

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

Company:

Address:

Telephone number:

Company contact:

Study Area Code:

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

Company's information posted on USAC website.

Other (describe):

\*Required

## **PUBLIC NOTICE - Cooperative**

Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc. (ITC) is designated as the “Eligible Telecommunications Carrier” for its service area for universal services purposes. The goal of universal service is to provide all citizens access to essential telecommunications services.

ITC provides the supported services of voice telephony service and broadband Internet service throughout its designated service area.

These supported services include:

- Voice grade access to the public switched network;
- Minutes of use for local service provided at no additional charge;
- Access to emergency services provided at no additional charge;
- Access to emergency services provided by local government to other public safety organizations, such as 911 and enhanced 911, to the extent the local government in ITC’s service area has implemented 911 to enhanced 911 systems; and
- Broadband Internet access service, which includes the capability to send data to and receive data from the Internet.

Voice telephony service is provided at rates that start at \$22.50 per month for residential customers and \$22.50 per month for business line customers. Broadband Internet access service is provided at rates that start at \$54.95 per month for residential customers and \$54.95 per month for business customers. ITC would be pleased to provide you with specific rates for voice and broadband for your area upon request.

ITC also offers qualified customers Lifeline service. Lifeline is a non-transferable federal benefit that makes monthly voice or broadband service more affordable. The program is limited to one discount per household. Eligible households may apply the monthly Lifeline discount to either broadband service (home or wireless) or voice service (home or wireless) but not both. The Lifeline voice service also includes toll blocking to qualifying customers without charge. The current discount provided under the ITC’s Lifeline service is \$5.25 for voice service or \$9.25 for broadband Internet service for each month that the customer qualifies.

A household is eligible for the Lifeline discount if the customer’s annual household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. You may also qualify for the Lifeline program if a customer, a dependent, or the customer’s household participates in one or more of the following programs:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income; Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
- Other Programs for Tribal Lands.

Questions regarding any of the above services should be directed to ITC at 1.800.417.8667.

July 2023

Public Notices also published –

Brookings Register – 7/7/2023

Watertown Public Opinion – 7/6/2023

Grant County Review – 7/5/2023



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

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- ... Access to emergency services provided at no additional charge;
- ... Access to emergency services provided by local government to other public safety organizations, such as 911 and enhanced 911, to the extent the local government in XYZ’s service area has implemented 911 to enhanced 911 systems; and
- ... Broadband Internet access service which includes the capability to send data to and receive data from the Internet, but excludes dial-up service.

Voice telephony service is provided at rates which start at \$22.50 per month for residential customers and \$22.50 per month for business line customers. Broadband Internet access service is provided at rates which start at \$39.95 per month for residential customers and \$39.95 per month for business customers. ITC would be pleased to provide you with specific rates for voice and broadband for your area upon request.

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- ... Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
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Questions regarding any of the above service should be directed to ITC at 1.800.417.8667.

PHONE NUMBERS  
ID FOR BUSINESS

VERTISING  
Phone numbers used in business advertisements will classify that number as a business telephone regardless of the location instrument. The use of the service than the location of the telephone, defines the classification as residence or business service.

CUSTOMER PROVIDED  
EQUIPMENT

ICC rules are designed to meet the pleasure of the customer and at the same time protect the telephone network from any possible hazards to customers and company employees.

The customer is responsible for the connection, installation, maintenance and repair of this equipment and should arrange for these services through the manufacturer, if needed.

A charge may be incurred if a Service Representative from your Telephone Company visits the premises of the customer and the service difficulty or trouble is not to have been caused by the customer's equipment or facilities. Equipment cannot be connected to telephone service.

OPERATOR SERVICES  
CENTER FOR TDD  
CUSTOMERS

Link provides operator assistance to customers who use Telecommunications for Deaf Customers (TDDs). Any time making calling card, collect, direct assistance, or other Operator assistance should call 1-800-855-1155. This service may also be used for after hour service. For all other services call 23-3131.

COMMISSION OF  
SAGES

The Commission of your Telephone Company provides various means of communication to telephone stations. Acceptance, employees, of written or verbal communications from the public, for transmission is forbidden.

LAWFUL  
WIRETAPPING MAY  
SUBJECT TO  
EXECUTION

Federal and state laws it is a crime for anyone to wiretap or otherwise intercept a telephone call, without the consent

of one or both parties actually participating in the call.

