



## California Public Utilities Commission

# ULTS Administrative Committee Meeting

Please join the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for the Q1 2026  
Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Administrative Committee Meeting

**When:** Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 9 a.m.- Noon

**Where:** 505 Van Ness Ave., Hearing Room A, San Francisco, CA 94102

**WebEx Meeting Link:** 1st Quarter 2026 ULTS-AC Meeting Webinar Number 2498 410 7396

**Call-in Number:** 1-855-282-6330 **Access Code:** 249 841 07396 **Meeting Password:** 2026 (2026 when dialing from a phone or video system)

## California LifeLine Program Meeting Agenda

### Session 1: Welcome & Kick-Off

*Session Outcome: Meeting Kick-Off*

*Session Topics: Welcome, Opening Remarks, Public Comments*

|                       |                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 a.m. – 9:05 a.m. | Introduction: David Avila, Chair                                                                                          |
| 9:05 a.m. – 9:10 a.m. | Welcome:                                                                                                                  |
| 9:10 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. | Approval of Minutes: Committee reviews and approves the last meeting minutes prepared by the Communications Division (CD) |
| 9:15 a.m. – 9:20 a.m. | Public Comments                                                                                                           |

### Session 2: Program Alerts & New News

*Session Outcome: Inform Critical Program Updates*

*Session Topics: New News, Alerts & Highlights*

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|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:20 a.m. – 9:35 a.m. | CPUC Communications Division (CD) Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Federal Transition (Decouple Programs) – Robert Sansone</li><li>FCC OIG Advisory Deceased Subscribers Report – Robert Sansone</li><li>Broadband Pilot – Chari Worster</li><li>MSS/SSA - Chari Worster</li></ul> |
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### Session 3: Program Performance & Metrics

*Session Outcome: Understand "What's Working" vs. What's Not Working"*

*Session Topics: Internal & External Past Quarter Performance & Future Guidance*

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| 9:35 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Fiscal Report: Lalaine Semana                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 9:40 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | CAB Consumer Contact Statistics Report: Inetha Mallard                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 9:45 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Claims Status Report:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>Session 4: Program Enrollment &amp; Operations</b><br/> <i>Session Outcome: Understand Consumers Enrolling &amp; Staying on the Program</i><br/> <i>Session Topics: Operational Topics &amp; Updates</i></p>                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 9:50 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | LifeLine Program Report: James Graettinger<br>Program & Operation Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed Initiatives and Impact</li> <li>Upcoming Initiatives</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 10:15 a.m. – 10:25 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | BREAK                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>Session 5: Committee Administration &amp; Governance</b><br/> <i>Session Outcome: Lifeline Committee Management, Deliverables &amp; Commitments</i><br/> <i>Session Topics: Committee Deliverables, Sub-Team Reports/Read-Outs, Calendars</i></p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 10:25 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Annual Report – David Avila                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Sub-Committees (2025/2026) Update:<br><b>Marketing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead: Ceaser Motts</li> <li>Member:</li> <li>Member:</li> </ul> <b>Retention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead: Jason VanArsdall</li> <li>Member: Saira Pasha</li> <li>Member: Kate Woodford</li> </ul> <b>Acquisition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead: Ashley Salas</li> <li>Member: Robert Yap</li> <li>Member:</li> </ul> |
| 10:40 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | ULTS Administrative Committee Charter positions:<br>10 Open Positions – 4 Primary, 6 Alternates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLEC – 1 Primary, 1 Alternate</li> <li>Consumer – 1 Alternate</li> <li>CBO – 1 Primary, 2 Alternates</li> <li>Sister Agency – 1 Primary, 1 Alternate</li> <li>Office of the Tribal Advisor – 1 Primary, 1 Alternate</li> </ul>                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Meeting Adjourned                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

