

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/TRIBAL LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2020**

Company: Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.

Address: 415 Crown Street
PO Box 411
Wall, SD 57790

Telephone number: 605-279-2161

Company contact: Greg Oleson

Study Area Code: 391659, 391686, 391667, 391677, 391684, 391640

Lifeline/Tribal Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities:

- ✓ Advertise in media of general distribution.* (See attached advertisement(s).)
- ✓ Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/Tribal Link Up within 1st 30 days of service.* (See attached letter.)
- ✓ Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information in directory.
- ✓ Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information available on Company website. www.goldenwest.com
- ✓ Company's information posted on USAC website.
- ✓ Other (describe): - Monthly bill messages
- Various correspondence on reverification and decrease to voice Lifeline discount

*Required

General Lifeline/Tribal Link-up Advertisements

Run in newspapers across service area
in July 2019

Public Notice

As a part of its service commitment to its subscribers, Golden West provides voice grade access to the public switched network, interexchange carriers, telecommunications relay service and 911 emergency services. Golden West also provides access to operator services and directory assistance. Each local exchange access line includes a primary directory listing at no charge and a phone directory. Furthermore, customers can report service trouble to the Company 24 x 7.

Golden West understands the importance of consumers having access to quality local telephone service. To help consumers obtain and keep their local service, Golden West offers reduced rates to eligible consumers under the Lifeline and Tribal Lifeline programs. Another program, Tribal Link-Up, offers a reduction in residential phone start-up fees. Qualifying individuals subscribing to residential service who are eligible for these government programs will receive discounts off basic local charges and are eligible for toll blocking at no charge. Additional information may be obtained by calling 1-855-888-7777 and speaking to a Golden West customer service representative.

Golden West is a telecommunications carrier committed to providing high-quality basic and enhanced services at reasonable rates to all subscribers throughout its service territory.

Basic services, including expanded area local calling, are offered at the following monthly rates:

- **Single-Line Residence** **\$18.00 - \$23.48** depending on exchange
- **Single-Line Business** **\$24.95 - \$33.80** depending on exchange
- **Emergency 911 Service Fee** **\$1.00 - \$3.00** depending on exchange

1-855-888-7777
goldenwest.com



Golden West is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Mailings and Bill Stuffers that
Informed Existing and New
Customers of the Availability of
Lifeline/Tribal Link-Up**

Lifeline information sent to new customers in 2019.

LIFELINE ASSISTANCE – LOW COST INTERNET AND PHONE

Access to Internet service is vital in today's world. Lifeline provides important discounts to families who qualify.



Lifeline discounts can also be applied to a bundle with Internet.

Lifeline is a federal assistance program available from Golden West. Lifeline will provide \$9.25 per month discount towards Internet or phone service for qualifying customers.

Tribal Lifeline and Link-Up will provide qualifying residents of tribal lands with up to \$34.25 per month discount towards Internet or phone service, as well as discounted connection charges.

1-855-888-7777 | goldenwest.com/lifeline

BENEFITS OF HOME PHONE SERVICE

Unlimited Local Phone: With free local calling, staying in touch is easy and affordable.

Long Distance Calling Plans: You won't have to wonder when you can call or how long you can talk. And with bundled services, you get 150 minutes of long distance included in your package.

Toll Free Calling Plans: Available for business and residential customers, toll-free plans can go hand-in-hand with long distance calling.

Calling Features: Caller ID, Call Waiting, Call Forward, Voicemail or Anonymous Call Rejection – these are just a few of the Calling Features available.





Get Full-Speed Internet
at a Reduced Price.

April 2019 bill stuffer

Tribal

Save
\$34.25

Tribal Lifeline, a federal program available from Golden West, provides up to \$34.25 off broadband Internet or phone service each month for qualifying customers on tribal lands.

Lifeline eligibility depends on income and participation in other federal or tribal assistance programs. Only one Lifeline benefit (Internet or phone, but not both) per household. CIF - Hearing Impaired Service, Long Distance, 911 fees and other applicable charges still apply. Lifeline subscribers may also block long distance calls on their phone line at no charge. Golden West is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Call 1-855-888-7777 or visit
goldenwest.com/lifeline

 **Golden West**
We're everywhere people connect.



Get Full-Speed Internet
at a Reduced Price.

April 2019 bill stuffer
Non-Tribal

Save
\$9.25

Lifeline, a federal program available from Golden West, provides up to \$9.25 off broadband Internet or phone service each month for qualifying customers.

