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**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION**  
**GENERAL PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS**  
**LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

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**FNS 155 Lifeline/Link-Up Assistance Programs**

**Change #03-2021**

**June 1, 2021**

**155.01 LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Lifeline Assistance Program is a government benefit program designed to promote universal service by helping low-income individuals afford telephone service in every state, territory, commonwealth and/or Tribal lands. Lifeline Assistance allows low-income customers to receive a credit on their monthly telephone bill. The FCC Lifeline Assistance Program is supported by the federal Universal Service Fund (USF). Customers may not receive both discounts at the same time.

In addition to the Lifeline Program, the Link-Up Program is another federal benefit program that provides a discount to subscribers living on Tribal lands. The Link-Up program provides a discount that reduces the installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary residence.

**155.02 LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS REQUIREMENTS**

- A. The customers must have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines and receive assistance from one of these programs:
  - 1. Food and Nutrition Services;
  - 2. Medicaid;
  - 3. Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
  - 4. Federal Public Housing Assistance;
  - 5. Veterans or Survivors Pension Benefits;
  - 6. Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance; and
  - 7. Tribally Specific programs.
- B. Head of household must have the telephone service listed in his/her name; **and**
- C. Receive the telephone bill.

**155.03 LIFELINE PROGRAM PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATIONS & REAPPLICATIONS**

- A. The county Department of Social Services (DSS) is responsible for explaining the Lifeline and Link-up Assistance Programs to the applicant.

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- B. The county DSS is not responsible for providing a form to the client; households interested in this service must contact their provider directly to apply for the Lifeline Program. At this time no new brochures or posters will be made available.