



Advocating for South Dakota's Rural Broadband Providers

January 2, 2026

SD Public Utilities Commission
Via Electronic Docket Filing Only

Dear Ms. Mohr,

Re: TC23-006 Violation of PUC Order

On June 3, 2025, GenMobile was granted ETC designation by the SD Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the purpose of offering lifeline services. At that meeting Commissioner Nelson stated that, "...in South Dakota we have zero tolerance" for fraud and abuse of program rules. Given that, SDTA believes it is important for the Commission to be aware that a violation of its Order occurred. The facts, as SDTA knows them, are as follows:

- On June 3, 2025, GenMobile was granted ETC designation by the Commission to offer Lifeline services in a limited area in South Dakota. Specifically, the Order limits GenMobile's service area to *"CenturyLink wire centers and shall not extend into any rural service area served by an SDTA member company."*
- Sometime thereafter, GenMobile set up a temporary distribution tent site within the service territory of an SDTA member company. GenMobile advertised "Free Phones," for the purpose of enrolling customers.
- On September 26, 2025, SDTA alerted PUC Staff Attorney Reiss and GenMobile's attorney of the violation of the PUC Order. On October 6, 2025, GenMobile confirmed the violation stating it stopped all advertising and distribution in the SDTA member service area.
- After receiving said confirmation, SDTA sought information to better quantify the scope of the violation. In addition, SDTA requested that the company "self-report" the violation to the Commission and USAC to avoid any unjust enrichment by GenMobile receiving Lifeline funds for improperly enrolled customers.
- GenMobile was not responsive. As a result, SDTA does not have any further information regarding the scope of the violation and assumes disclosure did not occur.

- GenMobile did, however, provide a copy of the notice it sent to impacted customers. All impacted customers were provided the following “notice:”

Unfortunately, you are outside of our authorized Lifeline service area. You have 30 days to transfer your Lifeline benefit to another provider, or you will be de-enrolled from the Lifeline program. If you'd like to keep your Gen Mobile service and number, you may purchase a prepaid plan at genmobile.com/plans. Call 611 for more info.

Customers were left in the unfortunate situation of having to “fix” the problem that GenMobile created. SDTA believes the Commission should be aware of the violation and the burden placed on impacted customers.

Sincerely,

Kara Semmler

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cc. Docket Service List