

Link-Up and Lifeline Action Plan
Status Report
August 7, 2006

2006

Timeline

Implementation

April

Link-Up and Lifeline Workshop

April

Commissioners' Monthly Columns on Utility Topics

- Completed and distributed Commissioner Carter's April 2006 Monthly Consumer Bulletin on the topic of Link-Up and Lifeline. The bulletin was distributed to 642 churches, newspapers, and area community action agencies designated by Commissioner Carter.

April - Aug

Lifeline Training

- Conducted four Lifeline training sessions for PSC staff on April 26 and 27, attended by 142 staff members. Several staff subsequently volunteered to provide educational materials to their churches or community organizations.
- Provided Lifeline presentation and exhibit at the Florida Association for Community Action's 26th Annual Training Conference in Orlando on May 11.
- Completed a CD version of the PowerPoint Lifeline training presentation that includes the audio voice-over so that agency and organization staff who are unable to attend a live training presentation may still receive the same information in an easy to use format.
- Provided Lifeline presentation at the Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc.'s Annual Conference in Tampa on June 14.
- Provided Lifeline presentation at the Florida Voters League, Inc.'s 48th Annual Convention in Ocala on June 24. Commissioner Carter was also a featured speaker at the Convention.
- Scheduled to provide a Lifeline Exhibit at the Florida Conference on Aging in Tampa on August 14 and 15.

April – Sept Back-to-School Lifeline Project

- Partnered with the Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs), Office of Public Counsel (OPC), and Linking Solutions to develop the 2006-2007 Back-to-School Lifeline Project.
- Completed development of a new joint Lifeline application that represents all 10 ILECs and allows customers to self-certify that they participate in an eligible program. The new application includes the State Seal to help increase consumer confidence in the programs.
- Completed development of a new Lifeline Back-to-School Brochure which includes information and Lifeline applications in both English and Spanish within one brochure.
- Completed development of a similar Lifeline Back-to-School Brochure in Haitian Creole as required by the Dade County School System. The brochure includes the new Lifeline application showing the State Seal.
- ILECs will continue distributing the brochures to the targeted counties through early August.
- Completed development of a PSC news release to coincide with the school start dates in each of the targeted counties. The first news release was issued on July 28. Additional news releases are anticipated for August 4 and 11.

April – Dec New State Agency Lifeline Projects

- Continued working with representatives of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to provide Lifeline educational materials to eligible clients who are assisted through the ACCESS Florida Partner organizations. Effective June 19, the DCF implemented a Lifeline link on its ACCESS Florida Web page that will assist DCF clients with obtaining Lifeline information and applications from the PSC's Web site.
- Continued working with Front Porch Florida on a joint project to promote awareness and participation in Lifeline. Completed development of a joint brochure including the Front Porch Florida logo. Participated in a Front Porch Florida Training Meeting in Tallahassee on June 28.
- Began working with the Department of Revenue's Child Support Enforcement Program to enlist their assistance in providing Lifeline educational materials to program clients.

- Began working with the following agencies and organizations to request implementation of new or updating of existing Lifeline Web links to make Lifeline information and applications more accessible to eligible consumers who seek assistance through the various agency Web sites: Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI), Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Florida Department of Education (DOE), Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DEA), Florida Department of Revenue (DOR), OPC, Social Security Administration (SSA), Workforce Florida, Inc., and the AARP.
- Began new initiative with the DCA's Division of Housing and Community Development to provide updated Lifeline brochures and applications to all of the local agencies that administer the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Previously these agencies have assisted with providing brochures to eligible consumers. The DCA has agreed to request that the local agencies also begin assisting consumers with completing a Lifeline application when they apply for LIHEAP.

April - Dec

Lifeline Rulemaking

- Drafted Rule 25-4.0665, Lifeline Service, to implement the procedural requirements of Florida eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) with respect to Lifeline service as set forth in Section 364.10, Florida Statutes. The proposed rule:
 - Requires ETCs to provide Lifeline customers a 60 day written notice prior to the termination of Lifeline service.
 - Provides that if a customer's Lifeline service is terminated, and the customer subsequently presents proof of Lifeline eligibility, the ETC shall reinstate the customer's Lifeline service as soon as practicable, but no later than 60 days following receipt of proof of eligibility.
 - A workshop to discuss the proposed rule was held on June 21, 2006.
 - Staff is developing a recommendation for Commission consideration.
- Initiation of new rulemaking proceeding to:
 - Codify Florida's Lifeline Program.
 - Clarify the Lifeline responsibilities of all Florida ETCs.
 - Establish procedures to expedite the enrollment process.