Properly authorized law enforcement officers can take part in interception without the consent of either party, when proceeding under court orders issued following the appropriate federal or state law. The penalty for illegal wiretapping can be imprisonment and/or a fine.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT

The telephone equipment, apparatus, and lines furnished shall be carefully used and cared for by the subscriber and shall be surrendered to your Telephone Company upon termination of the subscriber's right of use in as good condition as when received, ordinary wear and tear alone excepted.

All ordinary expense of maintenance and repair, unless otherwise specified in your Telephone tariff or in the contract for the use of the equipment, will be borne by the Telephone Company. In case of damage to, or destruction of, any of the said equipment, due to negligence of the subscriber, the subscriber shall pay either the cost of replacing the equipment or the cost of restoring the equipment to its original condition.

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 e-mail 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.

USE OF TELEPHONE  
FOR DEBT COLLECTION  
PURPOSES

The Federal Communications Commission has received information that interstate telephone service is being used for collection of claimed debts in ways that are or may be in violation of applicable tariffs of the telephone companies and criminal statutes. Practices alleged include calling

at odd hours of the day or night; repeated calls; calls to friends, neighbors, relatives, employers, and children; calls making a variety of threats; calls asserting falsely that credit ratings will be hurt; calls falsely stating that legal process is about to be served; calls demanding payments for amounts not owed; calls to places of employment; and calls misrepresenting the terms and conditions of existing or proposed contracts. Although many of these calls are placed on a local basis, there is increasing indication that such improper practices also involve use of interstate toll and Wide Area Telephone Service (WATS).

Tariffs of the telephone companies forbid use of the telephone...for a call or calls, anonymous or otherwise, 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.

AFFORDABLE  
CONNECTIVITY  
PROGRAM

The FCC has approved ITC as a provider for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which is an FCC program to help low-income households provide a discount of up to \$30 per month for broadband service (up to \$75 for those living on Tribal Lands). If your application is approved, you will need to contact ITC to receive the discount on your existing service. For more info or to see if you qualify, visit www.GetInternet.gov.

LIFELINE & LINK-UP

Lifeline is a federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone or Internet. Eligible customers will get up to \$9.25 toward broadband service (up to \$34.25 for those living on Tribal Lands), or up to \$5.25 toward phone service on their bill. You can use Lifeline either for phone or Internet, but not both. Only one Lifeline credit is available per household. Lifeline is the FCC's program to help make communications services more affordable for eligible customers.

Contact ITC for a Lifeline application or visit ITC's website at www.itc-web.com/services/residential/phone. You can also go directly to the Lifeline National Verifier at www.LifelineSupport.org. The following information will be needed to apply: First and last name, address, date of birth, and last four digits of your social security number (or Tribal ID number). You may also need to provide one of these items: photo ID, prior year's tax return, social security card, or another document to prove your identity.

To be eligible for the Lifeline benefit, either you or someone in your household must participate in one of the programs below. The other option is to prove your income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

- Medicaid.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA).
- Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Other Programs for Tribal Lands.

If your application is approved, you will need to contact ITC to receive the discount on your existing service.

If you believe you are eligible for Lifeline, call our office at 1.800.417.8667 for assistance.

HOW TO  
HANDLE  
ANNOYANCE  
CALLS

It is against the law to make an obscene, harassing, or threatening telephone call. When you receive such a call, follow these suggestions:

- 1) When answering your telephone, say hello twice. If no answer, HANG UP.
- 2) Do not give information until you are absolutely certain you know who is speaking.
- 3) Instruct children not to give any information to strangers over the phone.
- 4) Hang up when you hear something off-color or obscene.
- 5) Never reveal the fact that you are alone.
- 6) When annoyance calls persist, contact your local law enforcement agency.
- 7) Calls of a threatening nature should be reported to the local law enforcement agency immediately.

**For information about any telephone service, call your Business Office at 1-800-417-8667. A Customer Service Representative will be glad to help you.**



# Bell Ringer

Volume 58, No 2 June 2024  
Clear Lake, South Dakota 57226

## UNLOCKING EFFICIENCY:

### *ITC's Managed Services for Your Business Network*

Whether you run a large or small business, ITC has several solutions to assist with your network. In today's competitive landscape, every moment counts. With our Managed Services, you can redirect your valuable time and resources towards what matters most – growing your business. By entrusting the IT (Information Technology) work to ITC's experienced team of professionals, you can rest assured that you are in capable hands.

