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NARUC
National Association of
Regulatory Utility Commissioners

NARUC Joins State Members and Partners for National Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week

WASHINGTON (September 9, 2024) — The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates, the Federal Communications Commission and state public utility commissions this week are observing National Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week from September 8 to 13. Since 2008, the week after Labor Day is designated to highlight the benefits of the federal Lifeline Program.

Lifeline is an affordable, inclusive program for low-income consumers, offering a way to connect with the nation's voice and broadband networks, secure employment opportunities, access essential healthcare services, stay connected with family and seek assistance during emergencies. The ability to stay connected holds the power to bridge the gap between social inclusion and isolation.

"Millions of individuals across the nation rely on access to phone and digital communications to remain connected to participate meaningfully in society," said Nebraska Commissioner and NARUC Telecommunications Chairman Tim Schram. "Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week is an important reminder for both participants and service providers about eligibility and recertification requirements."

The NARUC Board of Directors has consistently supported Lifeline by passing resolutions to [expand Lifeline week to include broadband services](#) and to fund the former [Affordable Connectivity Program](#). Although the Affordable Connectivity Program (aimed at closing the digital divide) was discontinued this year for a lack of funding, the FCC's wind-down measures included encouraging former ACP providers to develop their own low-income programs along with providing their former subscribers with information on those low-cost plans and providing training and resources on the Lifeline program for state public utility commissions and outreach partners to enhance awareness of Lifeline.

The federal Lifeline Program provides substantial assistance to eligible low-income consumers who are either participants in specified public assistance programs or meet specific income criteria. These consumers can benefit from discounts of up to \$9.25 per month for broadband-qualifying services, up to \$5.25 per month for voice-qualifying services and up to \$34.25 per month for residents residing on Tribal lands. An additional \$25 discount is also available for low-income subscribers residing on Tribal lands. The program's eligibility and regulations can be accessed at <http://www.lifelinesupport.org>. A dedicated American Sign Language video describing the Lifeline program can be accessed at <https://youtu.be/wwkjVrd5xHc>.

NARUC has several resources on its [Lifeline web page](#), which includes a toolkit and other resources, along with a video, [Welcome to Lifeline: It's a Life Changer](#).

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About NARUC

NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of state public utility commissions before the three branches of the federal government.