



# 2024 Annual Report

## California LifeLine Program

Program Years January 2023 – December 2024

MARCH 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.

# Contents

Executive Summary .....1

Program Summary .....3

    A. Program Participants.....4

    B. Participant Data .....5

    C. Services.....7

    D. Annual Renewal Process .....9

    E. Program Administration.....10

Pilot Programs Central to Program Evolution.....11

    A. iFoster Pilot Program.....11

    B. Affordable Connectivity Program Pilot .....11

Forging Partnerships Across California .....12

Key Achievements .....13

    A. Launched California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Program .....13

    B. Implemented Automated Eligibility Verification System.....13

    C. Launched Customer Portal.....14

    D. Enhanced Service Providers Intake Application API.....16

Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee .....17

    A. Meetings .....17

    B. Membership .....17

    C. Goals and Objectives.....18

    D. ULTS-AC Accomplishments.....18

The Universal LifeLine Services Trust Administrative Committee Fund (Fund 0471):  
Revenue, Expenditures and Fund Balance .....20

    A. Revenue.....20

    B. Expenditures .....20

    C. California LifeLine Fund Balance .....21

Looking Ahead to 2025.....22

Appendix A .....23

## Tables & Figures

Figure 1. Active Subscribers by Qualifying Public Assistance Program.....	4
Table 1. Income-based Qualification Eligibility .....	5
Table 2. California LifeLine Participants by California Region.....	5
Table 3. Tribal Participants and Participants Aged 65 and older .....	6
Table 4. Language Preferences for Written Communications of California LifeLine Participants .....	6
Table 5. California LifeLine wireless and wireline SSA and MSS for Calendar Year 2024...	8
Table 6. AEVS Verification Outcomes from April 19, 2024, to December 2024. ....	14
Table 7. ULTS-AC Membership Roster 2024 .....	18
Table 8. California LifeLine Fund Condition Statement .....	21



# Executive Summary

The California LifeLine provides discounted and free communications services to income-qualified households and foster youth. Over the years, the Program has evolved to include wireless services, fixed Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers, bundled voice and broadband service, and various pilot programs aimed at reaching underserved and unserved populations. These efforts have significantly increased program participation, which, as of December 1, 2024, stands at approximately 1.7 million participants, with the majority utilizing wireless services.

To qualify for California LifeLine, applicants must meet income-based or program-based eligibility requirements. The majority (94.3%) of participants qualify through program-based eligibility, which includes enrollment in public assistance programs such as Medi-Cal, CalFresh, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and others. The Program actively partners with state agencies and community organizations to increase accessibility and streamline the application and renewal processes.

Key accomplishments of the Program in 2024 include:



- **Launched California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Pilot Program** in May 2024 to provide continued support for foster youth. Efforts included targeted outreach and a streamlined transition process, resulting in over 5,100 enrollments.
- **Implemented Automated Eligibility Verification System (AEVS)** in April 2024 to improve Medi-Cal verification accuracy, reducing reliance on outdated benefit identification cards.
- **Launched California LifeLine Customer Portal** in December 2023 to enhance user self-service capabilities, enabling participants to manage their accounts, complete renewals, and access support features.
- **Enhanced Service Provider Intake Application (SPIA)** programming interface in August 2024 to ensure accurate Medi-Cal eligibility verification by requiring Client Index Numbers (CINs) and Benefit Identification Card (BIC) images.

Looking ahead, the California LifeLine remains dedicated to further enhancing accessibility, efficiency, and user experience. Key priorities for 2025 include:

- Enhance California LifeLine communication services to more effectively assist low-income families throughout California.
- Ongoing efforts to identify and pursue new ways to boost enrollment in the program.
- Advancing Phase 2 of the California LifeLine Customer Portal to make the platform more efficient and user-friendly.
- Collaborating with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to develop an API link with the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS), enabling faster and more accurate eligibility checks.

Through these initiatives, the Commission reaffirms its commitment to bridging the digital divide and ensuring that all eligible Californians have access to safe and reliable essential communications services.

# Program Summary

In 1983, the Legislature passed the Moore Universal Service Act (Moore Act) to ensure affordable phone service for California residents. In response, the Commission established the California LifeLine.<sup>1</sup> This program promotes universal service by providing low-income subscribers with more affordable phone services and ensuring access for those who are not able to afford communications services at regular rates.

