



2025 Annual Report

California LifeLine Program

Program Year January 2025 – December 2025



**California Public
Utilities Commission**

Mission

Providing affordable, accessible and reliable communications services to low-income households in California.

The California Public Utilities Commission's (Commission) California LifeLine Program (The California LifeLine) is committed to ensuring that all qualifying low-income residents have access to essential communications services. By providing discounts on basic landline and wireless phone services, the Program helps individuals stay connected to critical resources including employment, healthcare and education.

Vision

California LifeLine meets the evolving communications needs of Californians by giving discounts on plans and services available in the marketplace and streamlining access for all eligible populations.

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Executive Summary

The California LifeLine Program (California LifeLine) is a communications service subsidy program provided to qualified low-income households and qualified foster youth to help consumers lower the cost of their communications services, including voice and bundled voice and broadband services. Since its inception, the California LifeLine Program has undergone significant transformations to serve the current needs of its program participants, evolving from a traditional landline-based assistance model into a comprehensive communications safety net that reflects modern technological standards. Recognizing the shift in how subscribers connect, the program has expanded its scope to include wireless (mobile) services, fixed Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), bundled voice and broadband services.

Building on this progress, the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) recently launched a



California LifeLine Home Broadband Pilot to improve broadband access for low-income households. While California LifeLine has long provided affordable voice service to millions of eligible Californians, this pilot program directly addresses the broadband adoption gap and reflects the essential role broadband plays in daily life. This evolution ensures that participants are not limited to legacy technology but can instead access the high-speed data and mobile connectivity essential for modern life, including remote work, telehealth, civic engagement, and education.

California LifeLine Program enhancements have driven a significant increase in program participation, which as of December 31, 2025, reached approximately over 1.8 million participants including Foster Youth participants.

The following highlights represent the California LifeLine Program’s primary success throughout 2025:

- i. Adopted a **Home Broadband Pilot Program** in August 2025 in Commission Decision (D.) 25-08-050 as a voluntary, three-year, technology neutral program designed to provide affordable home broadband access to low-income Californians. The pilot program launched on January 26, 2026.
- ii. In October 2025, California Assembly Bill 1303 **established a process to expand California LifeLine eligibility**, for residents without a Social Security Number (SSN) with alternative identify documentation, enabling their enrollment in the California LifeLine.
- iii. **Modified and enhanced the California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Program and Pilot Program** in October 2025 to extend participant eligibility to include out of care foster youth and eliminate the one per household rule to provide continued support to foster youth.
- iv. **Initiated a new Rulemaking to assess California LifeLine Program enhancements including assessing a revised methodology for calculating the Specific Support Amount (SSA) to**

ensure alignment with Minimum Service Standards (MSS) requirements. The Rulemaking included a staff proposal aimed at maximizing customer benefits by updating the MSS, enhancing broadband service, and establishing affordable copayment wireless plans.

- v. **Enhanced the Automated Eligibility Verification System (AEVS)** which is used as the primary source for verifying Medi-Cal participation to include verification for renewals.
- vi. **Implemented new requirements for the Service Provider Intake Application (SPIA)** to combat a significant rise in unauthorized benefit transfers and fraud.

Through these initiatives the Commission will continue to enhance California LifeLine’s effectiveness and accessibility to better meet the evolving needs of its participants.

Key Achievements

A. Establishment of Home Broadband Pilot Program

In August 2025, through D.25-08-050 the Commission approved a three year, voluntary, technology-neutral Home Broadband Pilot through the California LifeLine program designed to provide affordable home broadband for low-income Californians. The Commission’s goal is to facilitate broadband usage and support vulnerable populations.

B. SSA/MSS Staff Proposal

In November 2025, the Commission opened a new Rulemaking R.25-11-005 which included a staff proposal assessing enhancements to the CA LifeLine Program including a revised methodology for calculating the SSA and MSS to better meet the evolving communication needs of low-income Californians. The proposed revisions in the proposal include:

- i. Update the Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) methodology used to calculate SSA and implement a “Set Price” SSA framework that aligns with the MSS.
- ii. Establish and update the MSS to maximize benefits for customers, including improved broadband service and working towards bridging the digital divide in the state.
- iii. Establish affordable copayment wireless plans where participants’ copayment is based upon the services offered in enhanced service tiers.
- iv. Update the program’s non-usage rules, to ensure the California LifeLine effectively supports active participants while maintaining program integrity and preventing waste.
- v. Reducing the California LifeLine wireless activation or connection reimbursement from two discounts per year, capped at \$39.00, to one discount per year, capped at \$15.00.

C. Enhancements to Foster Youth Pilot Program

In October 2025, the Commission adopted modifications to the Foster Youth program in D. 25-10-025 to streamline participant eligibility, reduce administrative burdens, and enhance access to communications services to foster youth participating in the Program.

These modifications:

- i. Expanded eligibility criteria to include current or former foster youth (including non-minor dependents) between the ages of 13 and 20 who were in foster care at any time on or after their 13th birthday. This expansion has been implemented.
- ii. Waived the one-per-household limit for the duration of the Foster Youth Pilot, allowing multiple eligible foster youths at the same address to receive program benefits. This has been implemented into the Foster Youth program.

- iii. Eliminated the requirement for foster youth to submit court/dependence letters for eligibility with their applications. This change removes the burden from the foster youth and instead requires the Third-Party Administrator (TPA) to collaborate with counties to verify eligibility. Foster youth still have the option of submitting a ward of the court, county dependency letter, or verification letter from the Ombudspersons office, which may be utilized to speed up the approval process if an application is pending at the county for a period of more than 21 days.
- iv. The term “Authorized Applicant” was replaced with “Authorized Representative” in D.24-05-003 to align with Title 22, CCR §89201(a)(7). This change allows a broader range of individuals or entities such as parents, attorneys, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), guardians, conservators, or public placement agencies to co-sign applications, submit them for minor foster youth, and serve as the main point of contact for the Foster Youth Program Administrator.
- v. Counties may submit applications through the county portal on behalf of minor foster youth, with the consent of the foster youth. This change will be implemented in 2026.
- vi. Foster Youth Program services may be terminated if a court orders a suspension lasting more than 90 days. This amends the prior policy, which specified a threshold of 120 days. Foster youth participants remain eligible to reapply once the suspension ends or the court order is removed.
- vii. Implements a non-usage policy where the foster youth that do not use their device for more than 90 days will be removed from the program. The TPA will send messages to the foster youth participants on days 30, 60, and 75 notifying that they will lose service if they do not use their device by the 90-day deadline. Prior to terminating service, the TPA will ensure that the foster youth do not have a pending equipment replacement request, which may explain a reason for non-usage.

Equipment Replacement Automation

In October of 2025, the Commission implemented an Equipment Replacement Application Programming Interface (API) with the Foster Youth Service Provider, Verizon Value. This API automates the process of providing replacement devices to the foster youth whose phones have been lost, damaged, or stolen. Through this process the TPA can communicate with the Service Provider in near real-time when a replacement is needed, significantly reducing the time to replace a foster youth’s device if it is lost, damaged, or stolen.

