

**State-by-State Lifeline and Link Up Initiatives**

Each state has a Lifeline and Link Up program; however, the discount customers receive varies by state and sometimes local telephone company as do the methods states use to promote the programs to eligible individuals. Some states, such as New York<sup>1</sup> and California, have been more successful than others in promoting Lifeline and Link Up and getting people signed up for the program. In August 2000, the Telecommunications Industries Analysis Project (TIAP) surveyed all 50 states to find out how the Lifeline and Link Up programs were being administered and advertised. The results show that states that make more of an effort to promote Lifeline and Link Up have a greater number of people participating in the programs proportional to the number of people living below the Federal poverty guidelines.

What follows is an analysis based on the TIAP report and other sources giving a state-by-state listing of Lifeline and Link Up promotional efforts going on across the country, along with the ratio of people participating in the Lifeline program compared to the number of people living under the federal poverty guidelines.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on New York State's Lifeline work, go to <http://www.civilrightsforum.org/cra/llandluinfopacket.html#story>

<b>State-by-State Lifeline and Link Up Initiatives</b>	<b>Lifeline:Poverty*</b>
<b>Alabama</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require phone companies to advertise availability of Lifeline and Link Up programs twice a year in newspaper</li> <li>• Require phone companies to put information in phone books</li> </ul>	1.00 to 35.93
<b>Alaska</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One local company went house to house to sign up people</li> </ul>	1.00 to 11.27
<b>Arizona</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended eligibility qualifications to include seniors and extended disabilities and low-income requirements</li> </ul>	1.00 to 26.18
<b>Arkansas</b>	1.00 to 42.31
<b>California</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 programs to increase penetration, one specifically targets support to low-income households.</li> <li>• Self Verification</li> <li>• Free access to Lifeline information</li> <li>• Has Lifeline marketing board</li> </ul>	1.00 to 1.48
<b>Colorado</b>	1.00 to 14.63
<b>Connecticut**</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility standards were expanded to include the following programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Child Care Certificate</li> <li>○ CONNPACE</li> <li>○ Personal Care Assistance Program</li> <li>○ Refugee Program</li> <li>○ Rental Assistance Program (RAP)</li> <li>○ Transitional Child Care (TCC)</li> <li>○ State Supplement to the Aged, Blind, or Disabled (AABD)</li> <li>○ State Appropriated Fuel Assistance (SAFA)</li> <li>○ State Administered General Assistance Program (SAGA)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.00 to 3.83
<b>Delaware</b>	1.00 to 130.36
<b>Florida</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working on including funds in next years budget for an automatic enrollment system</li> <li>• Florida PSC entered into an Interagency Agreement with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the Florida Department of Children and Families and the Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security to collectively promote low-income programs and get more eligible individuals enrolled in Lifeline and Link Up</li> <li>• Do Not Disconnect Policy for non payment of long distance.</li> </ul>	1.00 to 14.34

\* Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1999 poverty data and Federal Communications Commission

\*\* Source: <http://www.lifelinesupport.org>

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<p>but toll service can be blocked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once someone is no longer eligible for Lifeline, local telephone company has to provide service at 70% of the regular rate.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Georgia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link Up customers who sign up with BellSouth will receive 100% free telephone installation</li> </ul>	1.00 to 13.47
<p><b>Hawaii**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility standard: You must be a residential customer, with a combined annual household income of \$10,000 or less. If you are over age 60 or handicapped, you may be eligible for an additional credit beyond the credit available for standard Lifeline customers (ranges from \$ 1.60 - \$1.85)</li> </ul>	1.00 to 10.48
<p><b>Idaho</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility standards expanded to include Emergency Work Program, Aid to Aged Blind and Disabled</li> <li>Lifeline eligibility increased to 133% of the federal poverty guidelines</li> </ul>	1.00 to 11.84
<p><b>Illinois</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will mail enrollment information on Lifeline and Link Up services to Medicaid recipients</li> <li>Local telephone companies will conduct a survey to find out which households don't have telephone service and why</li> <li>Working with LIHEAP organizations to simultaneously enroll eligible participants for both LIHEAP and Lifeline/Link Up</li> </ul>	1.00 to 24.44
<p><b>Indiana</b></p>	1.00 to 20.73
<p><b>Iowa</b></p>	1.00 to 34.56
<p><b>Kansas**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility standards expanded to include Food Distribution Program</li> </ul>	1.00 to 56.88
<p><b>Kentucky</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about Lifeline and Link Up is included in bill inserts</li> <li>Local service can be cut off for non-payment of long distance if the local carrier provides billing services. But if customer selects toll blocking, the local service will not be disconnected</li> </ul>	1.00 to 19.91
<p><b>Louisiana</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local telephone companies are required to promote Lifeline and Link Up</li> </ul>	1.00 to 78.87