- In December 2012, the Commission issued Decision (D.)12-12-038<sup>2</sup>, updating basic residential telephone service requirements. This decision required all communications service providers participating in the California LifeLine to comply with these standards.
- The Commission remained committed to expanding the California LifeLine in alignment with the Moore Act. In 2014, it adopted D.14-01-036<sup>3</sup>, which broadened the program to include wireless telephone services.
- In October 2016, the Commission allowed fixed-VoIP service providers without Certificates of Public Necessity and Convenience to qualify as California LifeLine service providers.<sup>4</sup>
- In December 2018, D.18-12-019, the Commission established standards for pilot programs aimed at developing and testing strategies to reach underserved and unserved populations, increasing awareness and access to the California LifeLine.
- In May 2019, the Commission approved the iFoster Inc. (iFoster) pilot program in accordance with D.18-12-019, and in May 2024, officially launched the California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Program and Pilot Program.
- Furthering these efforts, on October 8, 2020, the Commission issued D.20-10-006, which set Specific Support Amounts (SSA) and Minimum Service Standards (MSS) to align with state policy goals while addressing the needs of programs participants.

The California LifeLine continues to enhance and expand how it provides discounted communication services to underserved populations. With these improvements, the program has had an increase in participation.

---

<sup>1</sup> D. 84-04-053. Interim Opinion. Investigation on the Commission's own motion into the method of implementation of the Moore Universal Telephone Service Act.  
[https://files.cpuc.ca.gov/LegacyCPUCDecisionsAndResolutions/Decisions/Decisions\\_D840200\\_to\\_D9212077/D8404053\\_19840418\\_O831105.pdf](https://files.cpuc.ca.gov/LegacyCPUCDecisionsAndResolutions/Decisions/Decisions_D840200_to_D9212077/D8404053_19840418_O831105.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> D.12-12-036. Decision Adopting Basic Telephone Service Revisions.  
<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.cpuc.ca.gov%2FPublishedDocs%2FPublished%2FG000%2FEM039%2FK603%2F39603602.doc&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>. p.55

<sup>3</sup> D.14-01-036. Decision Adopting Revisions to Modernize and Expand the California LifeLine Program.  
<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M086/K541/86541587.PDF>. p. 171

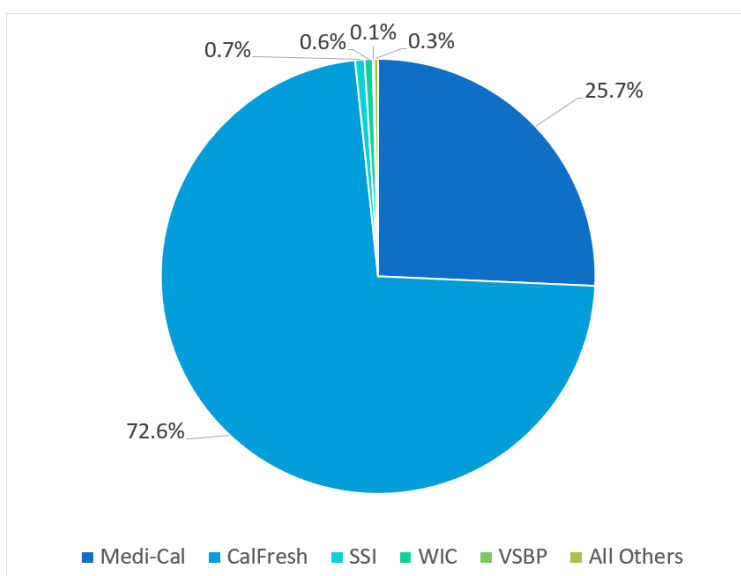
<sup>4</sup> D.18-12-019. Decision Establishing the Criteria for Pilot Programs and Partnerships within the California LifeLine Program.  
<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M251/K987/251987271.PDF>. p. 23

## A. Program Participants

As of December 1, 2024, the Program has approximately 1.7 million participants, including 108,856 wireline and 1,550,966 wireless participants. Of the wireline participants, approximately 13,383 subscribe to a bundled voice/broadband service. To qualify for the California LifeLine, a participant or their household can meet eligibility criteria through one of two methods: 1) Program-Based or 2) Income-Based.