D. Temporary Suspension of Annual Renewal

On January 30, 2025, the Commission issued a ruling suspending the Program’s annual renewal requirements until March 17, 2025, for subscribers in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties in response to tragic wildfires.¹ In response to the wildfire emergencies, the California LifeLine program has actively implemented a series of administrative actions to protect vulnerable subscribers. The following table summarizes these actions.

¹ [Commission ruling suspending the Program's annual renewal requirements- March 17, 2025](#)

Table 1: California LifeLine: Emergency Renewal Suspension Actions

Category of Renewal	Action Taken by Program	Impacted Subscribers
Renewal processes in progress with hard denial decisions rendered	Vacated denial decisions, paused the renewal processes, and adjusted anniversary dates to restart renewal process after March 17th.	13,578
Renewal processes in progress with no decisions rendered	Paused active renewal processes and adjusted anniversary dates to restart renewal processes after March 17th.	26,039
Renewal processes scheduled to start January 31 through March 17	Delayed the start of upcoming renewal processes by adjusting anniversary dates to fall after March 17th.	46,929
Added a banner to the public website announcing the temporary renewal process suspension	Deployed a prominent banner on the California LifeLine public website on Friday, February 7th, to announce the temporary suspension.	Program-Wide

E. Operational Enhancements

In 2025, the California LifeLine Program implemented a series of operational improvements to strengthen program integrity, enhance eligibility verification, and improve the subscriber and provider experience.

- i. In March 2025, the Program added a Benefit Qualifying Person (BQP) method to all new-applicant intake channels and subsequently expanded the BQP option to renewals in July. This enhancement allows an applicant to qualify for California LifeLine benefits because a member of their household, such as a child or dependent, is currently enrolled in a qualifying assistance program.
- ii. In July 2025, the Program launched a monthly Transfer Report to LifeLine Service Providers. This was an effort to increase transparency with LifeLine Service Providers on the volume of customer transfers occurring each month, and to provide high-level insight into the transfer activity, while preserving subscriber privacy.
- iii. By October 2025, the Program introduced multiple updates to address waste, fraud and abuse:
 - a) Created two new Income-Based review queue types to address concerns surrounding fraudulent income-based documentation. These enhancements allow the TPA to more precisely assess income-based documents, in order to maintain program integrity.
 - b) The Commission implemented new requirements for participating service providers to obtain and maintain their Service Provider Intake API or SPIA credential. SPIA is a web-based API solution that enables service providers to submit new applications, renewal forms, transfer requests, update applicant and subscriber information, cancel pending applications, and/or de-enroll subscribers in near real-time. However, due to significant increase in consumer complaints related to Service Providers transferring subscribers without consent, the Commission requires

each participating Service Provider to file a Tier 2 advice letter, which articulates the business need for their credential and must provide detailed information, such as specific users, processes, operational controls, etc.

- c) October 2025 also marked the soft launch – followed by a full launch in November 2025 – of the ‘Consent to Transfer’ Process, which captures subscriber’s authorization to transfer from one service provider to another. Unauthorized transfers have been the most frequent complaint from consumers and thus was important to address. A key element of the new Consent to Transfer form is that the subscriber must identify their current service provider, which only the subscriber would know. This has added new protections against unauthorized transfers, and while the process is still being refined, early indications reflect a 50% decrease in monthly subscriber transfers for the months of November and December of 2025.
- iv. In November 2025, in order to align with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule 47 CFR § 54.410 (f)(2)(iii), the Program removed the ability for “self-attestation” during the renewal process and deployed system changes to collect eligibility documentation during renewals, when eligibility is unable to be determined via a database check. To aid in this transition, the Program simultaneously introduced AEVS checks for renewals. 98% of Program-Based participants are either approved through CalFresh or MediCal benefits. Adding AEVS checks to renewal process ensures the Program is able to automatically renew the vast majority of the Program-Based subscribers, requiring only about 2% of the Program-Based applicants to provide supporting documentation during their renewal.
- v. Finally, in December 2025, the Commission enhanced the Program’s public website to improve user navigation and the overall online experience.

Program Overview

The California Legislature enacted the Moore Universal Telephone Service Act (Moore Act) in 1983 to make high-quality basic telephone service accessible and affordable to the greatest number of Californians.² The Commission established the California LifeLine Program to implement the Moore Act. The program provides discounts on home phone (wireline) and cell phone (wireless) services to qualified households. Through California LifeLine, the Commission provides a subsidy, or SSA to qualified low-income participants and foster youth for wireline, fixed Voice over Internet Protocol, or mobile voice and broadband services.³ The Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Fund funds this subsidy through a surcharge collected on all access lines in California.⁴

Although the Moore Act was originally enacted to offer high quality basic telephone service at affordable rates to the greatest number of California residents, the Commission and the California Legislature have since expanded California LifeLine to include additional communications services. In 2014, the Commission modernized the program rules to incorporate wireless services into the LifeLine program and to update the wireline LifeLine rules. To further enhance the program’s reach and to increase participation in the California LifeLine Program to underserved and unserved low-income households, the Commission developed strategies for pilot programs and government partnerships in 2018. This commitment to innovation transitioned to the 2019 iFoster pilot program which evolved into the official launch of the Foster Youth Long-Term Program and Pilot Program in 2024. By 2020, the program refined its impact by setting SSA and MSS to ensure benefits remained aligned with state policy goals and participant needs. These modifications refined the specific eligibility criteria and operational guidelines for the Foster Youth Program within the broader California LifeLine framework. Building upon this foundation of adaptive growth, the Commission took several landmark steps in 2025.

- i. The Commission in D.25-08-050 authorized a three-year, technology-neutral Home Broadband Pilot. This program addresses the urgent need for affordable high-speed internet among low-income Californians.
- ii. In November 26, 2025, the Commission opened a new Rulemaking, R.25-11-005, to update the California LifeLine Program. This proceeding will assess enhancements to the California LifeLine Program including, but not limited to, the development of a new methodology for determining the amount of subsidy provided by the program, enabling independent enrollment, considering strategies to leverage partnerships with social service agencies and community-based organizations,

² Pub. Util. Code §§ 871 et seq.

³ See generally D.24-12-006 (freezing SSA temporarily at \$19.00)

⁴ D.22-10-021 at 52 (defining “Access Line” as “wire or wireless connection that provides a real time two way voice telecommunications service or [Voice Over Internet Protocol] service to or from any device utilized by an end user, regardless of technology, which is associated with a 10- digit NPA-NXX number or other unique identifier and a service address or Place of Primary Use in California.”)

and responding to the needs of the program participants during declared state of emergencies and disasters.

- iii. As part of the new Rulemaking in November 2025, the Commission released a Staff Proposal recommending updates to existing methodologies used for calculating the SSA, and enhancement to existing MSS that meet the evolving communication needs of low-income Californians while ensuring the program's financial structure remains sustainable and relevant.

To reflect a rapidly evolving communications services market, the California LifeLine program continues to modernize its rules and policies to embrace technological advancements and transforms how Californians interact with LifeLine services.

