



For Immediate Release

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Low-income Families Can Stay Connected with Lifeline Telephone Assistance

Are you participating in Medicaid, Food Stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families? If so, you may be eligible for an annual discount of \$162 for local phone service.

Staying connected to local resources and emergency services can improve quality of life and possibly save lives. Access to local emergency services and community resources is vital to our low-income and elderly residents. The Office of Regulatory Staff wants residents to *stay connected* and is reaching out to those who need landline telephone service but cannot afford it.

Under the federal and state Lifeline program, telephone customers who participate in Medicaid, Food Stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families are eligible to receive a discount of \$13.50 per month per household on their landline telephone service.

Under the Link-up program, qualifying households that do not currently have landline telephone service are eligible for a 50% reduction in the telephone service installation charge, up to a maximum discount of \$30.

Even if you already have local landline phone service, you may qualify for the Lifeline discount if you participate in Medicaid, Food Stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

To apply for Lifeline or Link-up benefits or to get more information on these programs, call the ORS toll-free at 1-866-788-6565, or your local phone company for more information.

The Office of Regulatory Staff is an agency of the State of South Carolina. Its mission is to represent the public interest in utility regulation by balancing the concerns of the using and consuming public, the financial integrity of public utilities, and the economic development of South Carolina. For more information, please visit the ORS web site at <http://www.regulatorystaff.sc.gov/>.

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