Under the Program-Based Qualification, a participant may be eligible if the participant or a member of their household is enrolled in any of the qualifying public assistance programs listed in Appendix A. As of December 31, 2024, 94.3% of active subscribers were enrolled through the Program-Based method, while 5.7% qualified through the Income-Based method. Of the 94.3% that qualified through a program, 72.6% qualified through CalFresh and 25.7% through Medi-Cal. The detailed breakdown is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Active Subscribers by Qualifying Public Assistance Program<sup>5</sup>



To qualify under the income-based eligibility effective June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025, a participant's household annual gross income must be at or below the income levels outlined in Table 1, which are set at 150% of the 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines. Each year, by April 15<sup>th</sup>, the Communications Division (CD) adjusts the California LifeLine income limits to account for inflation, using the Federal Consumer Price Index – Urban Areas (CPI-U).<sup>6</sup> Additionally, General Order (GO) 153, Section 5.2.1.1 mandates that all California LifeLine service providers implement these adjusted income limits no later than June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> GO153. 2021. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/lifeline/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/lifeline/go1532021d2109023.pdf>. p. 13



Table 1. Income-based Qualification Eligibility

Household Size	Annual Income Limits
1	\$23,400
2	\$31,700
3	\$40,000
4	\$48,400
Each Additional Member	\$8,400
Effective June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025	

## B. Participant Data

In accordance with subdivision (a)(4) of Section 873 of the Public Utilities Code, the tables below display program participation levels for the Program in 2024.

Approximately 94% of applicants qualified through program-based eligibility, while the remaining 6% qualified based on an annual gross income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.

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

Additionally, the data highlights that the Los Angeles area has the highest Program participation, accounting for approximately 29%. It also includes statistics on participants aged 65 and older, tribal enrollment by region, and language preferences for written communications.

Table 2. California LifeLine Participants by California Region

California Region <sup>7</sup>	Tribal Participants	Total Participants
California	772	1,659,820
Superior California	148	140,425
North Coast	106	27,437
San Francisco Bay Area	5	201,195
Northern San Joaquin Valley	31	98,959

<sup>7</sup> 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.

California Region <sup>7</sup>	Tribal Participants	Total Participants
Central Coast	1	60,851
Southern San Joaquin Valley	48	166,327
Inland Empire	261	241,294
Los Angeles County	14	477,150
Orange County	6	94,173
San Diego – Imperial	80	151,938
Unassigned <sup>8</sup>	72	71

Table 3. Tribal Participants and Participants Aged 65 and older

	Tribal Participants	Participants Aged 65 and Older
Wireline	58	79,250
Wireless	714	333,828
<b>Total:</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>413,078</b>

Table 4. Language Preferences for Written Communications of California LifeLine Participants

Language Preferences	Subscribers
English	1,602,383
Spanish	40,045
Chinese	10,895
Vietnamese	4,165
Korean	1,832
Tagalog	327
Japanese	173
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,659,820</b>

<sup>8</sup> Unassigned refers to instances where participants enter incorrect or invalid zip codes, preventing the system from accurately linking them to a corresponding a region.

## C. Services

---

California LifeLine offers discounted home and mobile communication services to eligible households, ensuring affordable communications access. Each household is limited to one discounted California LifeLine service, whether through a wireline or wireless service, except for teletypewriter users and participants in the California Connect program also known as the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP). Eligible individuals using a teletypewriter (TTY) or enrolled in the California Connect program can receive discounts on two connections provided they have immediate and continuous access to the TTY device. The discount applies exclusively to an individual's primary residence, and since a person can have only one primary residence, they may not receive multiple discounts at different locations.

In addition to the subsidy provided through the California LifeLine, participants receive several benefits, including exemptions from various fees and taxes. These exemptions include the Public Purpose Program surcharge, the Commission user fee, federal excise tax, local franchise taxes, and the State 911 tax associated with phone service.

In 2021 the Commission adopted D.21.08.021 that updated minimum service standards requirements (see table below). The SSA for monthly flat rate service and bundled wireless phone service discounts is up to \$19.00, a with a service connection support of \$39.00.

