

**Docket Number:** TC23-034  
**Subject Matter:** First Data Request  
**Request to:** West River Cooperative Telephone Company (WRCTC or Company)  
**Request from:** South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Staff  
**Date of Request:** July 13, 2023  
**Responses Due:** July 27, 2023

1-1. This information is considered Confidential and is being filed under separate seal and included with this filing.

1-2. This information is considered Confidential and is being filed under separate seal and included with this filing.

1-3. Refer to the Lifeline/Link Up Advertising/Outreach Annual Report.

a. Provide a copy of the Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information in the Company directory.

Please see the West River PUC response 1-3 a.PDF file.

b. Provide a copy of the advertisements the Company made in media of general distribution.

Please see the West River PUC response 1-3 b.PDF file.

c. It appears the Company newsletters use old Lifeline language stating, "Lifeline provides a discount on monthly telephone and/or broadband services of \$9.25 per month". Provide an updated newsletter template that corrects this to include the language, "an eligible customer with broadband internet will receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month" and "eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month".

**Response:**

The updated Newsletter will read as:

**"How Lifeline Works**

Lifeline provides an eligible customer with broadband internet a discount of up to \$9.25 per month. Eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month. Subscribers may receive a Lifeline discount on either a wireline or a wireless service but may not receive a discount on both services at the same time. Lifeline also supports broadband and broadband-voice bundles. FCC rules prohibit more than one Lifeline service per household."

d. It appears the Company website uses old Lifeline language stating, "Lifeline is a federal program that provides eligible subscribers with a credit of \$9.25 each month on voice telephone service". Correct this to include the language, "an eligible customer with broadband internet will receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month" and "eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month".

**Response:**

The updated Website will read as:

“**Lifeline** provides an eligible customer with broadband internet a discount of up to \$9.25 per month. Eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month. The credit can be applied to only one telephone line per household. For the purposes of Lifeline, a household is an individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income or expenses. You may not receive Lifeline if you, or someone in your household, receives Lifeline on another home phone or a wireless phone. A Lifeline customer may not give his or her Lifeline discount to another person. Lifeline subscribers may also receive blocking of long distance calls on their telephone line at no charge.”

- e. It appears the customer letter uses old Lifeline language stating, “Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service or internet service” and that “eligible customers can receive \$9.25 per month”. Provide an updated letter that corrects this to include the language, “an eligible customer with broadband internet will receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month” and “eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month”.

**Response:**

The updated Engagement Letter will read as:

“**Lifeline** assistance provides an eligible customer with broadband internet a discount of up to \$9.25 per month. Eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month. Eligible residents of Tribal Lands can receive up to an additional \$25 in Lifeline support.”

June 2022  
NEWS RELEASE

WEST RIVER COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE COMPANY  
PO BOX 39  
BISON, SD 57620  
605-244-5213  
CONTACT: Sara Hauser

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Lifeline: Affordable Telephone Service for Income-Eligible Consumers**

### **Background**

Lifeline is a government benefit program that provides discounts on qualifying monthly telephone or broadband service for eligible low-income consumers to help ensure they have the opportunities and security that telephone service affords, including being able to connect to jobs, family, and 911 services. Lifeline is supported by the Federal Universal Service Fund (USF).

### **What Benefits are Available Under the Lifeline Program?**

Lifeline lowers the cost of basic monthly local qualifying telephone or broadband service (at least 25/3 Mbps). An eligible customer with broadband internet will receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month. Eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Lifeline service per household. That is, eligible low-income consumers may receive a Lifeline discount on either a voice or broadband service but may not receive a Lifeline discount on both services at the same time. Additionally, only ONE Lifeline service may be obtained per household. "Household" is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address as one economic unit. An "economic unit" is defined as "all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household." Lifeline applicants may demonstrate when initially enrolling in the program that any other Lifeline recipients residing at their residential address are part of a separate household.

Lifeline can also include Toll Limitation Service, which enables a telephone subscriber to limit the amount of long-distance calls that can be made from a telephone.

If a qualifying consumer resides on federally recognized Tribal lands, the consumer is also eligible for an additional \$25 Tribal benefit.

Tribal Link Up provides eligible low-income consumers living on Tribal lands with a one-time discount of up to \$100 on the initial installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary

residence. For service initiation charges of up to \$200, Tribal Lands Link Up also allows consumers to pay the remaining amount that they owe on a deferred schedule, interest-free for up to one year. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Link Up discount at a primary residence. Eligible consumers may be eligible for Link Up again only after moving to a new primary residence.

### **How Do I Qualify for Lifeline Discounts?**

The Lifeline program is available to eligible low-income consumers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands. You must be eligible to enroll. To participate in the program, consumers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the following assistance programs:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs

#### **TRIBAL-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS:**

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met)

When you qualify for any of the above programs, you must complete a Lifeline Application. For more information, log-on to <https://www.checklifeline.org/lifeline>, contact the Lifeline Support Center at 1-800-234-9473, call your local telephone company, state Public Utility Commission, or the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-CALL-FCC.

The  
\$1.00

Includes Tax  
Volume 41  
Number 2  
June 9, 2022

# Bison Courier

Official Newspaper for the City of Bison, Perkins County, and the Bison School District  
A Publication of Ravellette Publications, Inc.  
P.O. Box 429 • Bison, South Dakota 57620-0429  
Phone: (605) 244-7199 • FAX (605) 244-7198



## Trunk show highlights recent club meeting



Bert Lewton displayed a t-shirt quilt made for her husband at Town and Country CFEL's recent monthly meeting.

Bert Lewton was a guest presenter when Town and Country CFEL met on May 26.

