

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/TRIBAL LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2024**

Company: Midstate Communications, Inc.

Address: 120 E. 1st Street
PO Box 48
Kimball, SD 57355

Telephone number: (605) 778-6221

Company contact: Kathy Taylor

Study Area Code: 391670

Lifeline/Tribal Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities:

- Advertise in media of general distribution.* (See attached advertisement(s).)
- Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/Tribal Link Up within 1st 30 days of service.* (See attached letter.)
- Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information in directory.
- Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information available on Company website. <https://www.midstatesd.net>
- Company's information posted on USAC website.
- Other (describe): Annual letter was mailed to all customers on 8/17/2023 (documents attached)

New customers are sent a welcome packet within the first 30 days which includes a Lifeline letter (document attached) and a welcome email (if they also receive broadband) which includes link to lifeline information. (document attached)

*Required

June 26, 2024

Ms. Patricia Van Gerpen, Executive Director
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
State Capitol Building
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

Re: Midstate Communications, Inc. Lifeline Linkup
Advertising Outreach Annual Report
Our File No. 2003.01

FROM THE DESK OF
RYAN J. TAYLOR

CUTLER LAW FIRM, LLP
140 N Phillips Avenue
4th Floor
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
(605) 335-4950 main
(605) 335-4989 direct
(605) 335-4961 fax

Dear Ms. Van Gerpen:

As indicated on Midstate Communications, Inc.'s Lifeline/Tribal Linkup Advertising/Outreach Annual Report for the calendar year 2023, Midstate Communications Inc. did not advertise its Lifeline/Tribal Linkup Advertising/Outreach program in a media publication of general distribution during calendar year 2023. This omission was due to an employee's mistaken belief that publication in a newspaper of general distribution was no longer required. All other required notices and communications to the customers were delivered in accordance with the Commission's requirements during calendar year 2023.

Midstate Communications, Inc. has published the required advertisement in a newspaper of general distribution in calendar year 2024. A specimen copy of that advertisement is attached to this letter for your reference. Additional instructions and steps have been taken to ensure that this omission is not repeated in the future.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me at your convenience at (605) 335-4950.

Sincerely,

CUTLER LAW FIRM, LLP



Ryan J. Taylor
For the Firm

RJT/kmh

cc: Chad Mutziger
Kathy Taylor

Affordable Services made available with Lifeline Service through Midstate Communications

Midstate Communications provides basic and enhanced telecommunications services within its service area. Basic services are offered at the following rates:

Single Party Residence Service	\$21.95/month
Single Party Business Service	\$27.95/month*
Single Party Business Service	\$30.00/month*

*Single Party Business Service Monthly fee is determined by availability and location

Local residence and business service includes:

- Voice grade access to the public telephone network
- Minutes of use for local service provided at no additional charge
- Access to 911 emergency services
- Toll limitation for qualifying low-income consumers

Lifeline Assistance Programs are available for qualifying subscribers. These programs provide a monthly service discount on voice and now on bundled broadband services. Toll blocking at no charge and reduced deposits are also available with the Lifeline Program.

To qualify for Lifeline, subscribers must either have a household income that is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or the subscriber, one or more of the subscriber's dependents, or the subscriber's household must receive benefits from one of the following assistance programs:

- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Income-based eligibility

- The Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit

A subscriber who lives on Tribal lands and is an eligible resident of Tribal lands is eligible for Tribal Lifeline service if the subscriber, one or more of the subscriber's dependents, or the subscriber's household participates in any of the above-listed qualifying assistance programs or one of the following Tribal-specific federal assistance programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance; Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met); or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Tribal subscribers may also qualify if the household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Midstate Communication's voice and bundled broadband services are Lifeline-supported services. Only eligible consumers may enroll in the Lifeline program. Lifeline applicants must present documentation demonstrating eligibility either through participation in one of the qualifying federal assistance programs or through income-based means. Lifeline recipients are required to recertify their eligibility every year. The Lifeline program is limited to one benefit per household, consisting of either wireline or wireless service. A household is defined, for purposes of the Lifeline program, as an individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline is a government benefit program, and consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the program.

