

TELEPHONE AND INTERNET ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

ITSAP and Lifeline

How can I get help paying for telephone service?

Financial assistance is available in Idaho to help qualified low-income individuals pay for telephone service. The *Idaho Telephone Service Assistance Program (ITSAP)* offers a \$2.50 discount on monthly telephone bills.

A separate program – the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) *Lifeline Program (Lifeline)* <https://www.fcc.gov/lifeline-consumers> offers:

- **Voice only support**
There is a monthly discount of \$5.25.
- **Broadband Lifeline Program**
There is a discount of \$9.25 for Broadband support, alone or bundled with Voice Support. *(In addition, see **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** below.)*

Who is eligible?

To qualify for both *ITSAP* and *Lifeline*, you must be a residential customer who is:

- Head of the household.
- Income eligible (income cannot exceed 135% of Federal Poverty Guidelines).

More information about ITSAP

The Idaho Telephone Assistance Program (ITSAP) provides a communication “lifeline” to those who might not otherwise be able to afford telephone service. It also enhances the value of service for everyone by increasing the number of people who can be reached by telephone. A small surcharge is applied to every Idaho telephone line each month to reimburse local telephone companies for the cost of state discounts under ITSAP. The surcharge is waived for customers receiving the ITSAP discount. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) reviews the surcharge annually and may increase or decrease the surcharge.

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- The name and telephone number on your application must match telephone company records.

How do I apply? (Note: Apply and get approval for federal assistance before state.)

CenturyLink:

- Contact CenturyLink’s Customer Service (1-888-833-9522 or 1-800-244-1111) and request a telephone assistance application be mailed to your home address.

OR

- Download the form from CenturyLink’s website.
<http://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html>
If you fill out a paper application, suggestion (for your records):
 - *Make a copy of the completed application*
 - *Request Delivery Confirmation from the US Postal Service (to show proof of receipt at the Company)*

ZiPLY Fiber:

- If you qualify for Federal Lifeline, after you receive approval on the Lifeline application, call ZiPLY Customer Service (1-866-699-4759) to inform them you are eligible. **If you do not call, then the discount will not be applied to your account.** There is no need to fill out an application.

Do I need to apply every year?

Yes. If you still meet the eligibility criteria and wish to continue receiving financial assistance, you must re-apply every year.

What if my income is more than 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines?

- If your income exceeds 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), you do not qualify for ITSAP. However, you may qualify for Lifeline if you are a participant in one of the following federal assistance programs:
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
 - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
 - National School Lunch Program’s Free Lunch Program
- If your income exceeds 135% FPG and you are a participant in one of these programs, you must apply for Lifeline directly with your local telephone company.

Is telephone assistance available for cellular (wireless) service?

Some cellular companies offer telephone assistance discounts. See the list of Eligible Telecommunication Carriers (<https://puc.idaho.gov/Fileroom/PublicFiles/telecom/ETC%20List.pdf>) on the Commission’s website. **If you already receive assistance for landline service, you cannot receive an additional discount for cellular service.** Some cellular companies only participate in the Federal Lifeline Program. Customers of those companies are not eligible to receive the ITSAP (state) discount and must apply directly to the cellular company for Lifeline (federal) assistance.

What if I live on tribal lands?

Under programs established by the Federal Communications Commission, a customer living on tribal lands may be eligible for additional federal financial assistance for local telephone service. Assistance is also available for the cost of setting up new telephone service. Contact your tribal office or your local Community Action Partnership office for more information.

AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP)

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a separate program from Lifeline for assistance for up to \$30 per eligible household (or up to \$75 per eligible household on Tribal lands).

Can I receive both the Affordable Connectivity Program and Lifeline benefits at the same time?

<https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program-consumer-faq>

Yes. You can also combine these benefits with other state and local benefits where available. They can be applied to the same qualifying service or separately to a Lifeline service and an Affordable Connectivity Program service with the same or different providers. For example, an eligible household could have a Lifeline-supported mobile phone service and a separate home internet service that is supported through the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Who is eligible?

You must be a residential customer who is:

- Head of the household.
- Income eligible (income cannot exceed 135% of Federal Poverty Guidelines).
- The name and telephone number on your application must match telephone company records.

How do I apply?

Go to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) webpage

<https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/how-to-apply/> for information on how to apply.

You can apply online or request an application.

If you fill out a paper application, suggestion (for your records):

- *Make a copy of the completed application*
- *Request Delivery Confirmation from the US Postal Service (to show proof of receipt at the Company)*

Do I need to apply every year?

Yes. If you still meet the eligibility criteria and wish to continue receiving financial assistance, you must re-apply every year.

You are eligible for the ACP if you (or someone in your household) participate in one of these programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) (including Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program (Section 8 Vouchers), Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)/202/811, Public Housing, and Affordable Housing Programs for American Indians, Alaska Natives or Native Hawaiians)

- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
- Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, including at U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Community Eligibility Provision schools
- Received a Federal Pell Grant in the current award year

You may need to show a card, letter, or official document as [proof that you participate](#) in one of these programs when you apply for the ACP.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is responsible for helping consumers apply for these programs, understand eligibility requirements, and keep their benefit current through an annual recertification process.

National Verifier

The National Verifier is a centralized system established by the FCC and operated by USAC that verifies applicants' eligibility and recertifies subscriber eligibility annually.

*On the National Verifier website, you can apply for Lifeline and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which help low-income households pay for internet service and internet connected devices. Visit AffordableConnectivity.gov to learn more about **ACP** and visit LifelineSupport.org to learn more about **Lifeline**.*

*If you have questions about your application, or would like an application mailed to you, **contact Customer Support at (800) 234-9473.***