She is an accomplished seamstress who started sewing on an old treadle sewing machine that her parents bought her at auction

when she was just nine years old. She has fitted and sewn pageant clothes for a rodeo queen, made prom formals and wedding dresses and even a fabric tractor seat!

Never did she think that she

would ever want to become a quilter but her other sewing projects had left her with quite a lot of fabric pieces. Quilting would be a good way to use them up and it became her hobby only ten years ago. In that time she has created many beautiful quilts and she brought several of them to show to the club members.

Included in her presentation was a quilt that she made for her husband Dennis from t-shirts that tell a story of his life interests. She had another with a bull frog theme. Their winter home in Arizona uses frogs in the décor. Among others that she shared were a kitten-themed and a floral-themed quilts. Her very favorite is a colorful cactus-themed quilt that she designed using scraps of fabric. She also showed several pieced table runners.

Bert's hobby is mostly for her own enjoyment. Some of her quilts have become gifts, some were donated to various fundraising efforts but most are stored in pillowcases in her home.

During a short business meeting, following the quilt show, the club nominated longtime member Teddi Carlson for the coveted Spirit of CFEL award. That nomination has been sent to the state CFEL chairwoman. A winner will be announced at the annual statewide CFEL convention in Watertown in September.

Also being recognized during that same convention will be Town and Country members Joyce Waddell and Beth Hulm, both with 50 years of membership in the organization.

The June meeting of this club will be their annual picnic in Lions Park on June 23, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

## Lifeline: affordable Telephone Service for Income-Eligible Consumers

### Background

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### What Benefits are Available Under the Lifeline Program?

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If a qualifying consumer resides on federally recognized Tribal lands, the consumer is also eligible for an additional \$25 Tribal benefit.

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tial installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary residence. For service initiation charges of up to \$200, Tribal Lands Link Up also allows consumers to pay the remaining amount that they owe on a deferred schedule, interest-free for up to one year. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Link Up discount at a primary residence. Eligible consumers may be eligible for Link Up again only after moving to a new primary residence.

### How Do I Qualify for Lifeline Discounts?

The Lifeline program is available to eligible low-income consumers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands. You must be eligible to enroll. To participate in the program, consumers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the following assistance programs:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs
- TRIBAL-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS:
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
  - Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
  - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
  - Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met)

When you qualify for any of the above programs, you must complete a Lifeline Application. For more information, log-on to <https://www.checklifeline.org/lifeline>, contact the Lifeline Support Center at 1-800-234-9473, call your local telephone company, state Public Utility Commission, or the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-CALL-FCC.

## Still time to apply for Century Farm Recognition at SD State Fair

There is still time to submit your application for your farm or ranch to be honored at the Century Farm celebration at the South Dakota State Fair in Huron on Thursday, Sept. 1, 2022.

South Dakota Farm Bureau (SDFB) and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) are

again partnering to recognize South Dakota farms and ranches that have been in the same family for 100 years and more.

Recognition will be given to farms and ranches that have been in the same family for 100, 125 and 150 years. Century Farm and Ranch program application forms are available online at [sdfbf.org](http://sdfbf.org) and by clicking on "Get

Involved" and "Century Farms" or by calling SDFB at 605.353.8052.

The application deadline is Monday, August 1, 2022.

For more information and an application please visit the South Dakota

Farm Bureau website at [www.sdfbf.org](http://www.sdfbf.org) or call 605-353-8052.

# Lifeline

## Receive up to \$9.25 off your phone or Internet service

Lifeline is a federal program that helps lower the monthly cost of your phone or Internet service.\*

### INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

You qualify for a discount if:

- You participate in any **ONE** of these government benefit programs:
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Medicaid
  - Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
  - Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

— OR —

- Your income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines

### HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY

A household is a group of people that share income and expenses.

- You are only allowed to get **one** Lifeline discount per household.
- If you share housing, complete the **Household Worksheet**.
- The worksheet is available on our website, **LifelineSupport.org**. You can also ask your Lifeline service provider.

### THREE WAYS TO APPLY



**APPLY ONLINE** Find the online application at **CheckLifeline.org**.

OR



**MAIL YOUR APPLICATION** Print an application from **LifelineSupport.org**. Fill out and mail it with proof of eligibility to:

Lifeline Support Center  
P.O. Box 7081  
London, KY 40742

OR



**CONTACT A PHONE OR INTERNET COMPANY** Find a company that provides Lifeline at **LifelineSupport.org**. Click *Companies Near Me*.

If you live in **CA (CaliforniaLifeline.com)**, **OR (Lifeline.Oregon.gov)**, or **TX (TexasLifeline.org)**, visit the website for your state to find out how to apply.

### HOW TO SHOW YOU ARE ELIGIBLE

You may need to show proof that you qualify for Lifeline, such as:

- **A copy of your SNAP or program letter OR**
- **A copy of your pay stub or tax return** to prove your income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

\*If you live on Tribal Lands, you may receive an additional discount toward your service.

If you have a disability and need assistance with your application, contact the Lifeline Support Center.



Universal Service  
Administrative Co.

### LIFELINE SUPPORT CENTER

(800) 234-9473 | 9 AM-9 PM ET | 7 DAYS PER WEEK  
[LifelineSupport@usac.org](mailto:LifelineSupport@usac.org) | [www.LifelineSupport.org](http://www.LifelineSupport.org)

Lifeline is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program to help make communications services more affordable for eligible consumers. The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) administers the Lifeline program. USAC is responsible for helping you apply for the program, understand eligibility requirements, and keep your benefit current through an annual recertification process.

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