Table 5. California LifeLine wireless and wireline SSA and MSS for Calendar Year 2024<sup>9</sup>

California LifeLine WIRELESS Specific Support Amounts (SSA) and Minimum Service Standards (MSS) Effective for the period of 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2024							
TIER	PLAN	SSA	FEDERAL SUBSIDY	MOBILE VOICE & TEXT ALLOTMENTS BY MONTH	MOBILE BROADBAND SPEED*	MOBILE BROADBAND ALLOWANCE PER MONTH	CO-PAYMENT OR PREPAYMENT
1	Basic Plan	\$12.85	\$5.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	4 GB	\$0.00
2	Standard Plan	\$19.00	\$5.25 - 9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	6 GB	\$0.00
4	Family Plan (Line 1) **	\$19.00	\$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	12 GB	Tier 2 Advice Letter review for affordability
5	Promotional Plan	\$19.00	\$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	12 GB	Tier 2 Advice Letter review for affordability
7	Basic Plus	\$12.85	\$5.25 - \$9.25	Unlimited	FCC MSS	4.5 GB	\$0.00
8	Voice Only	\$0.00	\$5.25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
0	ACP	\$0.00	N/A	N/A	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 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2024*						
TIER	PLAN	SSA	FEDERAL SUBSIDY	CA 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	\$9.25	N/A	FCC MSS	FCC MSS
*	Mobile broadband speed MSS applies to the entire mobile broadband allowance amount.					

<sup>9</sup> The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

## D. Annual Renewal Process

---

The Program continues to proactively incorporate improvements to various administrative processes including the annual renewal process. All California LifeLine subscribers are required to renew their participation in the Program on an annual basis. The renewal process begins one hundred and five (105) calendar days before the subscriber's Program anniversary date. This ensures that subscribers have ample time to complete the necessary steps to maintain their enrollment in the Program.

As part of the renewal process, the Third-Party Administrator (TPA) initiates a verification check through the CalFresh Confirm Hub. This step is intended to identify whether the subscriber is an active beneficiary of CalFresh. If a positive match is found, the subscriber's renewal is automatically approved, and no further action is needed on their part. In the 2024 calendar year 79.73% 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.

To facilitate outreach, the TPA contacts subscribers through text messaging and pre-recorded outbound calls. These messages inform them of the various ways they can complete their renewal. The available options include using the Program's interactive voice response (IVR) system, completing the renewal form over the phone with assistance from a representative at the TPA's Call Center, or accessing and submitting the renewal form through the California LifeLine Customer Portal.

If the subscriber does not submit a completed renewal form within the first ten (10) calendar days after the renewal process begins, the TPA takes an additional step to ensure the customer receives the necessary documentation. A physical renewal form is mailed to the subscriber in a distinct pink envelope, serving as a clear indicator that action is required.

Subscribers are granted a total of forty-four (44) calendar days from the start of the renewal process to submit a completed renewal form to the TPA. This period allows them sufficient time to gather any required information and fulfill the necessary requirements for continued participation. If, at the end of the forty-four-day period, a final decision—either approval or denial—has not yet been made regarding the subscriber's renewal, the TPA issues a "second chance" renewal form. This additional opportunity provides the subscriber with an extra twenty (20) calendar days to submit a completed form and secure their place in the Program.

On the subscriber's Program anniversary date, the TPA communicates the final renewal decision. Subscribers whose renewals are approved will continue their participation in the Program for another full year. However, subscribers whose renewals are denied will be removed from the Program.

By following this structured renewal process, the California LifeLine ensures that eligible individuals continue to receive necessary support while also maintaining regulatory compliance. The multiple layers of verification and outreach efforts are designed to maximize participation, minimize disruption, and provide subscribers with several convenient options to renew their enrollment.



## E. Program Administration

---

The Commission oversees the Program in compliance with the Moore Act and the Program regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Under the Commission's supervision, the TPA (presently Maximus, Inc.) is responsible for administering all aspects of the Program including:

- Determining the Program eligibility of California residents, including enrolling applicants; approving, and denying subscribers' renewals.
- Operating and monitoring dynamic and responsive Information Technology (IT) systems that support the flow of information between the TPA, customers, California LifeLine Service Providers, and Commission staff.
- Providing a dynamic, responsive, and comprehensive customer service solution which includes a call center, Toll-Free service lines, Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, and website.
- Performing records and database management.
- Coordinating, communicating, and collaborating with the Office of State Publishing (OSP) for outbound printing and mailing of program documents to align with the Inter-Agency Agreement between the Commission, Department of General Services (DGS), and OSP.
- Processing inbound mail documents.
- Preventing waste, fraud, and abuse of the Program.
- Complying with federal and state regulations affecting universal service programs; and
- Communicating and interacting with internal and external stakeholders.