A. Program Participants

Between January 2025 and December 2025, the California LifeLine Program experienced continuous growth in total participation. As of December 31, 2025, total program enrollment reached approximately 1.8 million households. Wireless participation grew by over 163,000 subscribers, rising from 1,550,966 in 2024 to 1,714,350 by the end of 2025, while wireline participation decreased from 108,856 in 2024 to 80,513 in 2025. There are two ways to qualify for the program:

- i. Participation in other assistance programs (“program-based”), or
- ii. Income eligibility

These remain the foundation for helping families afford the communication services they need.

Program-Based

To qualify through Program-Based enrollment, a member or participant becomes eligible if any member of the household is currently participating in an approved public assistance program listed in Appendix A. Applicants must submit a completed form accompanied by copies of official eligibility documentation, ensuring all signatures are clear and legible to avoid processing delays. As of December 31, 2025, 93.5% of active subscribers were enrolled through the Program-Based method, while 6.5% enrolled through the Income-Based method.⁵ Of the 93.5% that qualified through the Program-Based method, 78.6% qualified through CalFresh Confirm and 19.0% through Medi-Cal. The table below details the number of active wireline and wireless subscribers categorized by their specific program eligibility.

Table 2: Program-Based active wireline and wireless participants.

Program-Based	Active Subscriber Count	Active Subscriber Count – Wireless	Active Subscriber Count – Wireline
Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)	50	38	12
Tribal Head Start Program	18	15	3
Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance	17	9	8
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	2,004	926	1,078
Medicaid, known in California as Medi-Cal	319,606	302,623	16,983

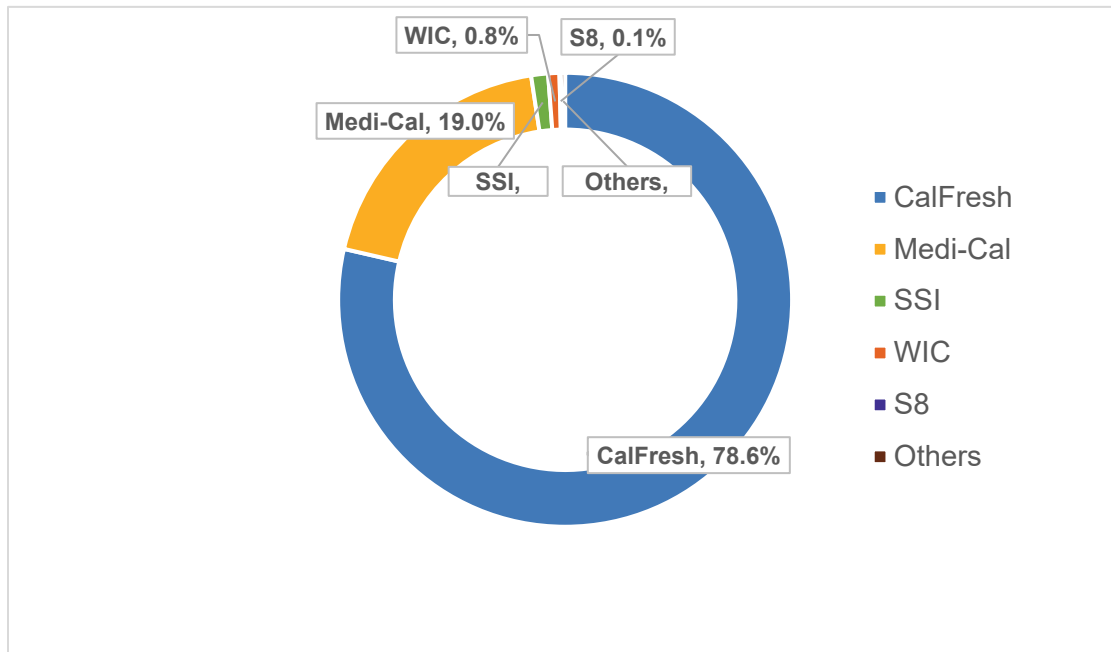
⁵ Qualifications: <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/lifeline/california-lifeline-eligibility>

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Program-Based	Active Subscriber Count	Active Subscriber Count – Wireless	Active Subscriber Count – Wireline
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	893	522	371
Federal Public Housing Assistance	2,359	1,523	836
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”), or “CalFresh” in California.	1,318,559	1,279,196	39,363
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	19,751	14,770	4,981
Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF)	22	16	6
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	204	200	4
Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit (VSPB)	1,022	771	251
Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)	13,929	13,848	81
	1,678,434	1,614,457	63,977

As shown in Figure 1, the Program-Based enrollment remains dominated by a few key public assistance categories, which account for the largest share of participants.

Figure 1: Percentage of program participants qualified through Program-Based enrollment⁶



Income-Based

To qualify under the Income-Based eligibility, effective June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026, a participant’s household annual gross income must be at or below the income levels outlined in Table 3, which are set at 150% of the 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines. Each year, by April 15th, the Commission’s Communications Division (CD) adjusts the California LifeLine income limits to account for inflation, using the Federal Consumer Price Index – Urban Areas (CPI-U).⁷ Additionally, General Order (GO) 153-A, Section 5.2.1.1 mandates that all California LifeLine service providers implement these adjusted income limits no later than June 1st of each year.

⁶ Qualifying Public Assistance Programs: Medi-Cal-California’s Medicaid program, CalFresh, SSI-Supplemental Security Income, (WIC) Women, Infants, and Children supplemental Nutrition Program, and (VSBP) Federal Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit Program.

⁷ [GO 153 - A](#)

Table 3: Income-Based Qualification Eligibility

Household Size	Annual Income Limits
1	\$24,200
2	\$32,600
3	\$41,100
4	\$49,600
Each Additional Member	\$8,500
Effective June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026	

The table below details the distribution of active California LifeLine subscribers who qualified through Income-Based eligibility.

Table 4: Active LifeLine Subscriber Distribution by Income Type and Service Platform

Income Type	Active Subscriber Count	Active Subscriber Count – Wireless	Active Subscriber Count – Wireline
Federal Income	105,830	94,843	10,987
State Income	10,467	5,937	4,530
Total	116,297	100,780	15,517

B. Participant Statistics

Pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 873, subdivision (a)(4), the following tables detail the program participation levels recorded for 2025.

The tables provide participation data in the following categories:

1. Number of California LifeLine Tribal participants and total participants by California region
2. Tribal participants and participants aged 65 and older
3. Language preferences
4. Subscribers based on various Income Ranges
5. Racial Distribution of subscribers

Participants Based on California Regions

According to the California census website, California’s 58 counties are grouped “into 10 geographical regions based on population, like-mindedness of the counties, capacity of community-based organizations within the counties, and state census staff workload capabilities”.⁸ Tables 5 and Figure 2 below provide the number of tribal and total LifeLine participants in each California region. Additionally, the data highlights that the Los Angeles region has the highest Program participation, accounting for approximately 27.4%. The San Diego–Imperial region, which includes the highest number of tribal subscribers, encompasses major cities such as El Centro, Chula Vista, Escondido, and Carlsbad.