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<b>Maine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent flyers and personalized letters to eligible customers</li> <li>• Worked with social service agencies to promote Lifeline and Link Up</li> </ul>	1.00 to 2.00
<b>Maryland**</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a customer receives benefits from any of the programs outlined in article 88A, Sections 44A through 53 of the Maryland Code, they are eligible.</li> </ul>	1.00 to 94.72
<b>Massachusetts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone company sales representatives receive a bonus for signing up Lifeline customers</li> </ul>	1.00 to 4.31
<b>Michigan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) MPSC can revoke the license of telecommunications providers who don't offer service to all customers in the geographic area of its license within 2 years;</li> <li>b) Prohibits mandatory minimum monthly or flat-rate charges for toll calls;</li> <li>c) MPSC may establish an intrastate universal service fund to subsidize customers of "supported telecommunications services"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.00 to 7.38
<b>Minnesota</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses age and disability to determine eligibility in addition to income.</li> </ul>	1.00 to 6.32
<b>Mississippi</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-certification: Once a year after enrollment, subscribership will be verified from state department data</li> <li>• Each county welfare office has brochures about Lifeline and Link Up</li> <li>• Phone companies send out information on telephone bill</li> </ul>	1.00 to 33.21
<b>Missouri</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southwestern Bell expanded eligibility to include household income at or below guidelines defined in Missouri State statues</li> <li>• Sprint expanded eligibility to include total household gross income at or below 150% of the Federally established poverty levels set forth for the number of persons in applicant's household.</li> <li>• Verizon expanded eligibility to include total household income at or below 110% of the Federal poverty level guidelines, per Missouri Statute 660.105</li> </ul>	1.00 to 59.11
<b>Montana</b>	1.00 to 14.63

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<b>State-by-State Lifeline and Link Up Initiatives</b>	<b>Lifeline:Poverty</b>
<b>Nebraska</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sprint expanded eligibility to include total household gross income not exceeding 150% of the Federally established poverty levels set forth for the number of persons in applicant's household.</li> </ul>	1.00 to 15.99
<b>Nevada</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nevada Bell expanded eligibility to include household income at or below Federal poverty guidelines</li> <li>• Sprint expanded eligibility to include total household gross income does not exceed 150% of the Federally established poverty levels set forth for the number of persons in applicant's household</li> <li>• Verizon expanded eligibility to include household income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty guidelines</li> </ul>	1.00 to 20.47
<b>New Hampshire</b>	1.00 to 18.44
<b>New Jersey</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded eligibility to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Total Family Income Measurements: at or below the US Census Bureau Poverty Level Guidelines</li> <li>○ State Run Programs: Lifeline Utility Credit/Tenants Lifeline Assistance, Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled, General Assistance, Work First New Jersey</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.00 to 98.07
<b>New Mexico</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One small local company provides monthly discount of \$12.99 (New Mexico Exchange Carrier Group)</li> </ul>	1.00 to 11.30
<b>New York</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automatic enrollment with computer match between the Department of Social services and largest phone company's database</li> </ul>	1.00 to 3.96
<b>North Carolina</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formed Ad Hoc committee to determine how to promote Lifeline and Link Up</li> <li>• Printed 200,000 brochures. Over 100,000 have been distributed to various organizations across the state that work with low-income families</li> <li>• Local telephone companies will include a bill message about Lifeline and Link Up</li> <li>• Do Not Disconnect Policy for non-payment of long distance bill</li> <li>• Phone companies are given tax breaks for the amount of</li> </ul>	1.00 to 22.89

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<p>money they are required to kick in for Lifeline and Link Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSC sent notices to everyone in North Carolina who was eligible</li> <li>• If the connection fee is above \$60 even with the Link Up discount, the customer has a year to pay off the charge interest free</li> </ul>	
<p><b>North Dakota</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach program to Native American reservations</li> <li>• Human services dept. works with local phone company to promote Lifeline and Link Up</li> <li>• Do Not Disconnect Policy- Started to prevent Native Americans from losing telephone service and has been expanded statewide</li> </ul>	1.00 to 7.06
<p><b>Ohio**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southwestern Bell expanded eligibility to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ohio Works First <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disability Assistance</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.00 to 14.08
<p><b>Oklahoma**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded eligibility to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Medical Assistance-Sooner Care</li> <li>○ Oklahoma Sales Tax Relief</li> <li>○ Vocational Rehabilitation (full assistance)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.00 to 172.43
<p><b>Oregon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach program for town halls and group meetings</li> <li>• Customers who have their general assistance benefits terminated also have Lifeline benefits terminated. However, customers can request a hearing on termination of Lifeline</li> </ul>	1.00 to 14.76
<p><b>Pennsylvania</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifeline eligibility increased to 150% of the federal poverty guidelines</li> </ul>	1.00 to 27.87
<p><b>Puerto Rico</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puerto Rico Telecommunications Regulatory Board started conducting lectures in every town hall in May 2000 and plans to distribute 500,000 pamphlets to inform customers of Lifeline and Link Up.</li> </ul>	1.00 to 194.10****
<p><b>Rhode Island</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion- Target community centers, public schools, churches, job and health fairs, community festivals, senior citizen events and neighborhood commission meetings</li> <li>• Advertise in community newspapers</li> <li>• Do Not Disconnect Policy- Lifeline customers can stay on</li> </ul>	1.00 to 2.10