## Pilot Programs Central to Program Evolution

The Commission is committed to bringing essential communications services to underserved and unserved low-income households through partnerships and pilot programs. In D.18-12-019, the Commission established the criteria for pilot programs, which allowed for further exploration and research of program enhancements. Pilot programs can assist in laying groundwork for how to increase program participation by lowering barriers and providing access to essential communication services to those in need. In 2024 there were two active pilot programs, 1) the iFoster Pilot Program and 2) The Affordable Connectivity Program Pilot.

### A. iFoster Pilot Program

---

The Commission authorized the iFoster Pilot Program (iFoster Pilot) in D.19-04-021 to offer eligible foster youth aged 13-26 free smartphone and essential communication services. In D.23-01-003, the Commission set the iFoster Pilot's sunset date for July 31, 2024. In D.24-05-03, the Commission established the California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Pilot Program<sup>10</sup> (California LifeLine Foster Youth Program), and participants were migrated to that program by the end of 2024. At the conclusion of the iFoster pilot program there were 12,345 participants.

### B. Affordable Connectivity Program Pilot

---

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) replaced the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program with the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) in January 2022. On June 9, 2023, the Commission adopted two ACP pilot programs in Decision 23-06-003. The pilot programs allowed communications service providers to combine the California LifeLine discount with ACP, enhancing affordability and access to broadband services. By December 31, 2023, three wireless providers and one wireline provider had enrolled a total of 89,654 participants in the ACP pilot. However, the ACP pilot ended when federal ACP funding sunset in May 2024, and providers migrated participants over to wireless California LifeLine.

---

<sup>10</sup> The Commission adopted a five year California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Pilot Program effective from May 10, 2024 through May 9, 2029.

## Forging Partnerships Across California

The California LifeLine is actively forging partnerships across California to enhance accessibility, support for all eligible participants, and to streamline processes. Collaborating with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), it integrates the CalFresh Data Dip to enable the auto-renewal process based on program eligibility and save participants the hassle of filing renewal paperwork. The Program is engaged across all 58 California counties, focusing on foster youth through partnerships with the California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), Youth Advocates, the Children's Law Center, the Youth Law Center, and the Foster Youth Education Fund. Additionally, the program works with Medi-Cal to refine the renewal process, utilizing the Automated Eligibility Verification System (AEVS) to confirm applicants' Medi-Cal participation, which also saves participants the hassle of filing renewal paperwork. The Department of General Services (DGS) Office of State Publishing also plays a key role in supporting these efforts by handling high volume print and mail services to ensure that essential program documents are efficiently produced and distributed. This collaboration improves the program by allowing applicants without computer access to request and receive a hard copy application and renewal materials, while also providing braille documents for individuals with visual impairments, ensuring accessibility for all.

# Key Achievements

## A. Launched California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Program

---

The Commission, in D.24-05-003, established a long-term pilot program for foster youth ages 13 to 20 within the California Universal Telephone Service Program. On July 31, 2024, Maximus took over as the TPA for the California LifeLine Foster Youth Program. To ensure a smooth transition, the Commission and T-Mobile extended cellular service for Foster Youth Pilot subscribers until November 30, 2024.<sup>11</sup> This extension allowed subscribers time to switch their phone service from T-Mobile to Verizon/TracFone without losing coverage.

From August through November, Maximus launched a series of targeted text campaigns to inform and encourage pilot subscribers to transition their service, ensuring continuity and minimizing disruptions. As of December 2024, the TPA enrolled a total of 5,115 foster youth in the program.

The Foster Youth Customer Portal was launched on January 20, 2025. This release introduces the front-end Foster Youth customer portal on the California LifeLine public website, along with backend integration into Maximus' Solix360 Platform. Additionally, an API connection will be implemented between the TPA and Verizon/TracFone, significantly reducing the wait time between application approvals and device procurement. This improvement is especially critical for foster youth, as many in this population frequently change living situations. By streamlining the process, the program ensures that eligible participants receive their devices more quickly, enhancing accessibility and continuity of service.

The Commission remains committed to supporting vulnerable populations and will continue seeking ways to enhance, simplify, and streamline the enrollment process. This ongoing effort ensures that eligible foster youth in California have access to reliable and secure communication services.

