

Attached is a fact sheet on the Lifeline program.



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear Backs Telephone Program That Aids Low-income Kentuckians

Issues proclamation declaring Lifeline Awareness Week

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 9, 2011) – In order to focus attention on programs that assist low-income Kentuckians with the cost of telephone service, Governor Steve Beshear has proclaimed Sept. 12-18, 2011 as “Lifeline Awareness Week” in Kentucky.

“Telephone service is indeed a lifeline that no household should be without,” Gov. Beshear said. “It is a critical link to the outside world for the homebound, or for anyone dealing with an illness or other emergency.

“Two programs offer assistance to Kentuckians who might otherwise be unable to afford basic telephone service,” Gov. Beshear said. “The Lifeline program helps pay for monthly service, while the related Link-Up program pays a portion of the installation costs.”

More than 250,000 Kentucky households participate in the Lifeline program, a lower proportion of households than in many neighboring states, Kentucky Public Service

Commission (PSC) Chairman David Armstrong said. That indicates that there are many eligible Kentuckians who do not participate in the program, he said.

“The Lifeline and Link-Up programs offer eligible households an opportunity to reduce the monthly cost of essential utility services,” Armstrong said. “The PSC encourages anyone who thinks they may be eligible to apply through their local telephone provider.”

The Lifeline program provides a reduction in the monthly basic phone service charge for either landline or wireless service and also waives deposits and activation charges. Link-Up offers a one-time credit of up to \$30 for installation of telephone service.

“These are tough economic times that have left many Kentuckians struggling to pay their bills every month,” Gov. Beshear said. “Lifeline and Link-Up can ease that struggle by reducing the cost of obtaining and maintaining a vital service.”

Kentucky Lifeline Awareness Week is part of a national effort to build awareness of and participation in Lifeline and Link-Up.

It is being coordinated by the National Association of Utility Regulatory Commissioners (NARUC), in cooperation with the Federal Communications Commission, and the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates, The Kentucky PSC is a member of NARUC.

“Many eligible Kentuckians probably do not know that these programs are available,” Chairman Armstrong said. “We hope that increasing awareness will increase participation.”

Eligibility for Lifeline and Link-Up is established through participation in other programs such as Medicaid, Food Stamps or the National School Free Lunch Program.

Participants may not have an unpaid and overdue balance on their telephone bill or must have a current payment arrangement to pay any outstanding balance.

Lifeline and Link-Up are funded through a small charge on all telephone bills.

More information is available on the PSC Web site at <http://psc.ky.gov/agencies/psc/consumer/lifeline.pdf>

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LIFELINE/LINK-UP FACT SHEET

1. The Lifeline program was designed to preserve and promote telephone services to qualified low-income households. The program provides a monthly credit for local service.
2. The Link-Up program offers eligible individuals a reduction in the local telephone company's charges for starting telephone service. The program pays for half of the installation charge up to \$30.
3. Eligibility for the Lifeline program or the Link-Up program is determined by participation in one of the following:
 - Medicaid
 - Food Stamps
 - Federal Public Housing
 - Supplemental Security Income
 - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
 - National School Free Lunch Program

AND

- Payment of or valid payment arrangements for any outstanding balance for telephone services provided to anyone residing at the current address
4. Enrollment in Lifeline provides the following benefits:
 - Waiver of the federal subscriber line charge.
 - Reduction in monthly residence line charge.
 - Waiver of deposit for local service.
 - Waiver of charge to activate new service.
 - Free toll blocking service.
 5. Local telephone companies should be contacted for enrollment details. Proof of participation in a qualifying program is required.
 6. The Kentucky Public Service Commission has approved a small charge to be placed on all telephone customers' bills to help eligible low-income consumers maintain basic phone service.