The basic services described above are offered to all consumers in Midstate's service area. If you have any questions regarding telecommunications services, please call Midstate's office at (605) 778-6221.



PO Box 48
Kimball, SD 57355
www.midstatesd.net

Universal Service Charge Notice

Universal Service (USC) Surcharges cover the costs associated with Midstate Communications contributions to the universal service fund. Effective with the start of 2024, there will be an increase in this charge of 34.4%.

Midstate
COMMUNICATIONS

PO Box 48
Kimball, SD 57355
605-778-6221

ADVERTISING
WORKS ...
Standard
Publishing, Inc.

(605) 249-2166

info@
auroracountynews.net
or
advertising@
midstatesd.net

August 2023

The Messenger



120 E. FIRST/PO BOX 48, KIMBALL, SD 57355-0048
605.778.6221 WWW.MIDSTATESD.NET

CALENDAR

August 5

Disconnect of all accounts with a 30 day balance.

August 20

Bills due by 12:00 PM
Overdue notices mailed out

August 31

September bills are mailed out and due September 20th.

October 5

71st Midstate Communications Annual Meeting

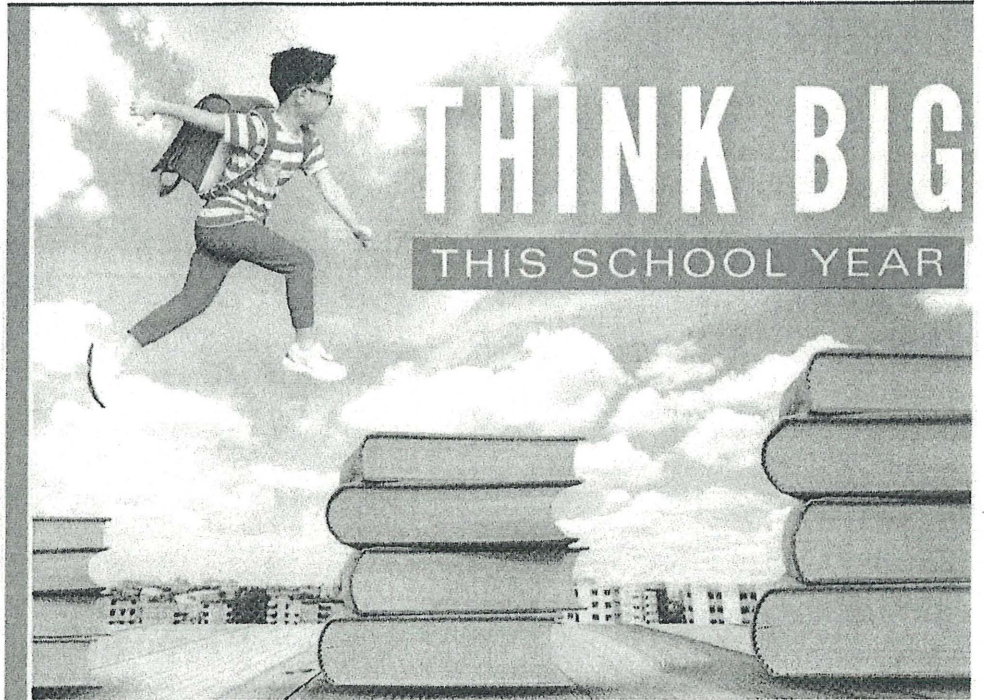
One More Round Of Plowing

It may be hard to believe but our summer days are starting to wind down. Andrew London, our Construction Coordinator wants to remind everyone that if you wish to have Midstate's fiber-optic line plowed to your construction project, give our office a call so we can have the proper paperwork and order processed ahead of time.



Know what's below.
811 before you dig.

We never know what mother nature has in store for us in the fall. Our last plowing date for the summer 2023 season is scheduled for the end of September.



As your growing child prepares for a new school year, think beyond shopping for a bigger backpack or a bigger pair of shoes. You may also need to upgrade to bigger speeds for your home's internet connection — to better handle the bigger demands of more online homework (not to mention more streaming when the homework's done).