# ULTS-AC Member Roster as of 2Q2025

|    |                                                  |                      |                                            |                                                                   |
|----|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <b>ILEC</b>                                      | Primary<br>Alternate | Chris Burke<br>Saira Pasha                 | Frontier Communication<br>AT&T                                    |
| 2  | <b>CLEC</b>                                      | Primary<br>Alternate | Vacant<br>Vacant                           |                                                                   |
| 3  | <b>Wireless</b>                                  | Primary<br>Alternate | David Avila<br>Alex Gudkov                 | IM Telecom<br>TruConnect                                          |
| 4  | <b>Wireless</b>                                  | Primary<br>Alternate | Robert Yap<br>Jason VanArsdall             | GenMobile<br>StandUp Wireless                                     |
| 5  | <b>Consumer Group</b>                            | Primary<br>Alternate | Ashley Salas<br>Vacant                     | The Utility Reform Network<br>(TURN)                              |
| 6  | <b>CBO</b>                                       | Primary<br>Alternate | Cesar Motts<br>Vacant                      | Newstart Housing Corporation                                      |
| 7  | <b>CBO</b>                                       | Primary<br>Alternate | Vacant<br>Vacant                           |                                                                   |
| 8  | <b>CPUC's Public<br/>Advocates Office</b>        | Primary<br>Alternate | Christopher Bartulo<br>Chrystian Villareal | Public Advocates Office<br>Public Advocates Office                |
| 9  | <b>Deaf/Hearing Impaired<br/>or Disabled Rep</b> | Primary<br>Alternate | Kate Woodford<br>Brian Winic               | Cntr for Accessible Technology<br>CA Department of Rehabilitation |
| 10 | <b>Sister Agency</b>                             | Primary<br>Alternate | Vacant<br>Vacant                           |                                                                   |
| 11 | <b>CA Office of the Tribal<br/>Advisor</b>       | Primary<br>Alternate | Vacant<br>Vacant                           |                                                                   |

## Meeting Minutes – ULTS-AC Meeting, S, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Attendees:** 6 primary members and 1 alternate present

**Primary members:** Chris Burke, David Avila, Kate Woodford, Cesar Motts, Christopher Bartulo, Ashly Salas, Robert Yap

**Alternates:** Alex Gudkov, Chrystian Villareal, Jason VanArsdall, Brian Winic, Saira Pasha

**Other Attendees:** Robert Sansone, Kellie M. Jones, Lisa Anthony, Lalaine L. Semana, Chari Worster, Jim Graettinger, Michael Mullaney, Danyel Cordoba, Sola Lee, Sindy J. Yun, Robyn Purchia, Joseph Haga, Sandy Lion, Jessica Rodriguez, Loi Nguyen

**Introduction:** David Avila – Opening remarks.

## Approval of Minutes

- Cesar Motts: Motion to adopt.
- Robert Yap, approved.

## Public Comments:

- N/A

## CPUC Communications Division (CD) Updates: Robert Sansone/Loi Nguyen

- **Program updates, Presentation 1**
  - Two federal Issues
    - FCC universally revoked CA optout status as of Feb1st Californias applying to lifeline will have to apply to both programs.
      - Worked with TPA, there are NO administrative changed for the CA process, currently with service provider on the ETC to channel customers that wish to apply to federal lifeline benefits, go to the appropriate USAC website
    - Working with FCC and USAC on WFA prevention; CPUC no longer makes federal eligibility determinations for the federal program.
  - FCC investigatory issued memo describing 5yr period of an anomaly of deceased persons; have reviewed and evaluated – determination of relationship with USAC; begun relationship with Lexis Nexius and California Public Health Department to both receive reports on potentially deceased people, and get county level data from counties themselves in California.
- Staff Proposal on Lifeline Specific Support Amount and minimum Service Standards
  - Jan 9<sup>th</sup> – 11 parties that filed comment and 8 filed reply comments; CPUC is reviewing to determine next steps
- California LifeLine Home Broadband Pilot
  - Jan 26,2026 official launch date
  - Feb 26<sup>th</sup> – Commission approved RES.T-17903
    - Established a registration process for a local agency to participate in the program.
    - Private program that provides subsidy of up to 20\$ for standalone broadband; up to 30\$ for broadband service bundled with a wireline or wireless voice service

- Since launch date; LL has received 16 AL; 15 approved 1 pending reviewed, 4 SP have completed Onboarding and system testing
- Questions/ Comments:
  - QC independent small leg: We haven't received any notification that the advice letters were accepted Was wondering about the sequencing of the events. Some companies have received notification from the TPA that they were approved, but we haven't heard anything as far as the advice letters being accepted. Loi: Certificates have been sent, talk offline to follow up on status