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Call 1-855-888-7777 or visit
goldenwest.com/lifeline

 **Golden West**
We're everywhere people connect.

STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #618
RAPID CITY SD

 **Golden West**
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790

Get Full-Speed Internet
at a Reduced Price.

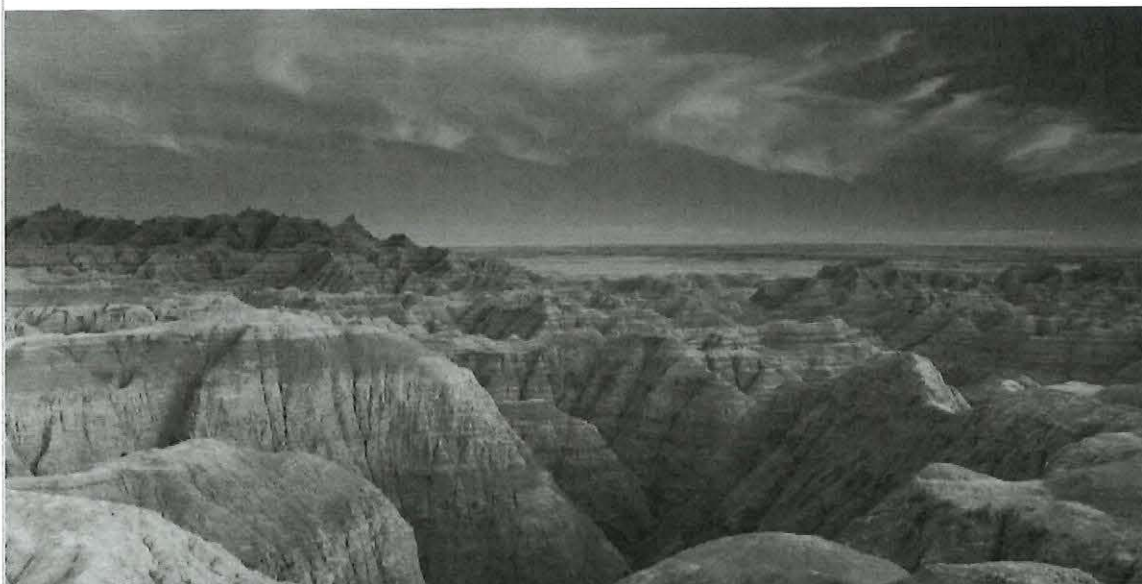
Save
\$34.25

Tribal Lifeline, a federal program available from Golden West, provides up to \$34.25 off broadband Internet or phone service each month for qualifying customers on tribal lands.

Lifeline eligibility depends on income and participation in other federal or tribal assistance programs. Only one Lifeline benefit (Internet or phone, but not both) per household. CIF - Hearing Impaired Service, Long Distance, 911 fees and other applicable charges still apply. Lifeline subscribers may also block long distance calls on their phone line at no charge. Golden West is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Call 1-855-888-7777 or visit goldenwest.com/lifeline

May 2019
Newsletter
Tribal areas



HORIZONS - Volume 19, Number 3
Horizons is an award-winning customer newsletter published bimonthly by Golden West Telecommunications.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Golden West, PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790
Dee Sleep, Editor • goldenwest.com • 1-855-888-7777