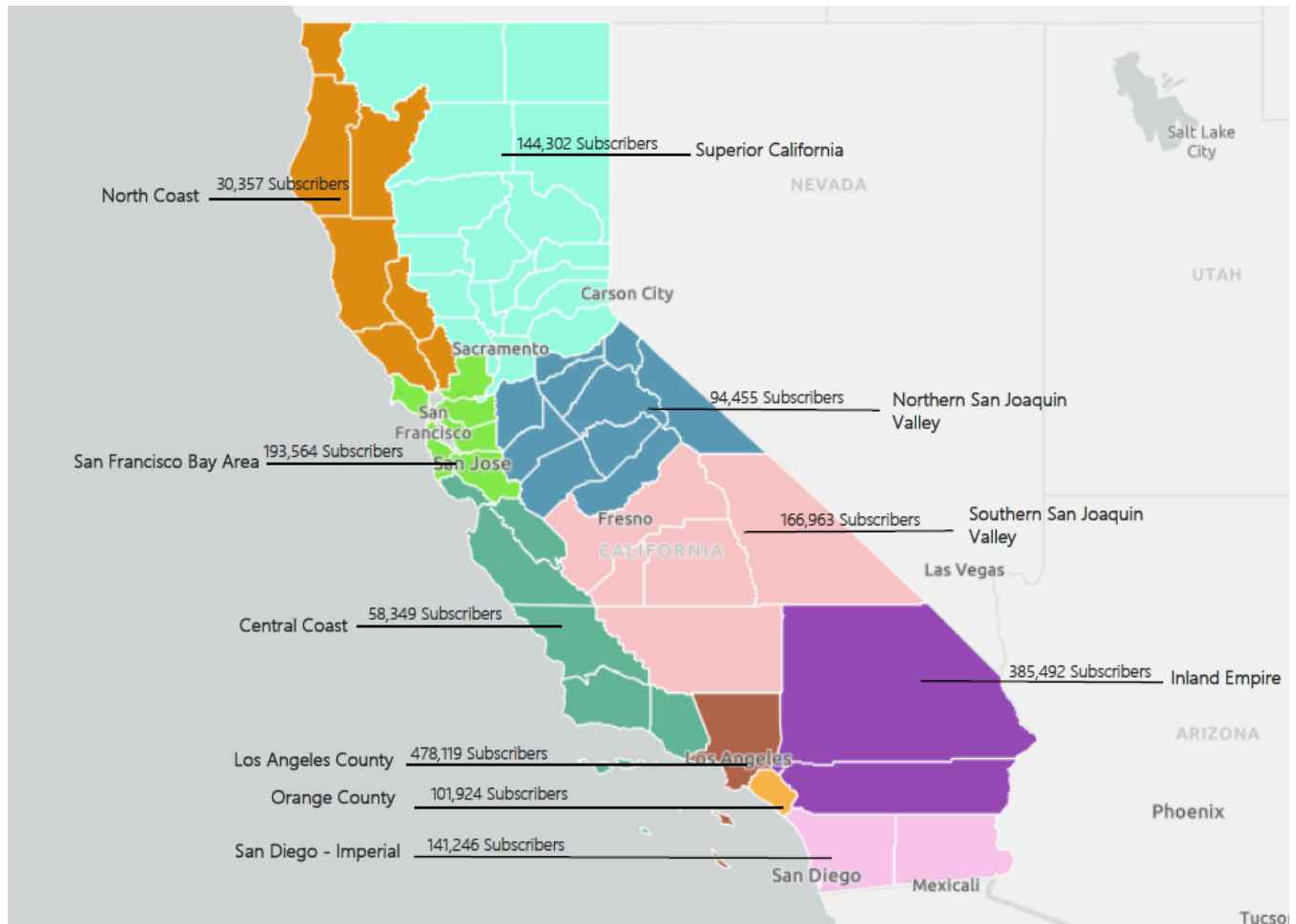
Table 5: California LifeLine Participants by California Region

California Region ⁹	Tribal Participants	Total Participants
Superior California	140	144,302
North Coast	112	30,357
Northern San Joaquin Valley	46	94,455
Southern San Joaquin Valley	34	166,963
Central Coast	20	58,349
Inland Empire	23	385,492
Los Angeles County	13	478,119
Orange County	6	101,924
San Diego County	401	141,246
San Francisco Bay Area	3	193,564
Total	798	1,794,820

⁸ Regions grouping: <https://census.ca.gov/regions/>

⁹ Regions | CA Census. <https://census.ca.gov/regions/>. Superior California includes the following counties: Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Yolo, Yuba.

Figure 2: Graphic representation of California LifeLine All Subscribers by Regions as of Dec 2025



Tribal Participants, Participants Aged 65 and over

Tribal subscribers in the California LifeLine program are low-income consumers who reside on federally recognized Tribal lands within the state.¹⁰ Table 6 shows the service based tribal participants and subscribers aged 65 and older.

¹⁰ LifeLine’s Tribal land is defined in 47 CFR § 54.400(e)

Table 6: Tribal Participants and Participants Aged 65 and older

Service type	Tribal Participants	Participants Aged 65 and Older
Wireless	747	375,168
Wireline	51	64,317
Total	798	439,485

Language preferences

California LifeLine offers written correspondence in multiple languages, ensuring participants receive all program communications in their preferred language for maximum accessibility and clarity. The table below summarizes the linguistic diversity of the program, detailing the number of participants and the corresponding percentage for each primary language preference.

Table 7: Language Preferences for Written Communications of California LifeLine Participants

Language	Subscribers	Percentage
English	1,744,292	97.20%
Spanish	38,202	2.10%
Chinese	7,874	0.40%
Vietnamese	2,990	0.20%
Korean	1,187	0.10%
Tagalog	194	0.01%
Japanese	123	0.01%
Total	1,794,862	

Subscribers' Income Range

California LifeLine ensures essential connectivity for low-income residential customers. The marked concentration of subscribers in the lowest economic brackets demonstrates the program's critical role in providing a lifeline to those facing the greatest financial hardships.

Table 8: Subscribers' Income Range

Income Range	Subscriber Count	Percentage of Group
\$0 - \$9,999	139,858	47.10%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	56,579	19.10%

Income Range	Subscriber Count	Percentage of Group
\$20,000 - \$29,999	28,959	9.80%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	12,245	4.10%
\$40,000+	11,495	3.90%
Prefer Not to Respond	47,515	16.00%
Grand Total	296,652	100.00%

Note: These numbers may not match the total number of LifeLine participants, as they represent optional data collected from participants. The table reflects only those who chose to respond to the question.

Racial Distribution of Subscribers

The California LifeLine subscriber population reflects significant racial diversity. Among subscribers who reported racial demographic information, Hispanic individuals make up the largest identifiable group at 30.3% of the reporting population (296,652) representing approximately 16% of the total California LifeLine subscriber population of 1,794,820.

