

# Indiana Legal Services, Inc

www.indianalegalservices.org

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## Lifeline and Link-up

### **What are LIFELINE and LINK-UP?**

Generally, LIFELINE and LINK-UP are programs that help low-income households afford telephone service. It is not the emergency call service provided by the Red Cross.

LINK-UP helps you pay for the connection of your phone service, and LIFELINE helps you pay your monthly local phone bill.

### **Who is eligible for LIFELINE and LINK-UP telephone service?**

You are eligible for these programs for your home if you take part in at least one of the following programs:

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Housing Subsidy Programs (including Section 8)
- Medicaid
- Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

You must also meet each of these conditions to be eligible for LIFELINE or LINK-UP service:

- Your telephone service must be listed under your own name.
- You cannot be listed as a dependent on someone else's tax return.
- Your telephone service address must be your primary residence, not a second home or a business.

### **What are the benefits of having LIFELINE service?**

1. LIFELINE lowers the cost of local home telephone service by \$5.25 per month (\$63 per year).
2. If you pay the local phone service part of your bill, but you are not able to pay all long distance or other toll charges (such as 1-900 numbers), your local phone service will not be disconnected. The phone company may, however, stop you from making long distance or other toll calls until old bills are paid.
3. If you ask for toll blocking, you will not have to pay a deposit for your local telephone service. If you get toll blocking, long distance and other toll calls can not be made from or

billed to your home.

### **How do I make long distance calls if I have toll blocking?**

You would have to use prepaid long distance calling cards or set up direct billing with your long distance carrier.

### **What are the benefits of having LINK-UP service?**

1. LINK-UP lowers the amount you have to pay for getting your home phone connected by one-half, up to a maximum of \$30. For example, if your connection charge is \$30, LINK-UP will pay \$15 and you pay the other \$15. However, if your connection charge is \$80, LINK-UP pays \$30 and you pay the other \$50.
2. If you can't pay all your phone service connection charges at one time, LINK-UP lets you pay off the balance of the connection charge within one year, without having to wait to get your new local telephone service. You will have to pay the charges little by little over the year.

### **What if I have more than one phone line in my home?**

LINK-UP benefits can be used only for one phone line per home. If you have more than one line, LINK-UP will only pay half of the connection charges for the first phone line at home, up to a total of \$30.

### **What if I move?**

You may still qualify for LINK-UP. The benefits may help lower phone service connection charges at your new home.

### **Can I use both LIFELINE and LINK-UP?**

Yes. LINK-UP helps you get your phone service connected, and LIFELINE helps pay your ongoing monthly telephone bills. You can use both programs if you are eligible.


### **How do I apply for these benefits?**

You must call your local phone company. If your local phone company is Ameritech, the phone number is 1-888-285-7983. If your local phone company is GTE, the number is 1-800-483-4600. If you are not served by one of these two companies, contact your local phone company. You can also call the Indiana Utility Consumer Counsellor at 1-888-441-2494 if you have any questions about these programs.

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