NEWS & INFORMATION

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August 3, 2009
For Immediate Release
16-09

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Low-income phone assistance customers: Verify eligibility to maintain benefits

All Iowa telephone customers receiving low-income assistance through the Lifeline/Link-Up program should watch closely for a periodic verification form or letter from their local telephone company. In Iowa, if you receive a form or letter asking you to verify continued eligibility to keep your assistance benefits, it is important that you take a few minutes to respond and return it to your telephone company within 30 days. You may also be required to provide a copy of documentation proving you meet criteria for participation.

Lifeline assistance can be terminated if a customer cannot prove continued eligibility or is no longer eligible. Although customers are required to notify their telephone company if they cease being eligible for Lifeline, periodic eligibility verification checks are also conducted so your telephone company can meet certain federal requirements. In Iowa, this typically means providing basic contact and address information, indicating your participation in other low-income programs and/or that you meet income guidelines, and attesting by signing and dating the form or letter. This should only take a few minutes but is necessary to avoid termination from the program.

Please contact your local telephone company if you have any questions or concerns about this verification process or the Lifeline assistance program. Customers not in the program but interested in learning about qualification may contact their phone service provider or contact the Iowa Utilities Board toll free at 1-877-565-4450.

Lifeline assists qualified low-income Iowans by providing a monthly reduction on their telephone bill. Link-Up assists them in obtaining basic phone service by reducing connection charges and deferring payment of connection charges without interest. The IUB Web site, www.state.ia.us/iub, has more information and an application form.

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