

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

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|---------------------------------------|---|------------|
| ELECTRONIC APPLICATION OF I-WIRELESS, |) | CASE NO. |
| LLC FOR DESIGNATION AS AN ELIGIBLE |) | 2021-00197 |
| TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER |) | |

ORDER

On May 10, 2021, i-wireless, LLC (i-wireless) filed an application seeking to expand its eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) service area for the purpose of providing Lifeline service. i-wireless is a reseller of Commercial Mobile Radio Service, also known as a Mobile Virtual Network Operator. i-wireless was granted ETC designation by the Commission in Case No. 2010-00478 for the purpose of receiving both federal and Kentucky Lifeline support.¹ The Commission granted i-wireless ETC designation in the service area of BellSouth Telecommunications, LLC dba AT&T Kentucky, Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company and Windstream Kentucky East, LLC subject to the coverage area of its underlying carrier Sprint Spectrum L.P. (Sprint).

i-wireless is now using T-Mobile USA, Inc. (T-Mobile)² as its underlying carrier and seeks to expand its designated service area³ to statewide subject to the wireless network

¹ Case No. 2010-00478, *Petition of i-Wireless, LLC for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Kentucky for the Limited Purpose of Offering Lifeline Service to Qualified Households* (Ky. PSC Nov. 23, 2011).

² T-Mobile merged with Sprint Corporation and T-Mobile is the surviving entity.

³ 47 CFR § 54.207(a) defines service area as: “[A] geographic area established by a state commission for the purpose of determining universal service obligations and support mechanisms. A service area defines the overall area for which the carrier shall receive support from federal universal service support mechanisms.”

coverage of its underlying carrier. i-wireless attests in its application that it continues to meet the all federal requirements for Lifeline ETCs including those that have been promulgated since receiving its ETC designation.

47 USC § 214(e)(2) provides in pertinent part that:

A State commission shall upon its own motion or upon request designate a common carrier . . . as an eligible telecommunications carrier for a service area designated by the State commission. Upon request and consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity, the State commission may, in the case of an area served by a rural telephone company, and shall, in the case of all other areas, designate more than one common carrier as an eligible telecommunications carrier for a service area designated by the State commission, so long as each additional requesting carrier meets the requirements of paragraph (1). Before designating an additional eligible telecommunications carrier for an area served by a rural telephone company, the State commission shall find that the designation is in the public interest.

The Commission, prior to designating an ETC pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6), must determine whether such designation is in the public interest, the same consideration is given for expanding the service area of an ETC. In determining the public interest, the Commission historically has considered the benefits of increased consumer choice and the unique advantages and disadvantages of the petitioner's service offering.⁴

i-wireless has provided the Commission with the information required for amending its service area in which it is designated as an ETC, namely that, to the extent it did not before, will provide service statewide, and which will necessarily entail that it will provide service in the territories of some rural carriers. Such expanded coverage will increase consumer choice and increase competitive pressure on existing ETC. Accordingly, the

⁴ See, e.g., Case No. 2013-00136, *Application of Air Voice Wireless, LLC For Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth Of Kentucky* (Ky. PSC Sept. 4, 2013).

Commission finds that the public interest supports such expansion of i-wireless' service area, subject to i-wireless' continued compliance with the representations and commitments made in its application and the Federal Communication Commission's rules.

Having reviewed the evidence of record and having been otherwise sufficiently advised, the Commission HEREBY ORDERS that:

1. i-wireless's designation as a Lifeline ETC is amended to permit i-wireless to offer Lifeline service statewide subject to its underlying wireless carrier's coverage.
2. The case is now closed and removed from the Commission's docket.

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By the Commission



ATTEST:



Executive Director

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