

What is Lifeline?

Lifeline is a federal/state program that permits eligible low income customers to receive discounted telephone service. This program is available only to those who meet certain eligibility requirements.

How much can I save?

A consumer may save between \$15.00 - \$18.00 on their basic service monthly wireline bill or obtain a free wireless phone with up to 250 minutes.

How do I know if I am eligible?

Eligibility is based on household income (effective June 1, 2012) and participation in one or more of the programs listed below. A consumer may be eligible based on either household income OR program participation; it is not necessary that a consumer meet multiple eligibility criteria. However, **ONLY ONE LIFELINE SERVICE DISCOUNT IS AVAILABLE TO EACH ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD. FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS MORE THAN ONE PERSON IN EACH HOUSEHOLD FROM SUBSCRIBING TO A SEPARATE LIFELINE SERVICE.**



Household income: A household is eligible for Lifeline if the total household income is at or below certain levels, depending on the size of the household. For 2012, the guidelines are as follows:

Persons in family household	Annual Income
1.....	\$15,080
2.....	\$20,426
3.....	\$25,772
4.....	\$31,118
5.....	\$36,464
6.....	\$41,810
7.....	\$47,156
8.....	\$52,502

**For families with more than 8 persons, add \$5,346 for each additional person.

Program Participation: An individual or household is eligible for Lifeline if the individual or one member of the household participates in one of the following programs:

- Emergency Aid to Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC)
- Fuel Assistance (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program or LIHEAP)
- MassHealth or Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- National School Lunch Program (free meals program only)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

What proof of eligibility do I need to provide when I apply?

Eligibility is verified by the telephone carriers that offer Lifeline service. You must provide proof of your eligibility by submitting acceptable documentation as listed below. You will also be required to sign a form, under penalty of perjury, that certifies that you meet the income-based OR program-based eligibility criteria, among other things.

Acceptable documentation of income eligibility includes the prior year's state or federal tax return, current income statements from an employer or paycheck stub, a social Security statement of benefits, an Unemployment or Workmen's Compensation.

Acceptable documentation of program eligibility includes the current or prior year's statement of benefits from a qualifying state or federal assistance program.

At the discretion of the Lifeline service provider, you may be able to present documentation of eligibility by multiple methods, including in-person and by mail. A carrier will not retain copies of this documentation after it verifies your eligibility.

Are there any restrictions?

There is a limit of one Lifeline discount per household, where "household" is defined as any individual or group of individuals who are living together at the same address as one economic unit.

How do I apply?

Contact a Massachusetts Lifeline service Provider to obtain an application or for more information about Lifeline.

The providers that offer Lifeline service in Massachusetts are:

Wireline:

- **Verizon**
www.verizon.com/lifeline
or call 1-800-837-4966

- **RCN**
www.rcn.com
or call 1-800-746-4726

- **Granby Telephone Company (OTT Communications)**
www.gogtt.net
or call 1-413-467-9911

- **Richmond Telephone**
www.richmondtelephone.com
or call 1-413-698-2255

- **Taconic Telephone** (also known as Fairpoint Communications)
www.fairpoint.com
or call 1-800-822-6422

Wireless:

- **Safelink Wireless** (also known as TracFone Wireless)
www.safelinkwireless.com
or call 1-800-SAFELINK (800-723-3546)

- **Assurance Wireless** (also known as Virgin Mobile)
www.assurancewireless.com
or call 1-877-378-6102

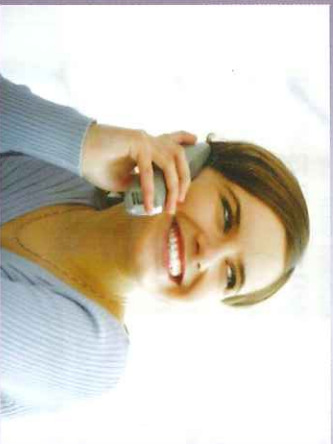
- **InReach** (also known as T-Mobile)
www.t-mobile.com
or call 1-800-937-8997

For a list of additional wireless providers please contact us at 1-800-392-6066 or www.mass.gov/dtc

How do I continue to receive the Lifeline discount?

Eligibility will be reviewed annually by your Lifeline provider. Your provider will contact you, and you must respond within 30 days certifying under penalty of perjury that you still qualify for Lifeline service. In addition, if at any time while subscribing to Lifeline you become ineligible for Lifeline service, you are REQUIRED under Federal Law to notify your Lifeline service provider within 30 days.

If your Lifeline provider determines that you are no longer eligible for Lifeline, it will notify you via letter and your Lifeline service will be terminated 30 days after the date of such letter, unless you provide proof of eligibility. Alternatively, if you do not respond to an annual re-certification request from your Lifeline provider, your service will be terminated 30 days after the date of such request. If you are not eligible for Lifeline service, contact a service provider to inquire about the most beneficial rate plan for you.



Other useful information

- Being a Lifeline customer does not protect you from being disconnected if you fail to pay your telephone bill.
- The Lifeline discount cannot be applied to an outstanding balance owed to your telephone company.
- You may choose either a wireline or wireless for Lifeline service.

Contact the Consumer Division of the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable for complaints regarding Lifeline service at 1-800-392-6066, fax 617-988-8288 or email: consumer.complaints@state.ma.us.



**Department of
Telecommunications and Cable**
Better businesses, Smarter consumers.

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