## B. Implemented Automated Eligibility Verification System

---

The Program revised the renewal process in April 2024. Historically, the Program accepted images of applicants' Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Cards (BIC) as proof of Medi-Cal participation. While BICs serve as permanent identification, possessing one does not guarantee active Medi-Cal enrollment, as beneficiaries often retain their BICs even after leaving the program.

To improve verification accuracy, the California Department of Health Care Services provides the Automated Eligibility Verification System (AEVS), which allows real-time verification of Medi-Cal participation for the current and past 12 months.

---

<sup>11</sup> D.24-05-003. Decision Establishing the California LifeLine Foster Youth Long-Term Program and Pilot Program <https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M531/K319/531319661.PDF> p.34

On April 19, 2024, the TPA began using AEVS for eligibility determinations, utilizing its web-based single-subscriber eligibility transaction service to verify applicants' Medi-Cal status. Additionally, the TPA's customer management system was updated to store applicants' BIC number. When an enrollment is approved based on AEVS verification, eligibility documents are created for auditing and linked to the approved enrollment applications in the TPA's California LifeLine database. Medi-Cal participants who cannot be confirmed through AEVS will receive a correctible denial notice along with a new enrollment application, giving them the opportunity to qualify through a different eligible public assistance program or by income.

Table 6. AEVS Verification Outcomes from April 19, 2024, to December 2024.

2024 Month	Medi-Cal Participation Confirmed	Medi-Cal Participation Not Confirmed	Percentage Confirmed
April	16,776	2,143	88.67%
May	44,864	6,197	87.86%
June	45,208	6,594	87.27%
July	37,919	5,279	87.78%
August	42,597	6,440	86.87%
September	37,817	5,797	86.71%
October	39,914	6,029	84.91%
November	30,695	8,007	79.31%
December	38,558	7,775	83.22%

## C. Launched Customer Portal

In August 2023, the Commission adopted Decision D.22-05-014<sup>12</sup> to implement staff recommendations aimed at improving the renewal process for the California LifeLine. This decision also mandated enhancements to the program's public website, leading to the development of a user-friendly customer portal. On December 13, 2023, the California LifeLine Customer Portal was officially launched, replacing the use of Commission-issued personal identification numbers (PINs) with a more user-friendly login system utilizing usernames and passwords. This change provided registered portal users with enhanced self-help functionality, including the ability to:

- Cancel pending transfers between service providers (SPs)
- Remove themselves from the Program
- View their written font preference (regular, large, or Braille) and written language preference
- Access their current service and mailing addresses

<sup>12</sup> D.22-05-014. Decision Regarding Renewals Process Improvements and Compliance with Assembly Bill 74. <https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M480/K116/480116069.PDF>. p.5



- Check their Program anniversary dates

## Expanded Self-Help Features

On February 22, 2024, additional self-help features were introduced to further empower registered portal users. Enhancements included:

- Access to view and download Program decision letters.
- More detailed explanations for participants receiving correctible denials, helping them understand the reasons for denial and avoid similar errors when submitting second chance forms.
- Alerts notifying users when Program mail has been returned as undeliverable by the U.S. Postal Service, prompting them to update their mailing addresses with their Service Provider.

## Updated Customer Portal

On May 17, 2024, the Program integrated the third major update into the Customer Portal. Key improvements included:

- **From Submission Enhancements:** Users are now required to confirm their date of birth and the last four digits of their Social Security Number in separate confirmation fields. If the values do not match, users cannot proceed, reducing denials due to simple data entry mistakes.
- **Enhanced California Lifeline Tribal Benefit Indicator:** A new feature was added to the Account Information page, allowing users to see if they are receiving the Enhanced California Lifeline Tribal Benefit.
- **Service Provider Search Enhancement:** "Languages Serviced" by wireline Service Providers are now displayed in the Service Provider Search function, allowing users to make informed decisions based on language support availability.

These improvements collectively streamline the user experience, reduce errors, and enhance accessibility, ensuring California LifeLine participants can more effectively manage their services.

On July 24, 2024, the TPA mailed out a flyer promoting the California LifeLine Portal to active wireline and wireless subscribers. These participants had submitted Program forms via U.S. mail in the past year but had not yet registered for a Portal account.

Shortly after the mailing, the Program observed a significant week-over-week increase in Portal user registrations.

