

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/TRIBAL LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2014**

Company: Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
(F/N/A SSTELECOM, Inc.)

Address: PO Box 920
312 4th St W
Clear Lake, SD 57226

Telephone number: 605-874-2181

Company contact: Jim Canaan

Study Area Code: 399013

Lifeline/Tribal Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities:

- X
_____ Advertise in media of general distribution.* (See attached advertisement(s).)
- X
_____ Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/ Tribal Link Up.* (See attached letter.)
- X
_____ Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information in directory.
- X
_____ Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information available on Company website. (www.companywebsiteaddress.com)
- X
_____ Company's information posted on USAC website.
- X
_____ Other (describe): Listed on PUC website

*Required

PUBLIC NOTICE

Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc. (ITC)/ Milbank offers voice telephony service to all consumers in its service area.

Single Party Residence Service	\$19.00/month
Single Party Business Service	\$19.00/month

This service provides subscribing customers with:

- Flat rated local exchange service free of per minute charges**
- Access to 911 emergency services**
- Toll blocking/Toll limitation**

Lifeline, a federal program that provides a monthly discount on telephone service, is available to qualified, low-income residents. Toll blocking at no charge and reduced deposits are also available. To qualify, a subscriber must participate in one of the following programs: Medicaid, Food Stamps, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), the National School Lunch (NSL) Free Lunch Program, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), or Federal Public Housing Assistance. Subscribers whose household income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines also qualify for Lifeline. Lifeline is available on one telephone line per household. Customers may not transfer their Lifeline discount to another person, even if the other person qualifies for Lifeline. Customers who qualify for Lifeline must submit proof of eligibility along with their applications.

Questions regarding any of the above services should be directed to ITC at 1-800-417-8667.

July 2014



Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
312 4th Street West, PO Box 920, Clear Lake, SD 57226

Lifeline and Toll Limitation Service support provide discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service. (**Note:** Telecommunications carriers cannot charge a Lifeline customer federal USF fees on the local service portion of their telephone bill.)

What type of discount is available?

Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive up to \$9.25 per month in discounts. Eligible residents of Indian reservations or tribal lands can receive up to an additional \$25.

Toll Limitation Service (TLS) support allows eligible consumers who wish to avoid incurring large long distance fees to choose toll blocking or toll control at no cost.

How do I know whether I am eligible?

Eligibility for Lifeline, Link Up, and TLS support *varies by state*. Individuals who reside in states that have their own discount programs qualify for federal Lifeline, Link Up, and TLS support if they meet the eligibility criteria established by their state. In states that do not provide state support, an individual is eligible if he or she participates in one of the following programs:

- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- Medicaid
- Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- National School Lunch Program's free lunch program

One Lifeline service per household.



2014

Dear Customer:

You currently participate in Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative's Lifeline assistance program. Federal Communications Commission guidelines require telephone companies like ours to annually verify a sample of Lifeline customers' continued eligibility.

Lifeline assistance is available to participants in one or more of the following programs: Medicaid; Food Stamps; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Federal Public Housing Assistance; Low Income Housing Energy Assistance; Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF); or the National School Lunch (NSL) free lunch program. Individuals whose household income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines are also eligible for Lifeline assistance. If you are still eligible for Lifeline assistance, please complete the enclosed application and provide supporting documentation (such as a copy of your Medicaid card) to ITC.

Documentation of income eligibility includes a customer's prior year's state or federal tax return, a current income statement from an employer or paycheck stub, a Social Security statement of benefits, or other such official documents. If your documentation does not cover an entire year, please provide three consecutive month's worth of the same type of document.

Please note: income is all income actually received by all members of the household. Income includes salary before deductions for taxes, public assistance benefits, social security payments, pensions, unemployment compensation, veteran's benefits, inheritances, alimony, child support payments, worker's compensation benefits, gifts and lottery winnings. The only exceptions are student financial aid, military housing and cost-of-living allowances and irregular income from occasional small jobs such as baby-sitting or lawn mowing. Only one lifeline service allowed per household.

If you qualify based on household income, please come to our office with the required documentation. Our offices are located at: 312 4th St. W in Clear Lake; 1022 Main Ave. S in Brookings; 107 2nd Ave. NW in Clark; 14 E. 7th Ave. in Webster and 401 S Main St in Milbank. All other applicants recertifying are welcome to drop the application and documentation off at one of our offices, or you may mail them back to us in the enclosed return envelope.

Please feel free to call me at 1-800-395-4656 with any questions you may have regarding the application or the Lifeline/Link Up programs.

Sincerely,

Julie Kasten
Customer Service Representative

Enclosures

General Information



FCC RULES FOR RECORDING TWO-WAY TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS

The FCC requires one of the following options to be used when a person wishes to record a telephone conversation:

- 1) Permission must be obtained from all parties involved before a conversation can be recorded.
- 2) "Beep tone" warning devices must be sounded at regular intervals during the recording of a conversation.
- 3) Individuals involved in the conversation being recorded must notify all parties that a conversation is being recorded either at the beginning of, or during, the conversation.