### **Fiscal Report: Lalaine**

#### **See presentation #2: ULTS (Fund 0471) Committee Meeting Report**

- For the period ending February 28, 2026
- Total Revenue: \$205,110,079
- Total Appropriation: \$724,600,577
- Total Expenditures: \$245,693,143
- Remaining/Available Appropriation: \$451,360,495
- Total Available Cash as of February 28, 2026: \$379,071,102
- Questions/Comments: N/A
  - N/A

### **CAB Consumer Contact Statistics Report:**

#### **See presentation #3, Quarterly LifeLine Report**

- Consumer Affairs Branch LifeLine Overview
  - CAB has dedicated specialists to assist consumers with LifeLine related issues:
    - Appealing LifeLine denials
    - Disputing various issues with the LifeLine Service Provider
    - Requesting information on the LifeLine application process
    - Resolving consumer questions or complaints with LifeLine application process regarding Rules and General Order 153
    - Resolving issues with wireless devices
    - LifeLine Contacts Received by CAB: November 2025 – January 2026

- LifeLine Contacts Closed by CAB: November 2025 – January 2026
- LifeLine Contacts Received and Closed by CAB – November 2025 – January 2026
- LifeLine Contacts Closed by CAB: November 2025 – January 2026
- LifeLine Contacts Received and Closed by CAB: 15month Trend
- Questions/Comments: N/A

### **Claims Status:**

- Questions/Comments: N/A

### **3rd Party Administrator – Maximus Report: Jim Graettinger**

#### **See presentation #4, Maximus CA LifeLine – TPA Presentation**

- **Completed Initiatives and Impact**
  - Federal LifeLine Program Transition
    - Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 – National Verifier and associated federal process determines eligibility
    - Lifeline Service Providers in California are required to use NLAD to enroll eligible consumers in the federal LifeLine program.
      - TPA generated a final report for USAC On Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 and USAC used that report to load those active subscribers from California into NLAD.
    - Starting Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 – federal lifeline program and California lifeline program are operating as fully independent programs.
  - California LifeLine Home Broadband Pilot
    - Aug 28, 2025 – CPUC issued Dec. 25-08-050 in Rulemaking 20-02-008 approving three (3) year voluntary technology-neutral Home Broadband Pilot program
    - Changes: Public website, enrollment and renewal applications have been updated for clear understanding of pilot and requirements. Instructional content, dedicated FAQ's to help educate consumers
    - TPA is actively involved with several Service Providers authorized by CPUC to participate.
      - Additional Service Providers close to be fully onboarded.

- Change to facilitate enrollees seeking service of broadband ONLY service.
    - TPA has updated system to process eligibility for standalone broadband services, as well as the bundled broadband voice services. Forms and process have been changed to align so enrollments can occur smoothly.
  - TPA has adjusted transfer processes to support situations where current CA lifeline choose to move into Pilot Eligible Broadband only service plans OR bundled broadband+voice service plans
  - April 1st
- Customer Portal 2.0
  - Modernize California Lifeline digital experience by improving:
    - Accessibility
    - Efficiency
    - Transparency for applicants/subscribers and Service Providers
  - Currently being finalized and will be communicated in Staff proposal during this calendar year
- **Upcoming Initiatives**
  - Compliance with California Public Utilities Code § 876.5
    - Establishes strong privacy protection and rules governing identity information for applicants and subscribers of the California Lifeline Program and its pilots.
    - To comply with statutory requirements the program needs to develop an enrollment process that permits applicants to provide their social security numbers voluntarily while ensuring no applicants prevented from enrolling or participating if they do not want to provide information. This change requires creative thinking around program integrity and identity authentication while upholding the privacy protections that are mandated by state law.
  - Potentially Deceased Participants Process
    - CA LL program needs to develop standalone process that is being worked on to prevent fraud from deceased individuals
- **Program and Operations Reports**
  - 5.17% increase of total subscribers since Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