May 2019 Newsletter
Non-Tribal

STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #618
RAPID CITY SD

Golden West
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790

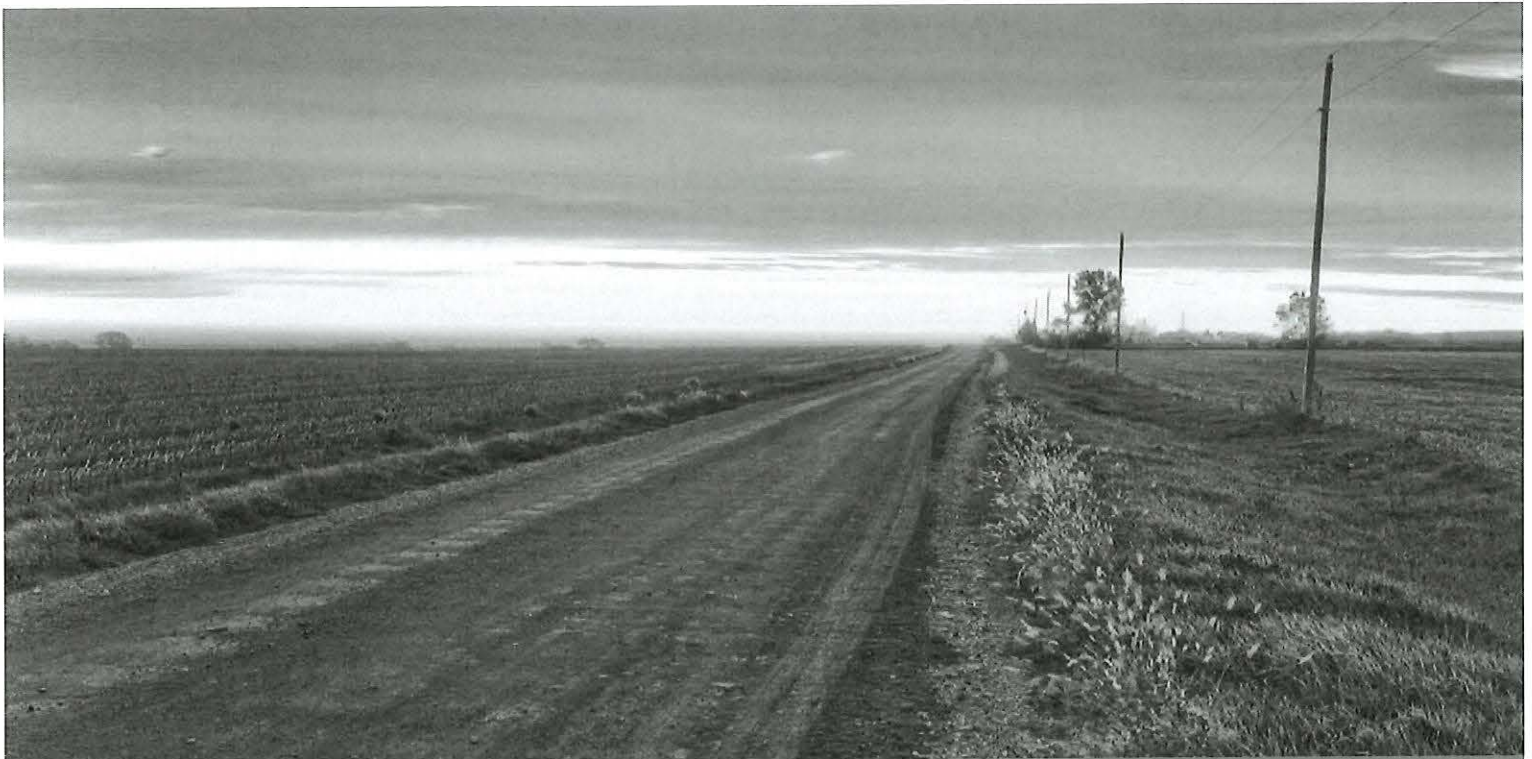
**Get Full-Speed Internet
at a Reduced Price.**

Save \$9.25

Lifeline, a federal program available from Golden West, provides up to \$9.25 off broadband Internet or phone service each month for qualifying customers.

Lifeline eligibility depends on income and participation in other federal or tribal assistance programs. Only one Lifeline benefit (Internet or phone, but not both) per household. CIF – Hearing Impaired Service, Long Distance, 911 fees and other applicable charges still apply. Lifeline subscribers may also block long distance calls on their phone line at no charge. Golden West is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Call 1-855-888-7777 or visit goldenwest.com/lifeline.



HORIZONS – Volume 19, Number 3

Horizons is an award-winning customer newsletter published bimonthly by Golden West Telecommunications.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Golden West, PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790
Dee Sleep, Editor • goldenwest.com • 1-855-888-7777

**Lifeline and Tribal Link-up
Advertisement in Company
Directory**

Access to Internet service is vital in today's world.
Lifeline provides important discounts to families who qualify.

Lifeline Assistance

Tribal Lifeline and **Link-Up** will provide qualifying residents of tribal lands with up to \$34.25 monthly discount towards qualifying Internet or phone service for eligible customers, as well as discounted connection charges.

Program Based Eligibility:

- **SNAP** • **SSI** • **Medicaid** • **FPHA or Section 8**
- **Veterans Pension/Survivors Benefit**
- **BIA General Assistance**
- **Head Start** (income eligible) • **Tribal TANF** • **FDPIR**

You may also qualify for the monthly savings if your income level falls at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Qualifying income levels range from \$16,389 for a single person household to \$33,885 for a family of four.

Lifeline discounts can also be applied to a bundle with Internet.

Lifeline is a federal program available from Golden West. Lifeline will provide up to \$9.25 per month towards qualifying Internet or phone service for eligible customers.