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554
202-418-0190
www.fcc.gov

anonymous or otherwise, if in a manner reasonably to be expected to frighten, abuse, torment, or harass another, or for calls that... interfere unreasonably with the use of the service by one or more other customers, or calls for...unlawful purpose. Upon violation of any of these conditions the telephone company can, by written notice, discontinue service forthwith. These tariff regulations are filed with this Commission pursuant to Section 203 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. 203, and are binding on the telephone company and customer alike. Users of the telephone service are also subject to the enforcement proceedings provided for in Sections 401 and 411 of the Communications Act. In addition to the loss of telephone service for violation of the tariffs, Section 223 of the Communications Act makes it a crime to use the telephone in

the District of Columbia or in interstate or foreign communications to make "repeated telephone calls, during which conversation ensues, solely to harass any person at the called number" or to knowingly permit "others to use his/her telephone" for such purpose. Penalties for violation of Section 223 are a fine up to \$500.00 or six months' imprisonment, or both, 47 U.S.C. 223.

The Commission is concerned that some users of telephone service may be unaware of their obligations to refrain from using the service for abusive or harassing calls. It is also concerned that other users may be willfully and repeatedly violating the provision of the tariffs and the applicable statutes, and that the telephone companies are not adequately enforcing their tariffs. Accordingly, the Commission is issuing this Public Notice in order that

the public may be informed of the requirements of law in this area and so that users may be alerted to their legal obligations in the use of the telephone and the penalties for failure to abide thereby.



Lifeline And Link-Up

Lifeline Service support provides discounts to eligible low income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service. Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service. A household is eligible for only one lifeline credit, which may be applied to landline or wireless service. Eligible consumers can receive up to \$9.25 per month in discounts. Eligible residents of tribal lands can receive up to an additional \$25 in Lifeline support.

Tribal Link-Up reduces the cost of initiating new telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive a 100% discount off of the one-time costs associated with initiating telephone service, up to a maximum of \$100.

Eligibility of Lifeline support varies by state. Individuals who reside in states that have their own discount programs qualify for federal Lifeline and Link-Up if they meet the eligibility criteria established by their state.

To be eligible for these programs the telephone service must be in the applicant's name. An individual is eligible if he or she participates in one of the following programs:

- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- Food Stamps
- National School Lunch Program's free lunch program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- In addition, a consumer may be eligible if his or her Temporary Assistance for Needy Families household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

If you fall into one of these examples, contact 800-417-8667.



Lifeline Assistance Application and Certification Form

(Please Print or Type)

Company Name _____ SPIN _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____

Residential Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
(Do not use a P.O. Box address.)

Is your residential address a permanent address? Yes _____ No _____

Billing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
(If different from residential address.)

Social Security Number (last four digits): _____ (If you are a member of a Tribal nation and do not have a social security number, you may provide your Tribal identification number.)

Date of Birth: _____

Telephone Number: _____ (if existing service)

Telephone number where you can be reached or receive messages: _____

Are you currently receiving Lifeline assistance through any other telephone provider? Yes _____ No _____

I am applying for: _____ Lifeline (monthly telephone service discount)
_____ Toll Limitation Service (free toll blocking or toll control)

I, one or more of my dependents, or my household currently participates in one or more of the following programs:
(Check all that apply.)

- _____ Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medical State Supplemental Assistance)
- _____ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps)
- _____ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- _____ Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- _____ Low-Income Energy Home Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- _____ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- _____ National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
- _____ OR My household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The number of individuals in my household is: _____.

If you do not participate in one or more of the programs listed above, you may qualify for Lifeline if your household income does not exceed 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (see table below).

2014 Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines

Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)	Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)
1	\$15,755	5	\$37,679
2	\$21,236	6	\$43,160
3	\$26,717	7	\$48,641
4	\$32,198	8	\$54,122

SIGN REVERSE SIDE

For each additional person after 8, add \$5,481 to the annual guideline.

Source: Federal Register, Vol. 79, No. 14, January 22, 2014, pp. 3593-3594

Important Information

You will be required to provide documentation of eligibility.

Lifeline is a federal government assistance benefit and willfully making false statements to obtain the benefit can result in fines, imprisonment, de-enrollment, or being barred from the program.

