



Idaho Public Utilities Commission

P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074

Brad Little, Governor

Eric Anderson, President

John R. Hammond, Jr., Commissioner

Edward Lodge, Commissioner

Case No. TRA-T-23-01
Order No. 36050
Contact: Adam Rush
Office: (208) 334-0339
E-mail: adam.rush@puc.idaho.gov

NEWS RELEASE: Commission approves company's application to receive designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier.

BOISE (Jan. 3, 2024) – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission on Tuesday approved an application from Terracom Inc., to receive limited designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier.

The approval will allow Terracom, doing business as Maxsip Tel, to be eligible to participate in and receive reimbursement from the Idaho Telephone Service Assistance Program. To qualify as an eligible telecommunications carrier, an application must satisfy requirements in federal and state law. The requirements include being a “common carrier” that offers services using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services.

State commissions determine if receiving an eligible telecommunications carrier designation is consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity. When evaluating the public interest element, the commission considers if the carrier contributes to state assistance programs such as the Idaho Telephone Service Assistance Program and the Idaho Telecommunications Relay Services program. The commission also considers if the designation is sought for only part of a rural telephone company's study area, which could leave some customers without service.

Other requirements to receive the designation include submission of a plan for proposed improvements or upgrades to a company's network, a demonstrated ability to continue offering service in emergencies without an external power source and a demonstrated willingness to satisfy consumer protection and service quality standards as well as financial and technical capabilities to provide Lifeline service. Lifeline is a Federal Communications Commission program that helps make communications services more affordable for low-income consumers. Lifeline gives subscribers a discount on qualifying monthly telephone service, broadband Internet, or bundled voice-broadband packages bought from participating wireline or wireless companies.

For companies seeking a Lifeline-only eligible telecommunications carrier designation, the Federal Communications Commission has waived the requirement to submit a network improvement and upgrade plan. These eligible telecommunications carriers do not receive funds to improve or extend their networks.

Terracom said it is seeking eligible telecommunications carrier designation in Idaho solely to provide Lifeline service to qualifying customers. It has asked for permission to be reimbursed from the Idaho Telephone Service Assistance Program, which the commission granted.

Additional information is available at puc.idaho.gov/case/Details/7080.