## D. Enhanced Service Providers Intake Application API

---

Starting August 15, 2024, the TPA's Service Provider Intake Application (SPIA) program interface began requiring wireless Service Providers to include properly formatted Client Index Numbers (CINs) from applicants' Benefit Identification Cards (BICs) when applicants seek qualification for California LifeLine based on Medi-Cal enrollment. Furthermore, communications service providers utilizing SPIA are required to upload images of Medi-Cal BICs whenever a CIN is provided during SPIA transactions. This new requirement enables TPA form reviewers to verify that the CIN submitted by a Service Provider aligns with the applicants' BIC, ensuring accurate eligibility verification for the program. These new changes help the TPA gather the necessary information to verify Medi-Cal eligibility through AEVS and streamline the eligibility process.

# Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee

Public Utilities (P.U.) Code Section 277 established the Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee (ULTS-AC).<sup>13</sup> The role of the ULTS-AC is to advise the Commission on the development, implementation, and administration of the Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust (ULTS) program, ensuring California LifeLine telephone service remains accessible to Californians under the Moore Telephone Service Act. Each fiscal year, the ULTS-AC submits its Annual Report to the Commission.

## A. Meetings

---

The ULTS-AC meets at least quarterly, with all meetings open to the public and conducted in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.<sup>14</sup>

## B. Membership

---

The ULTS-AC consists of eleven (11) members, representing various stakeholders in the ULTS program. The members include an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC), a representative from either an intern-exchange carrier or a competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC), and two wireless carriers. Additionally, the ULTS-AC will include a consumer organization that actively addresses barriers to access essential communications services. Two community-based organizations (CBOs) are also part of the ULTS-AC, each representing distinct constituencies based on factors such as geography, economic conditions, language, or other relevant criteria that impact access to basic telephone service. A state agency with expertise in universal service will be included, along with an individual or organization advocating for the needs of people with disabilities who use California LifeLine. Furthermore, the ULTS-AC includes a representative from the Commission's Office of the Tribal Advisor and the Commission's Office of Ratepayer Advocates.

Each ULTS-AC member has a designated alternate who is authorized to take on the responsibilities of the position in the absence of the primary member. This structure ensures continued representation and participation, supporting the ULTS-AC's mission to enhance access to California LifeLine telephone services in California.

Refer to Table 7, ULTS-AC Membership Roster 2024, for a list of members and alternates.

---

<sup>13</sup> PU Code § 277(a) There is hereby created the Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee, which is an advisory board to advise the commission regarding the development, implementation, and administration of a program to ensure LifeLine telephone service is available to the people of the state, as provided for in Article 8 (commencing with Section 871) of Chapter 4 Part 1 of Division 1, and to carry out the program pursuant to the commission's direction, control, and approval.

<sup>14</sup> 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

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

## D. ULTS-AC Accomplishments

Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, the ULTS-AC met quarterly and achieved the following objectives:

- Provided input to CD regarding California LifeLine contractors and the call center.
- Reviewed and monitored expenditures and surcharge income for the California LifeLine.
- Provided feedback to CD on updates related to changes in the California LifeLine and developments in the FCC's Lifeline and Affordable Connectivity Program.

Table 7. ULTS-AC Membership Roster 2024

Representatives	Primary	Alternate
ILEC	Chris Burke, Frontier Communications (Frontier Communications)	Linda Lassen (Sierra Telephone)
CLEC	Marice Evans (Cox Communications)	*Vacant
Wireless Carrier	David Avila (TracFone Wireless, Inc.)	Alex Gudkov (TruConnect)
Wireless Carrier	*Vacant	*Vacant

<sup>15</sup> 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>

<b>Representatives</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Alternate</b>
Consumer Organization	Vinhcent Le (Greenlining)	*Vacant
Community-Based Organization	Cesar Motts (Southeast Community Development Corp.)	*Vacant
Community-Based Organization	Andre Chapple (Faith Church, African American Empowerment, Nat'l Diversity Coalition, Answer City Outreach,	*Vacant
Commission's Public Advocates Office	Christopher Bartulo (Public Advocates Office)	Sharmila Selvalakshmirajeswara (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.*



# The Universal LifeLine Services Trust Administrative Committee Fund (Fund 0471): Revenue, Expenditures and Fund Balance

The Legislature directed the Commission to establish funding requirements and adopt required rates essential to administering the program.<sup>16</sup> Funds in the California LifeLine may not be redirected, transferred, appropriated or used for any other purpose.<sup>17</sup>

Program revenue primarily includes regulatory fees and investment income, while expenditure covers local assistance and state operations.