Program Based Eligibility:

- **SNAP** • **SSI** • **Medicaid**
- **FPHA or Section 8**
- **Veterans Pension/Survivors Benefit**

Lifeline basic monthly phone services are still available, but only one Lifeline benefit per household is permitted. You cannot transfer your Lifeline discount to someone else, even if he or she is eligible. CIF - Hearing Impaired Service, Long Distance, 911 fees and other applicable charges still apply. Lifeline subscribers may also block long distance calls on their phone line at no charge. Golden West is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

1-855-888-7777 • goldenwest.com/lifeline

 **Golden West**
We're everywhere people connect.

Telephone Directory ad
in yellow pages.

Broadband **INTERNET**

Speeds Up to 100 Mbps
VIPRE – AntiVirus Protection
Domain Hosting
Free 24/7 Support
Web Development Tools
Remote Computer Repair

Lifeline

A federal program available
through Golden West for
discounted Internet.
goldenwest.com/lifeline

1-855-888-7777

www.goldenwest.com
info@goldenwest.com

Dial 777
Customer Service

Dial 611
Repair Service

(From a Golden West Phone)

 **Golden West**
We're everywhere people connect.

PO Box 411, 415 Crown St., Wall, SD 57790 | 1510 National Ave. Hot Springs, SD 57747
PO Box 299, Billy Mills Hall, Junction Hwy 18 & 407, Pine Ridge, SD 57770

Telephone Directory ad
in yellow pages.

TELEPHONE Services

Unlimited Local Phone
Long Distance Plans
Extensive Calling Features

1-855-888-7777

www.goldenwest.com
info@goldenwest.com

Dial 777
Customer Service

Dial 611
Repair Service
(From a Golden West Phone)

Bundle Services & SAVE!

Complete PAKS –
Broadband Internet | Digital Cable TV | Phone

Internet PAKS –
Broadband Internet | Phone

Cable PAKS –
Digital Cable TV | Phone

Lifeline
A federal program available through
Golden West for discounted Internet.
goldenwest.com/lifeline

**Golden West**[®]
We're everywhere people connect.

PO Box 411, 415 Crown St., Wall, SD 57790 | 1510 National Ave, Hot Springs, SD 57747
PO Box 299, Billy Mills Hall, Junction Hwy 18 & 407, Pine Ridge, SD 57770

**Lifeline and Tribal Link-up
Information on Company
Website**

Lifeline information on
company website.

Lifeline Assistance

Lifeline (a federal program available from Golden West), includes **broadband internet or telephone**. Lifeline provides a monthly discount towards Internet or phone services for qualifying customers. This discount can also be applied to a bundles with internet.

The Tribal Lifeline and Link-Up programs allow for discounts for qualified consumers living on Tribal lands.

What do the programs provide?

LIFELINE provides qualifying customers with a monthly credit of \$9.25 off the basic service portion of their internet bill OR \$7.25 off the basic service portion of their telephone bill.

TRIBAL LIFELINE assistance for residents of tribal lands provides eligible subscribers with a up to \$34.25 monthly discount for internet service or \$32.25 for telephone service. CIF (Hearing Impaired Service) and 911 fees still apply. Lifeline subscribers may also receive blocking of long distance calls on their telephone line at no charge.

TRIBAL LINK-UP provides eligible tribal land subscribers with reduced connection charges for their basic home telephone service. This discount is 100 percent of the applicable charges up to \$100.00. It does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home and is limited to one time per home address per subscriber.

[Apply Online](#)

To see if you are eligible for Lifeline, please review the information on the links listed above. Call us at 1-855-888-7777 for more assistance.

Lifeline basic monthly phone services are still available, but only one Lifeline benefit per household is permitted. You cannot transfer your Lifeline discount to someone else, even if he or she is eligible. CIF - Hearing Impaired Service, Long Distance, 911 fees and other applicable charges still apply. Lifeline subscribers may also block long distance calls on their phone line.

Lifeline

Lifeline (a federal program available from Golden West), provides qualifying customers with a monthly credit of \$9.25 off the basic service portion of their internet bill **OR** \$7.25 off the basic service portion of their telephone bill. This discount can also be applied to a bundle with Internet.

Lifeline customers must participate in one of the following Programs or meet the below Income Levels:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) or Section 8
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs

You may also qualify for the monthly savings if your income level falls at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Qualifying income levels range from \$17,226 for a single person household to \$35,370 for a family of four.

