Tier-One federal Lifeline support to waive the federal End-User Common Line charges for Lifeline consumers. Such carriers shall apply any additional federal support amount to a qualifying low-income consumer's intrastate rate, if the carrier has received the non-federal regulatory approvals necessary to implement the required rate reduction. Other eligible telecommunications carriers shall apply the Tier-One federal Lifeline support amount, plus any additional support amount, to reduce their lowest tariffed (or otherwise generally available) residential rate for the services enumerated in § 54.101(a)(1) through (a)(9), and charge Lifeline consumers the resulting amount.

(c) Lifeline support for providing toll limitation shall equal the eligible telecommunications carrier's incremental cost of providing either toll blocking or toll control, whichever is selected by the particular consumer.

[62 FR 32948, June 17, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 2128, Jan. 13, 1998; 65 FR 38689, June 21, 2000; 65 FR 47905, Aug. 4, 2000]

#### **§ 54.405 Carrier obligation to offer Lifeline.**

All eligible telecommunications carriers shall:

(a) Make available one Lifeline service, as defined in § 54.401, per qualifying low-income consumer that is not currently receiving Lifeline service from that or any other eligible telecommunications carrier, and

(b) Publicize the availability of Lifeline service in a manner reasonably designed to reach those likely to qualify for the service.

(c) Notify Lifeline subscribers of impending termination of Lifeline service if the carrier has a reasonable basis to believe that the subscriber no longer meets the Lifeline-qualifying criteria, as described in § 54.409. Notification of