Table 9: 2025 Summary of Subscribers by Race

Race Label	Subscriber Count	Percentage
Hispanic	90,003	30.30%
White	76,470	25.80%
Asian	35,181	11.90%
Black American	34,162	11.50%
Other	15,082	5.10%
American Indian	4,313	1.50%
Pacific Islander	1,773	0.60%
Prefer Not to Respond	39,668	0.134
Grand Total	296,652	100.00%

C. Discounts Provided

The California LifeLine Program offers discounted home phone, wireless phone services, or a bundled combined voice and broadband service to help eligible households reduce their monthly communication expenses.

In December 2024, the Commission in D.24-12-006 temporarily froze the SSA at \$19.00 for both wireless and wireline providers. This freeze remains in effect from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026, or until the Commission establishes a new calculation methodology. Most recently, in November 2025, the Commission released a Staff Proposal outlining new methodologies to update how the program calculates the SSA by eliminating the COLR methodology.

Table 10 below provides the current LifeLine wireless and wireline SSA and MSS for Calendar Year 2025 which was adopted in 2025.

Table 10: California LifeLine Wireless and Wireline SSA and MSS for Calendar Year 2025

California LifeLine WIRELESS Specific Support Amounts (SSA) and Minimum Service Standards (MSS) Effective for the period of 1/1/2025 through 12/31/2025						
Tier	Plan	SSA	Federal Subsidy	Mobile Voice & Text Allotments By Month	Mobile Broadband Speed*	Mobile Broadband Allowance Per Month
1	Basic Plan	\$12.85	\$5.25 - \$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	4.5 GB
2	Standard Plan	\$19.00	\$5.25 - \$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	6 GB
4	Family Plan (Line 1) **	\$19.00	\$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	6 GB
5	Promotional Plan	\$19.00	\$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	12 GB
6	Voice Only	\$0.00	\$5.25	N/A	N/A	N/A
*	Mobile broadband speed MSS applies to the entire mobile broadband allowance amount					
**	Family Plan additional lines do not receive a CA LifeLine subsidy. Family Plan line 1 terms and conditions are subject to Tier 2 advice letter review. A Family Plan is an addition to the Standard Plan. If a participant fails to make Family Plan co-payments, Family Plan line 1 reverts to the Standard Plan					

California LifeLine WIRELINE Specific Support Amounts (SSA) and Minimum Service Standards (MSS) Effective for the period of 1/1/2025 through 12/31/2025*						
Tier	Plan	SSA	Federal Subsidy	CC Replaced FCC Subsidy Reduction	Fixed Broadband Speed	Fixed Broadband Allowance
F	Standard Flat Plan	\$19.00	\$5.25	\$2.00	None	None
F	Bundled Plan	\$19.00	\$5.25	N/A	FCC MSS	FCC MSS

California LifeLine WIRELINE Specific Support Amounts (SSA) and Minimum Service Standards (MSS) Effective for the period of 1/1/2025 through 12/31/2025*

*	Mobile broadband speed MSS applies to the entire mobile broadband allowance amount.
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One per Household Discount

The program generally limits one discount for each household, whether wireline or wireless, and strictly applies this benefit to the participant’s primary residence which restricts the participant from getting multiple discounts in different locations. Each household must select a single discount for either a home phone service or a wireless phone service. To maintain eligibility, households must obtain this discount from only one service provider. Any household that violates this “one discount per household” rule will lose its California LifeLine benefits.

However, the program provides an exception for households that include members with hearing or speech disabilities. Individuals who use a teletypewriter (TTY) or participate in the California Connect program (the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program) may receive discounts on two separate connections, provided the user maintains immediate and continuous access to the TTY device. To secure this second discount, the applicant must either certify that California Connect provided the TTY equipment or submit a medical certificate demonstrating a household member’s clinical need for the device. As of December 2025, 50 customers currently receive TTY voice service through the LifeLine program. By providing these essential discounts, the program ensures that members with hearing or speech disabilities can maintain affordable access to vital telecommunications services.

Households located on federally recognized Tribal lands receive additional benefits through the federal government’s Enhanced Lifeline program. Under this program, participants can secure local home phone service for \$1.00 per month.

In addition to these discounts, the Program also exempts California LifeLine subscribers from paying public purpose program surcharges, the Commission’s user fee, the federal excise tax, local franchise taxes, and the California 911 tax.

D. Active Pilot Programs

The Commission through partnership launches pilot programs to deliver essential communication services to underserved and unserved low-income households. These pilots lay the groundwork for increasing participation by lowering enrollment barriers and providing essential communication services to those in need. In 2025, the Foster Youth Pilot Program was the only active pilot; however, the Commission gave approval for a second program, the Home Broadband Pilot, to begin which will be active beginning January 26, 2026.

Foster Youth Pilot Program

The California LifeLine Foster Youth Program provides current and former foster youth with essential wireless communication services to support their education, employment, and health care. By ensuring reliable connectivity, the Program stabilizes the lives of foster youth in care, those in extended foster care, and the original iFoster Pilot population. All participants from the iFoster pilot as of May 15, 2024, are deemed eligible for the new Foster Youth Pilot Program and are automatically transitioned until December 31, 2025, unless they choose to opt out. As of December 2025, the Foster Youth program has 7,109 active participants.

In 2025, the California LifeLine Foster Youth Program achieved significant growth by strengthening partnerships with county agencies and youth advocates to streamline applications and improve outreach. The Program modernized its operations by enhancing the Foster Youth Portal and County Dashboard, deploying automated processing to reduce manual handling and process times, and launching a seamless, Application Programming Interface to automate the process of providing replacement devices to foster youth. In addition to these operational improvements, the Program made website enhancements as well, launching a new design of the Program’s public-facing website to improve usability, accessibility, and compliance with the Federal Department of Justice Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Standards, while introducing analytic tools to enhance reporting and insight into user interactions. Verizon Value was the sole Service Provider for the California LifeLine Foster Youth Program.

Table 11: Number of Foster Youth Program subscribers for the year 2025.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
# of Subscribers	5,836	5,874	6,078	6,185	6,347	6,491	6,651	6,729	6,847	6,872	6,970	7,109

County Portal Enhancements

In December 2025, the Commission launched major changes to the Foster Youth County Portal managed by the TPA which allows counties to track application statuses, identify device packages upon arrival, and monitor shipments to ensure timely and accurate distribution to the appropriate youth. The portal has been enhanced to allow county representatives to track the status of applications, providing additional support to foster youth while they wait for their devices.

Home Broadband Pilot Program

In August 2025, the Commission established the Home Broadband Pilot Program in D.25-08-050, a voluntary, three-year, technology-neutral program for eligible households that focuses on providing affordable home broadband access to low-income Californians. This pilot program minimizes burdens on customers and service providers participating while retaining protection to guard against waste, fraud, and abuse. Eligible service providers must comply with all rules, orders, and resolutions of the California

LifeLine program, including eligibility and enrollment processes. Participating service providers must also meet and offer customers the Pilot’s MSS, and in return, participating in eligible households will receive a subsidy as detailed in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Eligible Household Broadband Pilot Subsidy

Category	Detail / Standard	MSS	Data Cap for eligible plans
Household Limit	One subsidy per household	100/20 Mbps ¹¹	1280 GB
Subsidy for Standalone Fixed Broadband	Up to \$20.00		
Subsidy for Fixed Broadband & Voice Bundle	Up to \$30.00		

Existing California LifeLine service providers who wish to participate in the Pilot program must submit an advice letter as outlined in D.25-08-050. Additionally, non-LifeLine service providers with a Commission-issued Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) or Wireless ID Registration (WIR) may also choose to participate in the Pilot by submitting an advice letter requesting LifeLine provider status and including the requirements established in the decision.