- **Questions/Comments:**
  - David A.: The growth that we've seen here of slightly over 5%, in reports, is there anything to indicate where we think these new participants are coming into the program?
    - Jim G. (TPA): There are geographical reports that are included that lists subscribers from zip codes, geographically by county, state assembly district. Some movement appears that there were zip codes in the past have had a lower concentration of subscribers that have moved up, which indicates that there may be instances where service providers may be targeting new geographical areas
  - When BB pilot is launched will those participants be reported as Lifeline subscriber accounts or are those going to be treated differently?
    - TPA: Those subscribers would be reported on this slide, however, because it is a new pilot, tracking is being done very closely.
  - Check on customer base on possible deceased individuals. Comments from USAC; in the prior process what percentage of the customer base would be questioned as potentially deceased on a monthly basis when using/relying-when relying on USAC for information?
    - TPA: Reports received once a month; number of subscribers varied, 400 reasonable estimates identified. The number removed from that list was generally a small number. Maybe less than identified as deceased.
    - Sync to what the new process is.
      - Intent is to have a regular basis check; the county records would be a final record. High confidence level after half of year of the outcome.
  - Rachel from Assurance: Historically after enrollment, once that's been done moving forward will there be a block to the PII for further enrollment.
    - TPA is investigating:
      - If a subscriber is identified as potentially deceased; the PII transfer Second step; preventing PII combination from re-enrolling if identified as deceased.
    - Sequoia Wireless: With the deceased policy and the privacy laws in California are not collecting or letting the persons opt out of putting in

the SSN will that impact other ways of verifying if they're deceased or not? Is that going to impact those searches but where are those customers coming from? What other qualified programs? Is that being correlated to make sense of increase?

- Jim (TPA): There is a pie chart that shows qualified subscriber based on income, those subscribers that qualified based on program and looking at information identified that there was an increase in subscribers qualifying based on income and that led to an - increased scrutiny; change made to review process related to that observation. We are doing a careful approach for SSN authentication with new laws
- Customer Portal 2.0 on possible features, is there an opportunity for the committee members or carriers to give comment on home some of those things are addressed?
  - Robert S.: Portal 2.0 will be through a staff proposal in the rule making. We think it's a substantial change that we want, authorized by the commission but also giving stakeholders the opportunity to due process to comment on it. We always do receive feedback from service providers, through committee, do something more formal or any of the weekly meetings.

**Break: 9:55am – 10:05am**

### **Annual Report:**

- Report is almost complete; needs editing
  - Will distribute to committee members for review
- Questions/Comments: N/A

### **Sub-Committees (2025/2025) Updates Leads:**

#### **Marketing, Retention, and Acquisition:**

- Acquisition – Robert Yap
  - Exploration to help customers become part of LL program.
    - Consent to Transfer
      - Wait times have increased/Hours of operation
        - Windows
        - Consider Sat and Sunday hours

- Are shifts in hours possible?
- 2<sup>nd</sup> issue: Sometimes SNAP database is not tied into application flow. Is that a misunderstanding or an issue being seen? Is there a timing to advise customers if they're having this issue?
  - CalFresh check is done to every applicant, before approval. If not found in database, it can be a PII issue. Unfortunately, with paper document frauds it is a challenge to move the needle.
  - Jim: CalFresh refreshes database once a week Tuesday, guidance that has been provided in the past to Service providers (SP)
- Seeing customers outside of 45-day window of non-usage, small percentage that comes back, could be an emergency phone, not using as daily. Is there a possibility for customers to come back instead of re-enrolling.
- Next steps:
  - Subcommittee meet with Maximus
  - Reaching out to communication division
    - Fine tune recommendations
  - Open it up to industry feedback
- Retention – Jason VanArsdall
  - No Updates
- Marketing – Cesar Motts
  - No update
    - Committee members to join this group
- Questions/Comments:

## **10 Open Positions – 4 Primary, 6 Alternates**

- CLEC – 1 Primary, 1 Alternate
- Consumer – 1 Alternate
- CBO – 1 Primary, 2 Alternates
- Sister Agency – 1 Primary, 1 Alternate
- Office of the Tribal Advisor – 1 Primary, 1 Alternate

**Motion to Conclude:** Robert Yap

Second: Jason Arsandale

**Meeting adjourned at 1037**