

Most of us take for granted that we can call 911 in a crisis or reach family, friends, and employers when necessary. Monthly phone service, while a necessity in today's world, is still off the hook for many low-income consumers. A federal program, Lifeline Assistance was launched in Florida in 1995 to help low-income residents stay connected. With oversight by the PSC, Lifeline currently has more than 900,000 Florida residents benefitting from the program.

National Lifeline Awareness Week, September 8-14, 2014, offers an opportunity to highlight how the PSC, the telecommunications companies, the Office of Public Counsel, and the PSC's many outreach partners year-round help promote the program that benefits Floridians needing a lifeline to families, jobs, education, physicians, and communities.

The Lifeline program offers at least a \$9.25 credit per month on local monthly phone bills for those who qualify. Applying is easy.

CONSUMERS CAN CALL THEIR LOCAL TELEPHONE COMPANY, OR ACCESS THE PSC'S WEBSITE, TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM AND MAIL OR FAX IT TO THE COMPANY THEY CHOOSE.

To participate in the program, Florida consumers must have an income that is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in a qualifying state, federal, or Tribal assistance program.

Federal rules prohibit consumers from receiving more than one Lifeline discount per household. An eligible consumer may receive a discount on either a wireline or wireless service, but not both, and violators may be subject to criminal and/or civil penalties.

The Lifeline program is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). USAC is responsible for data collection and maintenance, support calculation, and disbursement for the low-income program. USAC's website <http://www.usac.org/default.aspx> provides information regarding program administration, as well as program requirements.

FACES OF LIFELINE



LIFELINE ASSISTANCE



FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CONSUMERS NEED LIFELINE...

"TO FIND A JOB."

Chairman Art Graham



"TO CONNECT TO FAMILIES AND FRIENDS."

Commissioner Lisa Polak Edgar



"TO GET HELP IN EMERGENCIES."

Commissioner Ronald A. Brisé



"TO LOWER THEIR MONTHLY PHONE BILL."

Commissioner Eduardo E. Balbis



"TO CONTACT CHILDREN'S TEACHERS."

Commissioner Julie I. Brown



For more information or an application

CLICK HERE