Furthermore, the Commission in D.25-08-050 authorized CD staff, through a resolution, to develop a process that allows California’s local agencies to participate in the Pilot program. A local agency is an agency of local government authorized by law to provide broadband internet service, as defined in Government Code section 53167(e). To implement this, Commission Staff are currently drafting a resolution to update the rules for California’s local agencies.

E. Program Administration

The Commission maintains the regulatory oversight of the Program ensuring strict adherence to the Moore Act and the Program regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Under the Commission’s supervision, the TPA, currently Maximus, Inc., manages the comprehensive day-to-day operations of the Program. The TPA’s core responsibilities are categorized into several key functional areas:

Eligibility Lifecycle Management - Annual Renewal Process

The Program remains dedicated to the proactive enhancement of its administrative processes, with a specific focus on streamlining the mandatory annual renewal cycle required for all participants.

The TPA manages the end-to-end applicant and subscriber experiences, including determining eligibility for new applicants and determining continuing eligibility for annual renewal approvals. To ensure continued

¹¹ Decision D.25-08-050 - Approving Home Broadband Pilot, certain exceptions to the MSS apply. Providers may be granted exemptions in areas where meeting the MSS is not feasible, or for low-cost, income-eligible plans that do not reach the MSS threshold. All such exemptions remain subject to Staff review and approval.

eligibility and prevent service interruptions, the renewal process begins one hundred and five (105) calendar days prior to a subscriber’s program anniversary date. This extended lead time is designed strategically to provide subscribers with a substantial window to gather necessary documentation and navigate the verification steps, thereby reducing administrative burdens and minimizing the risk of accidental de-enrollment. By modernizing these workflows and allowing for early intervention, the Program helps vulnerable residents maintain their essential communications services through a more accessible, transparent, and reliable enrollment framework. For the 2025 calendar year, the California LifeLine program has optimized its approval systems to maximize automation through the CalFresh Confirm Hub and AEVS.

Table 13: Approval Breakdown for California LifeLine Renewal Applications

Renewal Process	Count	Total Percentage
With CalFresh Pass	875,072	81.62%
With AEVS Pass (Beginning 11/6/2025)	126,870	11.83%
With manual approval process	70,128	6.54%
Total Renewal Applications approved	1,072,070	

The CalFresh Confirm Hub

As a component of the annual renewal process, the TPA conducts automated eligibility verification checks for current subscribers through the CalFresh Confirm Hub. By cross-referencing subscriber information with CalFresh records, the TPA can proactively identify active beneficiaries within CalFresh. When a positive match is confirmed, the system triggers an automatic renewal of the subscriber’s LifeLine benefits, effectively removing the need for the individual to submit manual paperwork or provide additional proof of eligibility. This “passive renewal” strategy not only streamlines administrative workflows but also safeguards against the accidental loss of essential communications services for vulnerable Californians by ensuring a seamless, action-free transition into the next enrollment period.

In the 2025 calendar year 81.62% participants were renewed through a CalFresh Confirm Hub match. However, if the verification check does not result in a match, additional outreach efforts are made to ensure the subscriber is aware of the renewal requirements and available options for completing the process.

Automated Eligibility Verification System (AEVS)

To enhance the precision of the LifeLine program eligibility process, the California LifeLine Program has partnered with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to utilize their AEVS. This system provides the LifeLine program with real-time access to Medi-Cal participation records, covering both the current month and the preceding 12-month period. When an individual is enrolled in Medi-Cal, they are issued a Benefits Identification Card (BIC) with a unique Client Index Number (CIN).

Historically, the California LifeLine Program allowed applicants to submit images of their Medi-Cal BIC with the CIN as proof of participation in the program. However, because these BICs are used as permanent identification, many individuals retain them even after their Medi-Cal participation has ended. Consequently, simply possessing a card no longer serves as a guarantee of active enrollment. AEVS allows the LifeLine program’s TPA to manually verify whether a LifeLine applicant is currently enrolled in Medi-Cal by securely matching applicant information against DHCS records. This eliminates reliance of images of documentation that can be fabricated. By using AEVS, the TPA is able to efficiently process large volumes of applications while maintaining accurate eligibility verification.

During 2025, the TPA continued to use the AEVS as the primary method for verifying Medi-Cal participation. Results show that AEVS remains a reliable tool and continues to support program integrity.

Table 14 - AEVS Verification Outcomes for 2025

Month 2025	Medi-Cal Participation Confirmed	Medi-Cal Participation Not Confirmed	Percentage Confirmed
January	34,142	5,678	85.74%
February	29,520	4,873	85.83%
March	29,157	4,736	86.03%
April	32,313	4,645	87.43%
May	31,659	4,585	87.35%
June	28,643	4,201	87.21%
July	31,984	4,918	86.67%
August	31,907	4,641	87.30%
September	29,423	4,702	86.22%
October	37,632	6,420	85.43%
November	24,375	3,891	86.23%
December	35,247	5,515	86.61%
Total	376,002	58,805	86.48%

The 13.52% application rejection rate when using AEVS highlights the system’s ability to catch ineligible applicants. By identifying those whose Medi-Cal participation has expired, AEVS strengthens the overall fiscal health of the California LifeLine initiative. In January 2025, DHCS made a system change which affected the way Medi-Cal eligibility data is accessed. To ensure a smooth transition, the TPA immediately adjusted its internal processes to align with these new technical requirements.

Multi-Channel Outreach and Digital Options

To ensure a smooth transition into the next year of service, the California LifeLine Program utilizes a multi-channel outreach strategy managed by the TPA. Subscribers are contacted via text messages and pre-recorded outbound calls that detail the various convenient ways to renew. These options include using the Program’s automated interactive voice response (IVR) system, speaking directly with a representative at the TPA’s Call Center to complete the form over the phone, or utilizing the California LifeLine Customer Portal for a digital submission.

i. Physical Outreach “The Pink Envelope”

If a subscriber does not submit their completed renewal within the first ten (10) calendar days of the cycle after the renewal process begins, the TPA triggers a physical outreach phase to prevent accidental de-enrollment. A paper renewal form is mailed to the subscriber’s address in a distinctive pink envelope, which serves as a high-visibility reminder that immediate action is required. Subscribers are granted a total of forty-four (44) calendar days from the start of the renewal process to gather any required information, submit their completed form to the TPA and fulfill the necessary requirements for continued participation.

ii. The “Second Chance” Provision

To further safeguard against the loss of benefits, the Program includes a “second chance” provision. If a final approval or denial has not been reached by the end of the initial forty-four calendar days period, the TPA issues a secondary renewal form, providing the subscriber with an additional twenty calendar days to fulfill the requirements. This ensures that every effort is made to maintain the connection for eligible participants to secure their place in the Program before a final decision is made.