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\*\*\* Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990 data

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network as long as they pay for their local service each month	
<b>South Carolina</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributes Lifeline and Link Up information at state fairs</li> </ul>	1.00 to 21.10
<b>South Dakota</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self certification</li> <li>• Largest phone company sends letter to every new customer about the Lifeline program</li> </ul>	1.00 to 4.74
<b>Tennessee</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend eligibility so recipients with income 125% of federal poverty guidelines qualify</li> <li>• Requires no deposit for Lifeline</li> <li>• Uses Department of Human Services database to determine who's still eligible</li> <li>• Do Not Disconnect policy</li> <li>• Provides all information on Lifeline and Link Up in Spanish and other languages</li> <li>• Running Public Service Announcements on radio and television</li> <li>• Plans to establish a Manager of Consumer Outreach position that would concentrate only on providing consumer information.</li> <li>• Mail information on Lifeline and Link Up to identified low-income households. Also plans to send brochures about its do not disconnect policy to all residential customers</li> <li>• Will invite eligible companies that it does not regulate to inform their customers about Lifeline and Link Up</li> <li>• Department of Human Services committed to proactively providing information on Lifeline and Link Up to eligible subscribers</li> <li>• Toll free hotline to support Public Service Announcements and poster campaign</li> <li>• Created 4 color posters in English and Spanish to be posted in areas where eligible people would go: Health care facilities, legal facilities, churches, charities, and Human Services offices. Posters have hotline numbers on them.</li> <li>• The Program Manager conducts 3 or 4 seminars on Lifeline and Link Up per month. The seminars are conducted at nursing homes and brochures are distributed</li> <li>• Brochures passed out at public affairs events</li> </ul>	1.00 to 21.78
<b>Texas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do Not Disconnect policy- When a customer's bill is past due, the local company must offer them a payment schedule.</li> </ul>	1.00 to 12.72

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifeline eligibility set at 125% of the federal poverty level.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Utah</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded eligibility to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refugee Assistance</li> <li>○ Medical Assistance</li> <li>○ Total Income (Income is at or below 133% of the poverty level)</li> <li>○ Emergency Work Program</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.00 to 6.34
<p><b>Vermont</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires local telephone companies to send all customers annual notices on how to apply for Lifeline</li> <li>• Whenever eligible customers enroll in general assistance programs, they are asked if they want Lifeline</li> </ul>	1.00 to 2.04
<p><b>Virginia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do Not Disconnect policy</li> </ul>	1.00 to 24.30
<p><b>Washington</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local telephone company representative calls social service agency to determine which households are eligible</li> <li>• Lifeline and Link Up application process takes approximately 3 minutes</li> </ul>	1.00 to 8.72
<p><b>Washington, D.C.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion- Target community centers, public schools, churches, job and health fairs, community festivals, senior citizen events and neighborhood commission meetings</li> <li>• Advertise in community newspapers</li> <li>• Requires monthly reports on outreach and newspaper advertising and quarterly reports on the number of Lifeline subscribers from the local company</li> </ul>	1.00 to 7.27
<p><b>West Virginia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded eligibility to include Total household income below the level established for SSI eligibility (to determine your eligibility under these criteria, contact your local Social Security office.)</li> <li>• Link-Up will pay 100% off of charges for activation of phone service</li> </ul>	1.00 to 49.77
<p><b>Wisconsin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homestead Tax Credit includes low-income families and individuals that don't receive any federal or state assistance and applies to those with no taxable income</li> <li>• Works with Department of Revenue and the Department of Workforce Development to mail information to eligible subscribers</li> </ul>	1.00 to 7.77

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a customer orders service, local co. includes Lifeline in the choices and automatically perform verification</li> <li>• Do Not Disconnect Policy- Keeps residential customers at the highest level of monthly services that they can afford and avoid disconnection.</li> <li>• Implementing programs that allow community groups to market Lifeline and Link Up</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Wyoming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission working with Department of Family Services and local telephone companies to make it easier for eligible customers to subscribe to Lifeline and Link Up</li> </ul>	1.00 to 41.88