

IURC News Release

Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission

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Helping Connect Hoosiers with Basic Phone Service *IURC Promotes "Lifeline Awareness Week" from September 12 - 18*

INDIANAPOLIS – Staying connected to local resources and emergency services can improve and possibly save lives, which is why state and federal partners are promoting "Lifeline Awareness Week" from September 12 to September 18.

Because access to local emergency services and community resources is vital to our low-income and elderly residents, it's essential that Hoosiers who need it most are aware of this offering. Therefore, the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) is helping raise awareness and encouraging Hoosiers to "stay connected."

During "Lifeline Awareness Week," the IURC's Consumer Affairs Division will promote the Lifeline and Link-Up Assistance Programs, which offer discounts to those in need of basic local telephone service.

Under the federal Lifeline program, telephone customers, who participate in or are eligible for certain public assistance programs, are entitled to receive a basic telephone service discount up to \$10 per month. Link-Up, on the other hand, provides a 50 percent reduction in the telephone service installation charge, up to a maximum of \$30, for qualifying households that do not currently have telephone service.

Hoosiers may qualify if their household income is no more than 135 percent of the federal poverty income guidelines or if they participate in any of the following programs:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Food Stamps
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

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- National School Lunch Free Lunch Program (NSL)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Program (Tribal TANF, Head Start Subsidy, NSL)

For additional information about these programs, please visit the Federal Communications Commission's website at: <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/lifeline-and-link-affordable-telephone-service-income-eligible-consumers>.

For those in need of an application, please call the IURC's Consumer Affairs Division at 1-800-851-4268 or visit the Office of Utility Consumer Counselor's website at: <http://www.in.gov/oucc/2383.htm>. Upon completing the application, consumers should send all forms to their local telephone company.

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The Commission is a fact-finding body that hears evidence in cases filed before it and makes decisions based on the evidence presented in those cases. An advocate of neither the public nor the utilities, the IURC is required by state statute to make decisions that balance the interests of all parties to ensure the utilities provide adequate and reliable service at reasonable prices.