- Require the filing of quarterly reports on Lifeline participation.
- A workshop will be held to solicit input from affected persons and parties.

April - Dec Electronic Enrollment

- Met with DCF to discuss their participation in the development of a process that would provide eligible consumers the opportunity to be electronically enrolled in Lifeline once they are deemed eligible to receive services under the DCF.
- Discussed the electronic enrollment process with Florida ETCs to identify potential implementation issues along with solutions that could be employed to resolve those issues.

April - Dec Commissioner Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) in English and Spanish

- Continued working with radio stations to air Commissioner Arriaga’s and Commissioner Carter’s Lifeline radio PSAs. The PSAs have been airing on local stations across the state.
- Mailed follow-up survey to 84 participating radio stations on July 28 to request feedback regarding each stations’ use of the Lifeline PSAs and any response they received from consumers. The survey responses will be analyzed to determine if changes are needed that would increase the effectiveness of the PSAs.

April - Dec Commissioner Lifeline Educational Segments in English and Spanish

- Completed filming Lifeline Segments at WFSU featuring Commissioner Arriaga and Commissioner Carter. Completed review and editing process with WFSU. Awaiting delivery of final edited tapes from WFSU.
- Continued working with WFSU to find television stations to broadcast the Lifeline Segments.

May PSC On-Hold Message

- Implemented a new system whereby individuals who call the Commission and are placed on hold will hear a short PSA about Lifeline.

May

Educational Displays at Community Events

- Participated in four Senior Days Events in May as follows:
 - May 4: Miccosukee
 - May 11: Woodville
 - May 16: Fort Braden
 - May 23: Chaires
- Scheduled to provide a Lifeline Exhibit at the “Gadsden County Community Come Together Day” on September 9.

June

Commission Web Site Home Page Link with Online Application

- Began development of a process whereby customers can obtain information and complete an enrollment application via the Commission, OPC, DCF including its ACCESS Florida Web site, DOE, DCA, DEA, AHCA, AWI, DOR, AARP, and ETC Web sites.

June

Telephone Voice Prompt Information and Enrollment

- Began discussions for a system whereby a customer who calls an ETC or the PSC receives a recorded message on the Main Menu that informs them about the Link-Up and Lifeline programs and how to enroll.
- Currently the PSC’s Main Menu advises consumers to call their local telephone company for eligibility requirements. Options are being considered to update the recording to be more informative and advise consumers that a Lifeline application may be obtained on the PSC’s Web site or requested by mail.

July - Aug

Docket No. 040604-TL – Adoption of the National School Lunch Program and an income-based criterion at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines as eligibility criteria for the Lifeline and Link-Up programs.

- The Commission approved staff’s recommendation to expand the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) – Free Lunch and simplified certification enrollment process to all ETCs doing business in the State of Florida at the July 18, 2006, Commission Agenda. The 21-day protest period for the proposed agency action expires on August 28, 2006.

July - Aug

PSC Library Outreach Program

- Continued working on PSC’s annual Library Outreach Program, which includes distribution of Lifeline brochures and applications to 280 Florida public libraries and branches.

July - Oct

Lifeline Awareness Week

- Partnered with the ILECs, OPC, and Linking Solutions to develop the 2006 Lifeline Awareness Week to promote program awareness throughout the state. Participation from additional agencies and organizations will be requested.
- The PSC will request a Lifeline Awareness Week Proclamation from Governor Bush.
- Lifeline Awareness Week is tentatively scheduled for the week of October 16. Possible events include a kick-off ceremony in Tallahassee at the Capital Courtyard, followed by similar Lifeline promotional events in other cities during that week. PSC news releases would be issued prior to the planned events and media coverage of the events would be encouraged.

Planned

Interagency Agreement

- Revise the existing Interagency Agreement to clarify the role of partner agencies.

Planned

Lifeline Advisory Committee

- The PSC would establish a Lifeline Advisory Committee comprised of industry representatives, PSC staff, Office of Public Counsel staff, partner agencies, and other community-based partners to review and support Lifeline policies, implementation, and outreach efforts.