Anniversary Date and Final Determination

On the subscriber’s official Program anniversary date, the TPA communicates the final results of the renewal application. Those who meet all criteria and receive approval are granted another full year of participation in the Program. Conversely, subscribers who are denied or fail to complete the process are removed from the Program. This structured, layered approach effectively balances regulatory compliance with a commitment to maximizing participation and minimizing service disruptions for vulnerable Californians. This structured approach allows California LifeLine to maintain seamless service for eligible participants while ensuring strict adherence to regulatory standards. By engineering these outreach and verification processes to be both accessible and efficient, the Program maximizes participation and offers subscribers several intuitive pathways to remain enrolled.

Infrastructure & IT Systems

The TPA manages the program’s digital backbone by operating dynamic IT systems that facilitate the seamless and secure data flow between the TPA, program participants, service providers, the Office of State Publishing (OSP), and Commission staff. Furthermore, the TPA maintains a robust customer service suite,

featuring a dedicated call center, toll-free assistance, and an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system with a secure Customer Portal.

Data & Records Integrity

The TPA sustains accurate records and integrated database systems to provide real-time visibility into participant statuses. To uphold these standards, the TPA is efficiently handling and digitizing all incoming physical documentation from applicants and subscribers while maintaining rigorous database management and record-keeping protocols.

Logistics & Inter-Agency Coordination

The TPA arranges the program's logistical requirements by collaborating closely with the OSP and the Department of General Services (DGS). Through this inter-agency coordination, the TPA manages the high-volume printing and mailing of official program documents.

Program Integrity & Compliance

The TPA safeguards the program by maintaining rigorous controls to detect and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse within the program. Through constant oversight, the TPA ensures that all administrative operations remain in full compliance with evolving state and federal universal service program mandates.

Supplementing these TPA operations, the Commission's internal enforcement and audits team performs annual audits of telecommunications carriers.

Stakeholder Engagement

The TPA facilitates ongoing communication and collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders. By fostering these relationships, the TPA sustains public confidence in operations ensuring they remain fair, transparent, and fully aligned with legislative mandates.

F. Regulatory changes

On November 20, 2025, the FCC issued D.25-965, revoking the exemption that previously allowed the Commission to opt out of the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) for the federal Lifeline program. The Decision also modified the federal Lifeline National Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier) process in California, ending reliance on state eligibility determinations for federal Lifeline enrollment.

Following the FCC's issuance of the decision revoking California's NLAD opt-out waiver, the Commission has requested reconsideration and raised concerns regarding operational and consumer impacts.¹²

In compliance with this Decision, effective February 1, 2026, Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs) in California must submit separate applications for California LifeLine and Federal Lifeline. ETCs are also required to use the National Verifier's eligibility determination process for all consumers applying for federal Lifeline service.

¹² CPUC's LifeLine Ex parte: [Submitted to FCC Link](#)

Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee

The Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee (ULTS-AC) is an advisory board to the Commission advising on developing, implementing, and administering the Universal Lifeline Telephone Service Trust (ULTS) program.¹³ To uphold the Moore Act, the Committee ensures that LifeLine telephone service remains available to all Californians. Each fiscal year, the Committee also prepares and submits the ULTS-AC Annual Report to the Commission.

A. Meetings

The ULTS-AC meets at least quarterly and opens all sessions to the public in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. By adhering to these standards, the Committee ensures transparency in its proceedings and allows for direct public participation.¹⁴

B. Membership

The ULTS-AC consists of eleven (11) members, who represent a broad spectrum of stakeholders within the ULTS program. The Committee includes one representative from a large or mid-sized local exchange carrier (LEC) or small incumbent local exchange carrier (small ILEC), one representative from either an inter-exchange carrier or a competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC), and two wireless carriers.

The ULTS-AC also includes a consumer organization that actively addresses barriers to essential communication services. Two Community-Based organizations (CBOs) join the Committee to represent distinct constituencies based on geography, economic status, language, and other factors that impact access to basic telephone service. Finally, government expertise rounds out the group through representatives from a state agency, the Commission's Office of the Tribal Advisor, and the Public Advocates Office.

To ensure consistent representation, each ULTS-AC member designates an alternate to fulfill their responsibilities in their absence. This framework maintains continuous participation and advances the Committee's mission to expand California LifeLine access throughout the state. Refer to Table 15, ULTS-AC Membership Roster 2025, for a list of members and alternates.

¹³ Public Utilities (P.U.) Code Section 277

¹⁴ Government Code §§ 11120 – 11133. Requires all state boards and commission to publicly notice their meetings, prepare agendas, accept public testimony and conduct their meetings in public unless specifically authorized by the Act to meet in closed session.

C. Goals and Objectives

- i. Meet regularly under the Provisions of Bagley-Keene Open Public Meeting Act.
- ii. Follow procedures mandated by the Charter of the ULTS-AC.¹⁵
- iii. Provide recommendations to the Commission and CD on proposed Rulemakings.
- iv. Monitor and evaluate CBO education and outreach.
- v. Closely monitor Commission’s Conflict of Interest Concerns Relative to the impact on ULTS-AC members.
- vi. Monitor ULTS-AC Budget.
- vii. Review Senate and Assembly Bills’ impact on California LifeLine.
- viii. Continual interaction with California LifeLine contractors.
- ix. Monitor legislative, Commission and FCC activities that may impact California LifeLine or consumers in California.
- x. Submit yearly California LifeLine budget for review and approval by Commission resolution.

D. Accomplishments

Throughout the 2024-25 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025), the ULTS-AC maintained its quarterly meeting schedule and successfully met the following objectives:

- i. The ULTS-AC elected its Chair and Vice Chair by voting during its first-quarter AC meeting.
- ii. The Committee approved a \$442.3 million budget during its first-quarter meeting.
- iii. During the first quarter, the Committee voted to fill three vacancies: two wireless carrier positions and one consumer group position. Following the vote, the Committee added the new wireless members to the official membership roster.
- iv. During the third quarter, ULTS-AC launched a new sub-committee to drive marketing, retention, and acquisition for LifeLine subscribers which was led by three dedicated Committee members. This initiative prioritizes reaching qualifying households and expanding the subscriber base through strategic outreach and engagement. As this sub-committee establishes its foundation, the Committee looks forward to reporting on its future milestones and impact.

¹⁵ Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee Charter. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/lifeline/ultsac/ults-ac-charter.pdf>

- v. The Committee added foster youth reports to the second and fourth quarter agendas to improve program transparency. These reports track the total number of subscribers, call center metrics, and specific program initiatives related to foster youth.

