



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ICC Issues Resolution on FCC Lifeline Program to Help Low-Income Consumers Stay Connected Through COVID-19 Pandemic

Chicago, IL- As residents practice social distancing to stop the spread of the Coronavirus, access to affordable internet and cell phone service has proven to be essential. To help eligible low-income consumers financially impacted by the pandemic, the Illinois Commerce Commission recently approved a resolution to raise awareness about the federal Lifeline program which offers discounts on broadband and phone services.

“COVID-19 is having a dramatic effect on families, communities and the economy. To stay safe, many residents depend on internet service at home to telework or participate in remote learning. There’s also a large population who are now without a job and need technology to look for work. Staying connected has never been more important. Fortunately, there is help available,” said ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski.

Lifeline is the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Universal Service Fund program that provides eligible low-income customers with monthly discounts on Internet or phone service (up to \$9.25). Those eligible to receive the discount must already participate in certain federal benefits programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Federal Public Housing, or the Veterans Pension and Survivor’s Benefit; or have a household income at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. The Lifeline discount is limited to one benefit per household. Additionally, in Illinois, a program funded entirely through voluntary donations subsidizes the cost of phone installation for Lifeline participants. To learn more about this program, please visit <http://linkupillinois.org/to-enroll/>.

“So many residents suddenly found themselves out of work due to COVID-19 and may not be aware of programs such as Lifeline because they didn’t previously qualify. To make it even easier for those new to the program, the FCC has temporarily eased the documentation requirements for those seeking to apply for the Lifeline benefit based on their income,” said Commissioner Sadzi Martha Oliva.

For more information about the Lifeline program, including downloadable materials and fact sheets on how to apply in both English and Spanish, visit <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>. For a copy of the ICC Lifeline resolution click [here](#).

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About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, [click here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