ITC offers a streamlined approach to managing your network, saving your staff time by providing the various managed services below. Our team dedicated to these products is trained, qualified, and certified to be your one call for support.

When you partner with ITC, you gain access to a team of dedicated professionals who are not only highly trained but are here to help every step of the way. Give us a call today at 1.800.417.8667 to review our Managed Services portfolio and see what solutions fit your business.

#### IT SUPPORT

- Collaboration with your broadband service provider
- ITC support is only a phone call away
- Increased efficiencies within your organization by utilizing ITC for your IT support

#### MANAGED FIREWALL

- ITC will keep your Managed Firewall software up-to-date
- Cloud Management features a dashboard and scheduled reports of security threats
- Securely connect your business systems
- Guest Wi-Fi available

#### MANAGED WI-FI

- Seamless handoff between access points
- Statistics track performance, number of clients, traffic, and current usage
- Track and control access of specific users and guests
- Remote technical support and troubleshooting

#### ENDPOINT & ANTI-VIRUS PROTECTION

- Integrates proven technology like malicious traffic detection with real-time threat intelligence
- Helps prevent, detect, and remediate threats with ease

#### ITC BACKUP

- Local Cloud option
- Backup options
- Monitor and manage backups via a web-based dashboard
- Secure and encrypted service
- Site redundancy

#### **If you are unsure how to answer these questions, contact ITC about Managed Services.**

- When was the last time you updated your firewall?
- Do you have up-to-date virus and malware protection?
- Has your company implemented PCI security standards?
- Do you have a solid plan for backing up your data?



## ITC BACKUP

*By Michael Martinell, Network Broadband Technician*

In today's digital landscape, where every byte of data holds immense value, ensuring its safety is essential for businesses of all sizes. Imagine being a small business owner, and your entire customer database is wiped out instantly due to a hardware failure. Not only are you facing financial losses, but your reputation also takes a hit. That is why we're excited to introduce you to ITC Backup, powered by Veeam.

ITC Backup helps ensure that your data is backed up securely, so even if something goes wrong, you can quickly recover without losing valuable information. To decrease risks, adopting a robust backup strategy is important. Among the many backup methods out there, the 3-2-1 backup strategy stands out as a tried-and-tested approach for safeguarding critical data.

This 3-2-1 backup strategy involves creating three copies of your data, storing them in two different locations on-site, and keeping one copy off-site. This redundancy ensures that even if one backup fails or becomes inaccessible, you still have multiple layers of protection in place.

The first copy of your data is the original data stored on your company's servers or computers. This copy is the primary source of information that your business relies on for day-to-day operations.

The second copy is stored on an on-site storage device, such as a USB hard drive or a dedicated backup server within your premises. This provides an additional layer of protection in case the original data is compromised due to hardware failure, accidental deletion, or other local issues. Having a backup copy on-site also helps to speed up data restorations.

The third copy is stored off-site, such as in the cloud infrastructure provided by ITC. This off-site location safeguards against disasters like fire, flood, or theft that could potentially destroy both the original data and the on-site backup. Keeping a copy of your data in the cloud ensures that even if your physical premises are affected, your business-critical information remains safe and accessible.

As you can see, the ITC Backup service offers a comprehensive solution to safeguard your business data using the proven 3-2-1 backup strategy. With multiple copies of your data stored securely on-site and off-site, you can mitigate the risks of data loss and ensure business continuity, no matter the circumstances. If you want to learn more about how our backup service can protect your

valuable information and provide peace of mind for your business, please call ITC at 1.800.417.8667.



## TAKE OUR SURVEY

*By Holly Stormo, Marketing Communications Specialist*

ITC recently emailed out a two-question survey to our customers. If you didn't receive it or don't have email, please scan the QR code to the right with your smartphone camera. Paper copies are also available at the ITC offices. By completing the survey you will be entered into a drawing for an Amazon Fire Stick.



## LIFELINE FUNDING AVAILABLE

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## CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

When you call 811, the South Dakota One Call System notifies utility companies with buried lines in the area. The utility companies will only mark lines that they own. Private lines must be located by the private locating firm and are your responsibility. (For MN, call 811 or 1.800.252.1166.)