Table 15: 2025 ULTS-AC Membership Roster

Representatives	Primary	Alternate
ILEC	Chris Burke (Frontier Communications)	Saira Pasha (AT&T)
CLEC	*Vacant	*Vacant
Wireless Carrier	David Avila (IM Telecom)	Alex Gudkov (TruConnect)
Wireless Carrier	Robert Yap (Gen Mobile)	Jason VanArsdall (StandUp Wireless)
Consumer Group	Ashley Salas (The Utility Reform Network/TURN)	*Vacant
Community-Based Organization	Cesar Motts (Newstart Housing Corporation)	*Vacant
Community-Based Organization	*Vacant	*Vacant
Commission’s Public Advocates Office	Christopher Bartulo (Public Advocates Office)	Chrystian Villareal (Public Advocates Office)
Deaf/Hearing Impaired or Disabled Representative	Kate Woodford (Center for Accessible Technology)	Brian Winic (CA Department of Rehabilitation)
Sister Agency	*Vacant	*Vacant
CA Office of the Tribal Advisor	*Vacant	*Vacant

** Note: The ULTS-AC is actively conducting outreach campaigns to fill primary and alternate positions.*

Fund 0471: Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee Revenue, Expenditures and Fund Balance

Under Public Utilities Code § 879.5, the Legislature directs the Commission to establish funding requirements and adopt the rates necessary to administer the program effectively. According to the Department of Finance’s Manual of State Funds, the Commission strictly restricts California LifeLine funds to program-related expenditures. The Commission prohibits the redirection, transfer, or appropriation of these moneys to any other entity or fund, maintaining strict compliance with the narrow exceptions outlined in Education Code Sections 19325 and 19325.1.¹⁶

Regulatory fees and investment income generate the program’s primary revenue, while local assistance and state operations drive its expenditures.

A. Revenue

Regulatory Fees

The Commission collects revenue from telephone corporations to support various Public Purpose Programs (PPPs), including California LifeLine. Through Decision D.22-10-021, the Commission implemented a new surcharge methodology based on every access line that applies to a flat rate of \$0.90 for each active access line of telephone services in California. This rate took effect on April 1, 2025, and remains in force until the Commission adopts a new rate in a future decision.

Investment Income

The California Department of General Services invests Surplus Money Investment Fund assets in U.S. Government securities, commercial paper, time certificates of deposit, and bankers’ acceptances. These investments generate interest, which is credited back to the participating funds. At each fiscal year-end, the program records interest receivable in Account Number 1400.¹⁷

¹⁶ Manual of State Funds | Department of Finance. <https://funds.dof.ca.gov/app/download/0471>

¹⁷ California Department of General Services. <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/Resources/SAM/TOC/10400/10406>

B. Expenditures

Expenditures consist of two categories:

Local assistance

Through local assistance, the program reimburses communications service providers for the costs of delivering California LifeLine services to program participants. These reimbursements cover surcharges, taxes, connection or conversion charges, and the SSA for monthly recurring charges. Additionally, participating service providers can also recover specific administrative and implementation costs within established limits.

State Operations

Include staff salaries and benefits, external consulting, and professional services, such as those provided by the Program’s TPA. This category also funds Interagency Agreements (IAs) and other essential expenses, including ULTS-AC costs, program assessments, travel, training, office equipment, and overhead.

C. California LifeLine Fund Balance

The Enacted Budget displays the fund balance at the bottom of the Fund Condition Statements to reflect the total cash available at a specific time. Table 16 outlines the Fund Condition Statement for the California LifeLine as presented in the Governor’s Proposed 2026-27 Budget, published on January 09, 2026. The fund balance differs from the fund’s appropriation, which refers to the legal authority to spend a specified amount of money for a specific time, and purpose.¹⁸

Table 16: California LifeLine Fund Condition Statement¹⁹

California LifeLine	Fund Condition Statement dollars in thousands		
	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
BEGINNING BALANCE	\$567,930	\$419,679	\$189,967
Revenues, Transfers, and Adjustments	\$342,471	\$385,563	\$700,530

¹⁸ Glossary of Terms | house.gov. <https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained/open-government/statement-of-disbursements/glossary-of-terms>

¹⁹ 2026-27 Governor's Budget. <https://ebudget.ca.gov/2026-27/pdf/GovernorsBudget/8000/8660.pdf> p. 14

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California LifeLine	Fund Condition Statement dollars in thousands		
Total Resources	\$910,401	\$805,242	\$890,497
EXPENDITURES			
State Operations	29,591	51,638	33,983
Local Assistance	459,543	562,180	664,930
Other	1,579	1,457	\$1,601
Total Expenditures and Expenditure Adjustments	\$490,722	\$615,275	\$700,514
FUND BALANCE	\$419,679	\$189,967	\$189,983

Looking Ahead 2026

The California LifeLine remains dedicated to helping low-income households access essential communication services. By strengthening ties with state agencies and community organizations, the renewal process is simplified for effective participation. Our team uses modern technology to streamline applications, ensuring every participant enjoys a faster, simpler experience. By integrating new technology into enrollment procedures, reduces the barriers to participation and improves overall program efficiency.

Enhancements to the California LifeLine Customer Portal prioritizes user experience and digital accessibility. Continuous partnership with service providers safeguards the availability of secure and affordable essential communications for low-income households throughout the state. Looking ahead, the California LifeLine current goals include:

- i. Expanding California LifeLine communications services to better support low-income households across California.
- ii. Implementing the California LifeLine Home Broadband Pilot.
- iii. Assess enhancements and updates to the MSS/SSA calculating methodology to better meet the evolving communication needs of low-income Californians.
- iv. Completing and Implementing Phase 2 of the California LifeLine Customer Portal which will introduce a direct enrollment pathway between qualified California residents and the TPA.
- v. Putting systems in place to implement the expanded California LifeLine eligibility process for residents without an SSN that will enable enrollment in the program.
- vi. Establishing a registration process for non-certificated service providers, such as tribal and municipal providers, to participate in the California LifeLine Home Broadband Pilot Program.
- vii. A 90-day non-usage rule will be established for the Foster Youth Program effective March 1, 2026. If the foster youth have not used their phone by day 91, service will be terminated after confirming no pending equipment requests. Participant information will be retained for six months to allow for easy re-enrollment.
- viii. Establishing an API connection with the DHCS Medi-Cal database to confirm applicants' and subscribers' eligibility for enrollments and renewals.
- ix. The upcoming year will be defined by a significant shift toward federal administrative integration. Most notably, the FCC revoked the long-standing exemption that allowed the Commission to opt out of the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD).
- x. Beginning February 1, 2026, responsibility for the federal Lifeline program in California will transition from the TPA to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). This affects how customers enroll in the federal Lifeline program, not California LifeLine itself. There are no

changes to the California LifeLine program where the discounts, eligibility rules, and program operations remain the same.

Through these efforts, the California LifeLine program will continue to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that essential communication services remain accessible and reliable for those who need them most.

Appendix A

List of Program-Based Qualification Methods

Under the Program-Based Qualification, a participant may be eligible if the participant or a member of their household is enrolled in any of these qualifying public assistance programs:

- Medicaid/Medi-Cal
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- CalFresh, Food Stamps or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)
- National School Lunch Program (NSL)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - » California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)
 - » Stanislaus County Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (StanWORKs)
 - » Welfare-to-Work (WTW)
 - » Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN)
- Tribal TANF
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Head Start Income Eligible (Tribal Only)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Federal Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit Program