## A. Revenue

---

- **Regulatory Fees:** Revenue collected from telephone corporations, as determined by the Commission, supports various Public Purpose Programs (PPPs), including the California LifeLine. In Decision D.22-10-021, the Commission established a new flat rate surcharge methodology based on each access line. This methodology imposes a flat rate surcharge of \$1.11 for each active access line of telephone services in California. This rate became effective on April 1, 2023, and will remain in place until the Commission adopts a different rate through a future decision.
- **Investment Income:** Surplus Money Investments (SMI) is interest earned from the fund.<sup>18</sup>

## B. Expenditures

---

- Expenditures consist of two categories:
  - » Local assistance includes reimbursing communications service providers for claims related to providing California LifeLine services to program participants. These costs encompass surcharges and taxes, connection or conversion charges, and a SSA for the monthly recurring charge. Participating service providers can also recover administrative and implementation costs, albeit on a limited basis
  - » State Operations comprise of staff salaries and benefits, external consulting and professional services, which include Program's TPA, Interagency Agreements (IA's), and other expenses such as ULTS-AC related costs, Program assessment, travel, training, office equipment, and overhead.

---

<sup>16</sup> See Pub. Util. Code § 879.5.

<sup>17</sup> Manual of State Funds | Department of Finance. <https://funds.dof.ca.gov/app/download/0471> Purpose-Money in the fund may only be expended pursuant to this chapter. Moneys in the fund may not be appropriated, or in any other manner transferred or otherwise diverted, to any other fund or entity, except as provided in Section 19325 and 19325.1 of the Education Code.

<sup>18</sup> California Department of General Services. <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/Resources/SAM/TOC/10400/10406>

## C. California LifeLine Fund Balance

The fund balance amount is shown at the bottom of the Fund Condition Statements in the annual Enacted Budget. The fund balance amount represents the total available cash in the fund at a given point in time. Table 8 displays the Fund Condition Statement for the California LifeLine as it appears in the 2025-26 Proposed Governor's Budget, released on January 10, 2025. 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.<sup>19</sup>

Table 8. California LifeLine Fund Condition Statement<sup>20</sup>

California LifeLine	Fund Condition Statement		
	<i>dollars in thousands</i>		
	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	\$442,491	\$549,514	\$376,184
Revenues, Transfers, and Adjustments	\$405,795	\$280,159	\$280,159
Total Resources	\$848,286	\$829,673	\$656,343
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
State Operations	27,056	33,154	28,075
Local Assistance	270,436	418,733	414,204
Other	1,280	1,602	\$1,480
Total Expenditures and Expenditure Adjustments	\$298,772	\$453,489	\$443,759
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$549,514</b>	<b>\$376,184</b>	<b>\$212,584</b>

<sup>19</sup> Glossary of Terms | house.gov. <https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained/open-government/statement-of-disbursements/glossary-of-terms>

<sup>20</sup> 2025-26 Governor's Budget. <https://ebudget.ca.gov/2025-26/pdf/GovernorsBudget/8000/8660.pdf> p. 14

## Looking Ahead

The California LifeLine remains dedicated to expanding access to essential communications services to low-income households, improving efficiency, and enhancing the user experience for all eligible participants. Key priorities include strengthening partnerships with state agencies and community organizations, refining the renewal process for seamless participation, and leveraging technology to simplify application and enrollment procedures.

As digital services continue to evolve, the program is committed to enhancing the California LifeLine Customer Portal, making it more user-friendly and accessible. Ongoing collaboration with service providers will help ensure that high-quality, safe, and affordable essential communications services remain available to low-income Californians.

Looking ahead, the California LifeLine current goals include:

- Expanding California LifeLine communication services to better support low-income households across California.
- Continue to explore opportunities to increase program participation.
- **Completing Phase 2 of the California LifeLine Customer Portal** to further streamline and improve the user experience.
- **Partnering with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)** to establish an application programming interface (API) connection with the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) for efficient eligibility verification.

Through these efforts, the California LifeLine 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 Qualifying Public Assistance Programs

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)
  - a) California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)
  - b) Stanislaus County Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (StanWORKs)
  - c) Welfare-to-Work (WTW)
  - d) 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
- Federal Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit Program