Are there any restrictions? Lifeline can only be used for one phone line in a household. You may purchase additional services available to a non-Lifeline customer except if on LOTS program or other tribal programs. You must establish phone service prior to applying for the Lifeline discount.

What proof of eligibility do I need to provide? You will be required to provide proof of enrollment in one of the qualifying programs listed above. Proof of total household income will be required for income based qualification. Your Lifeline benefits will take effect when proof of eligibility is received.

How do I continue to receive Lifeline benefits? Eligibility will be reviewed annually. Your benefits will be discontinued when you no longer meet the eligibility requirements or when proof of eligibility is not received. Customers who are no longer eligible for Lifeline benefits must notify their phone service provider.

Being a Lifeline customer does not protect you from being disconnected if you fail to pay your bill. Customers permanently disconnected must re-certify for their Lifeline benefit. Lifeline discounts cannot be applied to an outstanding balance owed to your telecommunications company.

[Apply Online](#)

Tribal Lifeline

Tribal Lifeline (a federal program available from Golden West), provides up to \$32.25 monthly towards qualifying telephone service **OR** \$34.25 monthly towards qualifying internet service for eligible customers. This discount can also be applied to a bundle with Internet.

Tribal Lifeline customers must reside on Tribal lands and participate in one of the following Programs or meet the below Income Levels:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) or Section 8
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Head Start (income eligible)
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs

You may also qualify for the monthly savings if your income level falls at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Qualifying income levels range from \$17,226 for a single person household to \$35,370 for a family of four.

A second Federal Program, **TRIBAL LINK-UP** provides eligible tribal land subscribers with reduced connection charges for their basic home telephone service. This discount is 100 percent of the applicable charges up to \$100.00. It does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home and is limited to one time per home address per subscriber.

Are there any restrictions? Lifeline can only be used for one phone line in a household. You may purchase additional services available to a non-Lifeline customer except if on LOTS program or other tribal programs. You must establish phone service prior to applying for the Lifeline discount.

What proof of eligibility do I need to provide? You will be required to provide proof of enrollment in one of the qualifying programs listed above. Proof of total household income will be required for income based qualification. Your Lifeline benefits will take effect when proof of eligibility is received.

How do I continue to receive Lifeline benefits? Eligibility will be reviewed annually. Your benefits will be discontinued when you no longer meet the eligibility requirements or when proof of eligibility is not received. Customers who are no longer eligible for Lifeline benefits must notify their phone service provider.

Being a Lifeline customer does not protect you from being disconnected if you fail to pay your bill. Customers permanently disconnected must recertify for their Lifeline benefit. Lifeline discounts cannot be applied to an outstanding balance owed to your telecommunications company.

[Apply Online](#)

Company Information Posted on USAC Website

Do I Qualify?

How to Get Lifeline

Companies Near Me

National Verifier

How to Use it

Documents Needed

Eligibility Error Messages

Identity Error Messages

Address Error Messages

Current Customers

Lifeline Rules & Rights

Change My Company

Help

Community

Tribal Lands

Community Outreach

Companies in SD

USAC website

Note: Some of the companies listed here may not offer service to your zip code. Please contact the company to find out if they offer service to your address.

The order of this list is random and may change next time you search. The results will still be the same.

Showing 25 of 26 companies



Print List

Download List:



Company Name	Phone	Type of Service ▲	State
Swiftel Communications	605-692-6211	Home Phone	SD
Northern Valley Communications	800-556-6525	Home Phone	SD
James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company	800-556-6525	Home Phone	SD
Beresford Municipal Telephone	605-763-2500	Home Phone	SD
Kennebec Telephone Company	605-869-2220	Home Phone	SD
Consolidated Telcom	888-225-5282	Home Phone	SD
Mt. Rushmore Telephone Company	605-666-4411	Home Phone	SD
City of Faith Municipal Telephone Company	605-967-2261	Home Phone	SD
Midstate Communications	605-778-6221	Home Phone	SD
CenturyLink	800-407-5411	Home Phone	SD
West River Telecom	800-748-7220	Home Phone	SD
Western Telephone Company	800-824-7282	Home Phone	SD
ITC Telecom	800-417-8667	Home Phone	SD
TrioTel Communications, Inc.	800-242-1925	Home Phone	SD
* Golden West Telecommunications	855-888-7777	Home Phone	SD

Other Lifeline and Tribal Link- Up Advertising and Outreach

2019 Monthly bill notices

Non-Tribal

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LIFELINE BENEFITS:

You may be eligible for discounted monthly internet or phone service through Lifeline, a federal benefit program. Lifeline offers a discount of \$9.25 off the cost of internet or phone service each month. If you receive assistance from one or more of the following programs, you may be eligible:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Medicaid
Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) or Section 8
Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs

You may also qualify if your income falls at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Please call 1-855-888-7777 to learn more about eligibility and requirements, and to apply for these important benefits.

