



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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November 27, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: WC Docket No. 11-42 – Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization;
WC Docket No. 03-109 – Lifeline and Link Up;
CC Docket No. 96-45 – Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service
EX PARTE LETTER**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) wishes to correct the record regarding certain representations made recently by TracFone Wireless (TracFone) to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding the processes in place in Washington for determining Lifeline eligibility and the participation rates of Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs) in Washington in those processes.

In a September 13, 2013 ex parte letter to the FCC, TracFone incorrectly reported that 81% of ETCs in Washington are not utilizing a state database to verify an applicant's eligibility for Lifeline.¹ TracFone's 81% calculation was based upon TracFone's inaccurate representation that only six of the 32 ETCs in Washington use a state database to verify an applicant's eligibility for Lifeline.²

Further, in a September 19, 2013 ex parte letter to the FCC, TracFone stated that "[t]he information regarding the number of ETCs in various states who do not utilize state databases to verify Lifeline eligibility was obtained from state public service commissions and from state departments which manage the subject databases."³

¹ See TracFone Wireless, Inc., Notice of Ex Parte Presentation, WC Docket No. 11-42, WC Docket No 03-109 and CC Docket No. 96-45 (Sept. 13, 2013).

² *Id.*

³ See TracFone Wireless, Inc., Notice of Ex Parte Presentation, WC Docket No. 11-42, WC Docket No 03-109 and CC Docket No. 96-45 (Sept. 19, 2013).

October 14, 2013

Contrary to the representations of TracFone, 29 of the 36 ETCs in Washington are using a state database to verify the eligibility status of Lifeline applicants. Of those, 5 of the 7 prepaid Lifeline-only ETCs⁴ in Washington are obligated, as a condition of their ETC designation, to verify a Lifeline applicant's eligibility for the Lifeline program using the online query database provided by the Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).⁵ Additionally, all landline ETCs in Washington (24 in total) are required to participate in the Washington Telephone Assistance Program in addition to the federal Lifeline program. DSHS currently verifies ILECs' Lifeline applicants using the Department's database.

TracFone may have erred in its representations regarding the number of Washington ETCs verifying Lifeline eligibility using a state database because no one from TracFone contacted UTC staff to ensure the accuracy of the information provided to the FCC.

Sincerely,



Steven V. King

Executive Director and Secretary

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

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⁴ Of the two prepaid Lifeline-ETCs that do not use Washington state database, one ETC was recently designated an ETC by the UTC and is in the process of obtaining access to the database and the other plans to seek clarification on this requirement.

⁵ DSHS's online query database enables ETCs to verify applicants who seek Lifeline enrollment based on their participation in temporary assistance for needy families, food assistance (supplemental nutrition assistance program), state supplemental security income, medical assistance (including medicare cost sharing programs), state family assistance, pregnant women assistance, aged, blind, or disabled cash assistance, refugee assistance, community options program entry system and Chore services. In addition, the database only indicates whether the applicant is currently receiving Lifeline benefits from a landline company.