Midstate Communications offers A+ internet plans with speeds up to 1 Gbps, and they all include responsive customer service and support by our local team.

GET BIGGER
INTERNET SPEEDS
CALL 605-778-6221



Financial Assistance Available

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Single Party Business Service \$27.95/month*

Single Party Business Service \$30.00/month*

*Single Party Business Service Monthly fee is determined by availability and location

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- Access to 911 emergency services
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To qualify for Lifeline, subscribers must either have a household income that is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or the subscriber, one or more of the subscriber's dependents, or the subscriber's household must receive benefits from one of the following assistance programs:

- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Income-based eligibility
- The Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit

A subscriber who lives on Tribal lands and is an eligible resident of Tribal lands is eligible for Tribal Lifeline service if the subscriber, one or more of the subscriber's dependents, or the subscriber's household participates in any of the above-listed qualifying assistance programs or one of the following Tribal-specific federal assistance programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance; Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met); or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Tribal subscribers may also qualify if the household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

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The basic services described above are offered to all consumers in Midstate's service area. If you have any questions regarding telecommunications services, please call Midstate's office at (605) 778-6221.

8/17/2023

ROBYNE BUNNELL
34483 249TH ST
CHAMBERLAIN, SD 57325-6326

Dear Customer:

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) requires that we notify our customers each year of the availability of the Lifeline Assistance program. To see if you qualify, go to GetInternet.gov and create an account. If you do not have access to internet, that's no problem. We have a computer set up in our Kimball and our Chamberlain offices for you to use. Stop in anytime during our business hours to see if you qualify.

USAC will contact you by email from LifelineSupport@usac.org or mail from the Lifeline Support Center to let you know if you qualify for Lifeline. Once you qualify for Lifeline Midstate can help you get the monthly discounts. Qualifying documents include a letter from: Supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP), Medicaid (Not Medicare), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA), Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension, Income based eligibility and Tribal eligibility programs.

If you have questions about Lifeline, the application form or your current services, please contact us at 778-6221 or 234-8000 for more information.

Sincerely,
MIDSTATE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.



Chad Mutziger
General Manager



Your best connection.

You are here: [Help](#) / [Assistance Programs](#)

Assistance Programs

Low Income Assistance Available to Telephone & Broadband Subscribers

Midstate Communications is authorized to offer Lifeline assistance to our customers. The Lifeline Universal Service Program is a government supported program available to qualified, low-income consumers and offers a discount for eligible telephone and bundled Internet service meeting the minimum standards. If you are an existing telephone service subscriber receiving the monthly Lifeline discount, you can continue to apply that discount to your home phone voice service. Effective December of 2019, Lifeline discount amount available for voice only services will begin to decrease. If, however, the Lifeline support provided is applied to a bundled service package which includes not only telephone voice service, but also Internet Service, you can avoid these discount decreases and continue receiving the maximum discount, currently \$9.25.



Your best connection.

Tribal Lifeline-linkup Assistance

Lifeline-linkup provides reduced monthly charges to telephone subscribers who qualify.

Items covered by the Lifeline portion of the program include basic one-party telephone service equipped with touch-tone and toll restriction (if requested). Not covered are second lines, leased equipment, long distance calls, 911 surcharge, the CIF or hearing impaired fund, taxes and optional calling features like Call Waiting and Caller ID.



Your best connection.



Sign Up Today!

Linkup

Provides reduced connection charges to telephone subscribers who qualify. The credit applies on the main home telephone line listed in the name of the eligible telephone subscriber.

The reduction is up to 100% of the cost associated up to \$100.

Link-Up also provides for deferred payment of connection charges without interest. It does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home and is limited to one time per home address per subscriber.



Your best connection.

Eligibility

Applicants must live on tribal lands and participate in at least one of the following public assistance programs to qualify:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps)
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- BIA General Assistance Programs
- Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Head Start (Meeting Income Test)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- Income-Based Criterion (income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines)
- Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension

** Participating members and members of the qualified member's household MUST:

1. Be in good standing as a member of the Midstate Communications Cooperative.



Your best connection.