Only one Lifeline service is available per household. A household is defined, for the purposes of the Lifeline program, as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address as one economic unit. An "economic unit" consists of all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household. A household may include related and unrelated persons. A household is not permitted to receive Lifeline benefits from multiple providers. Violation of the one-per-household limitation constitutes a violation of the Federal Communications Commission's rules and will result in your de-enrollment from the program. Lifeline is a non-transferable benefit and you may not transfer your benefit to any other person.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that:

- (1) I meet the income-based or program-based eligibility criteria for receiving Lifeline, provided in 47 C.F.R. § 54.409. I have provided documentation of eligibility if required to do so;
- (2) I will notify the carrier within 30 days if, for any reason, I no longer satisfy the criteria for receiving Lifeline including, as relevant, if I no longer meet the income-based or program-based criteria for receiving Lifeline support, I am receiving more than one Lifeline benefit, or another member of my household is receiving a Lifeline benefit;
- (3) If I move to a new address, I will provide that new address to the telephone company within 30 days;
- (4) If I provided a temporary residential address to the telephone company, I will be required to verify my temporary residential address every 90 days;
- (5) My household will receive only one Lifeline service and, to the best of my knowledge, my household is not already receiving a Lifeline service;
- (6) I acknowledge that I may be required to re-certify my continued eligibility for Lifeline at any time, and my failure to re-certify as to my continued eligibility will result in de-enrollment and the termination of my Lifeline benefits pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(e)(4);
- (7) I acknowledge that providing false or fraudulent information to receive Lifeline benefits is punishable by law; and
- (8) The information contained in this application and certification form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- (9) I give ITC permission to release to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) or its agent any records required to confirm that my household only receives one Lifeline benefit. If USAC finds that my household receives more than one Lifeline benefit, USAC will notify the telephone companies, and I will have to select one service and I will be de-enrolled from the other.

Signature

Date

Provide the completed application and certification form to your phone company. Your telephone company will contact you for any additional information needed to prove eligibility.

For more information about Lifeline, see www.PUC.SD.gov/Lifeline

ITC - "I Truly Care"

By Kathy Weitala

Meet Stacey Amdahl! Stacey works in the Clear Lake Office as a Customer Service Representative. She has worked at ITC for the past eight years.

Stacey grew up in Summit, South Dakota, and is fortunate enough to have moved back there recently. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from SDSU in Brookings, SD.

When asked why she chose customer service, she replied, "I enjoy working with and helping people. Everyday I learn something new." Stacey worked more than 10 years in nursing prior to ITC and says that background is probably why she enjoys customer service so much.

Some of Stacey's duties include processing payments and toll. She also generates final notices and suspends service. Stacey answers the phone, along with the other customer service staff, and she says it is a good feeling to help a customer resolve a problem.

One thing Stacey would like the customers to know about ITC is that we are always working to improve services. She appreciates that ITC makes it a priority to offer the best products and customer service possible. Stacey also says, "Being part of Coop gives you ownership. Along with that ownership comes the responsibility to get involved." She encourages members to attend annual meetings and to be sure to vote for things such as their local director for the ITC Board. That person is your voice.

Stacey and her husband, Corey, have four sons. As she puts it, "There is always a lot of action!" Any spare time she might have is spent reading, cooking, baking, and spending time with her family. And there is always time to cheer on her favorite team, the Summit Eagles!

ITC is very fortunate to have dedicated employees like Stacey. She is a part of our front line and works hard to provide what is best for our customers!



Telecommunications Assistance Offered

Lifeline is a federal program that provides a monthly discount on telephone service to qualified low-income residents. Lifeline is designed to ensure that telephone service remains affordable to all residents.

The Lifeline assistance program provides a \$9.25 credit on a monthly telephone bill. You may qualify for Lifeline if your total household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines; or if you, your dependent, or your household receives one of the following:

- Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Medicaid
- National School Lunch free lunch program
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)



Lifeline is available on one telephone line per household. If you or someone in your household has Lifeline on a wireless phone, then you cannot get it on your home phone too. You may not transfer your Lifeline discount to another person, even if he or she qualifies for Lifeline. If you believe you qualify for Lifeline, stop by the ITC office and fill out an application form or call our office at 1.800.417.8667 for assistance. Please note that you must enroll in Lifeline service, and you must provide proof of eligibility before receiving support.

Qualifying residents of Tribal lands may receive additional discounts. To find out more about either of these programs, please contact ITC at 1.800.417.8667.

Cooperatively Speaking

By Holly Stormo,
Marketing Communications Specialist

Call Before you Dig

Smart digging means dialing 811 first! Don't take any chances. Calling 811 will get your underground utility lines marked for free! If you hit a utility line, it could harm someone or result in some fines.

There are many different lines buried on your property. Once they are located, there will be different colored flags stuck into the ground. What do the different colors mean? Red is for Electric lines. Yellow is for your Gas, Oil, or Steam. Orange marks your Communication/CATV lines; while Blue marks your Potable Water. Purple is for your Reclaimed Water/Irrigation and Green is for your Sewer. Pink, on the other hand, is for Temporary Survey Markings and White is Proposed Excavation. With all these colors, your property will look very colorful!

When you call 811, the SD One Call System notifies utility companies with buried lines in the area. The utility companies have 48 hours to mark their lines, so don't start digging before that. If the utility company does not respond, please call 811 again. Private lines need to be marked by a private locating firm and are your responsibility. For Minnesota, call 811 or 1.800.252.1166.



ITC University will be taking a break over the summer months. Watch the Bell Ringer this fall for new class topics, days, and times.