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## September 20-24, 2021 is National Telephone Discount Lifeline Awareness Week

Chicago, IL... Staying connected to local emergency and community resources is vital for all residents, and potentially saves lives. The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is joining the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and the Universal Telephone Assistance Corporation (UTAC) to raise awareness about the Lifeline Program which helps those who need voice and broadband services but can't afford it. The National Telephone Discount Lifeline Awareness Week is September 20-24, 2021.

“The COVID 19 pandemic has shined a spotlight on the need for individuals and families to have access to voice and broadband service, which is financially difficult for some families. Together we are joining forces to spread the word that there is help available through the Lifeline Program and the recently created federal Emergency Broadband Benefit which offer monthly discounts for voice and broadband services,” said Carrie Zalewski, Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Under the federal Lifeline Program, low-income consumers who participate in certain public assistance and veterans' pension programs or who qualify based on income can receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month off their monthly bill for phone, broadband, or bundled phone and broadband service.

In addition, a complementary program created by the U.S. Congress in 2020 called the [Emergency Broadband Benefit](#) (EBB) provides eligible households up to a \$50/month discount for broadband services. Currently more than 5 million Americans have enrolled. Current Lifeline participants are automatically eligible, and, in most cases, they don't need to apply separately for the EBB, but they do need to select a provider and eligible EBB plan to receive the benefit.

UTAC is a not-for-profit corporation which oversees the Universal Telephone Assistance Program (“UTSAP”) in Illinois, promotes the Lifeline program in Illinois, and provides a subsidy toward the cost of installing a new phone or broadband connection for wireline subscribers. It is important to note, that Lifeline participants must recertify each year, click [here](#) for more information.

If you are new to the Lifeline program, or to see if you qualify, visit the UTAC website at <http://linkupillinois.org/>. To apply for benefits, contact your local participating phone service provider [here](#). If you are interested in learning more details on EBB eligibility click [here](#).

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