"reservation." The term "reservation" means any federally recognized Indian Tribe's reservation, Pueblo, or Colony, and Indian Allotments.

[Click Here to Apply](#)

[Service Agreement](#) [Midstate DMCA Policy](#) [Network Management Policy](#)

[Relay South Dakota](#) [Privacy Policy](#)



120 E. First, P.O. Box 48, Kimball, SD 57355 • (605) 778-6221 • Fax: (605) 778-8080

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General Rules & Regulations

Taxes

Federal law requires a 3 percent excise tax on telephone rental and long distance charges. These taxes are billed to all telephone users not specifically exempt by law. All taxes collected are remitted to the proper federal and state agencies.

Allowance For Failure Of Service

The Telephone Companies do not guarantee uninterrupted working of its lines or equipment. In case service is interrupted otherwise than by the negligence or willful act of the subscriber, an adjustment will, upon application by a subscriber, be made in the amount of charges for such service, equipment, and facilities furnished as are rendered useless or inoperative. Any adjustment shall apply only to the period the interruption continues beyond 24 hours after notice of the interruption is received by the Telephone Companies. No other liability shall in any case attach to the Telephone Companies.

Billing & Payment For Service

If you desire assistance or explanation regarding your bill, please call the Business Office.

National Do Not Call Registry

The federal government created the National Do Not Call Registry to make it easier and more efficient for you to stop getting most telemarketing sales calls you don't want. You can register online at www.donotcall.gov if you have an active email address, or you can call toll-free, 1-888-382-1222 (TTY 1-866-290-4236), from the number you wish to register. Registration is free and your number will stay in the registry until it is disconnected, or until you delete it from the registry.

If you receive telemarketing calls after you have registered your telephone number and it has been in the registry for three months, you can file a complaint at www.donotcall.gov or by calling 1-888-382-1222 (TTY 1-866-290-4236). You will have to know the company's name or phone number to file a "do not call" complaint.

Annoying, Obscene, & Threatening Calls

If you get an annoying, obscene, or threatening call, hang up immediately. See page 21 for instructions on using Customer Originated Trace. Threatening calls should be reported immediately to the police. Obscene or harassing calls are prohibited by federal and state laws. A person who makes or permits such calls to be made over a telephone under his/her control may be fined or imprisoned, or both.

Telephone Assistance Programs

Low Income Assistance Available to Telephone & Broadband Subscribers

Midstate Communications is authorized to offer Lifeline assistance to our customers. The Lifeline Universal Service Program is a government supported program available to qualified, low-income consumers and offers a discount for eligible telephone and bundled Internet service meeting the minimum standards. If you are an existing telephone service subscriber receiving the monthly Lifeline discount, you can continue to apply that discount to your home phone voice service. Effective December of 2019, Lifeline discount amount available for voice only services will begin to decrease. If, however, the Lifeline support provided is applied to a bundled service package which includes not only telephone voice service, but also Internet Service you can avoid these discount decreases and continue receiving the maximum discount, currently \$9.25.

Moving your monthly Lifeline discount so that it also applies to your current bundled service which includes both voice telephone service and Internet service, will generally require that you agree to not transfer your Lifeline benefit to another provider for twelve months. There are certain exceptions to this requirement.

Tribal Lifeline/Link-Up

The Tribal Lifeline program provides a reduction in monthly charges to telephone or bundled Internet service to customers who live on tribal lands and are currently receiving benefits from a qualifying public assistance program. Eligible subscribers may be eligible for additional discounts up to \$25.

The Tribal Link-Up program provides a reduction in connection charges to telephone customers who live on tribal lands and are currently receiving benefits from a qualifying assistance program.

How to Qualify for a Lifeline Discount:

You must participate in at least one of the following programs to be eligible for a Lifeline Program discount:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Supplemental Security Income
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veteran's Pension and Survivors Benefit Program
- Income Below the Federal Poverty Guidelines

If residing on tribal lands the following eligibility criteria is also available to be utilized:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally-administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Food Distribution on Indian Reservations
- Head Start