Tribal

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LIFELINE BENEFITS:

Golden West customers living on tribal lands may be eligible for discounted monthly internet or phone service through Tribal Lifeline, a federal benefit program. If you receive assistance from one or more of the following programs, you may be eligible:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Medicaid
Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) or Section 8
Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
Head Start (income eligible)
Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs

You may also qualify if your income falls at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Tribal Lifeline offers discounted monthly internet or phone service, but taxes and fees still apply. Tribal Linkup provides financial assistance for the cost of connection charges. Please call 1-855-888-7777 to learn more about eligibility and requirements, and to apply for these important benefits.

November 2019 bill stuffer sent to basic Lifeline voice customers.



Important Change to Lifeline Benefits

The Lifeline discount on phone service will decrease by \$2 a month starting December 1, 2019.

This change is being made by the Universal Service Administrative Co. under the authority of the Federal Communications Commission.



1-855-888-7777

goldenwest.com



Letter to basic Lifeline voice customers notifying them of decrease in discount. Note - Tribal Lifeline voice customers did not receive letter since the \$32.25 still covers the cost of their service.

[Name]
[Address 1]
[Address 2]
[City], [State] [Zip]

November 12, 2019

Dear [Name],

Thank you for being a Golden West customer enrolled in the federal Lifeline program. Lifeline makes communication services more affordable for qualifying consumers.

Change to Lifeline Benefit for Phone Service

The Lifeline discount you receive on phone service will decrease by \$2/month starting December 1, 2019. This change is being made by the Universal Service Administrative Co. under the authority of the Federal Communications Commission.

This is the first step in a gradual phase out of the \$9.25/month Lifeline discount on *phone service*. By the end of 2021, the Lifeline discount will apply only to qualifying broadband service.

If you have any questions about Lifeline, please call Golden West at **1-855-888-7777** or stop by one of our offices during business hours for help. Thank you again for being a Golden West customer!

Sincerely,

Golden West

January 2019 bill steffer
sent to Lifeline customers

LIFELINE

Eligibility Verification Process Changes



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

There are some upcoming changes affecting Lifeline, the program that helps make communication services more affordable for you. Eligibility requirements remain unchanged, **but beginning in January 2019, eligibility verification for Lifeline will be administered by the Universal Service Administrative Co.**

It is important that you watch your mailbox for correspondence from the Universal Service Administrative Co, as all current subscribers need to re-verify sometime during 2019. Your re-verification timeline depends on when you enrolled in Lifeline.

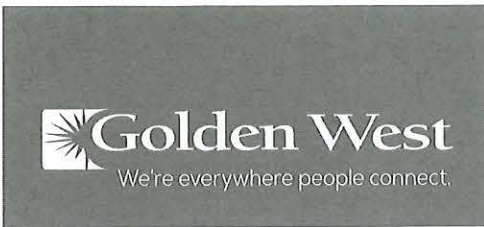
In order to continue receiving the monthly credit, you must respond as requested by the deadline listed in your letter. Subscribers can verify eligibility online or by submitting a paper application along with proof of eligibility documentation.

The Golden West logo features a stylized sunburst icon to the left of the text "Golden West" in a bold, serif font. Below "Golden West" is the tagline "You're In Good Company" in a smaller, italicized serif font. The entire logo is set against a white background with a torn-paper edge effect.

Golden West
You're In Good Company

goldenwest.com/lifeline

Golden West remains committed to assisting our members with this new process. Call **1-855-888-7777** with any questions or stop by one of our offices any time.



Letter notifying Lifeline customers of reverification process.

November 6, 2019

[Last], [First]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]

Dear [FIRST NAME],

Thank you for being a Golden West customer enrolled in the Federal Lifeline Program. The Federal Communication Commission's Lifeline program helps make communications services, including either phone or internet, more affordable for low-income consumers.

Lifeline Changes Require Everyone to Re-Verify Eligibility

The Universal Service Administrative Co. (USAC) recently took over administration of the Lifeline program in South Dakota. Now USAC needs to re-verify the eligibility of ALL LIFELINE customers this year.

Watch for Letter, Follow Instructions & Respond Quickly

Watch your mailbox this week or next for correspondence from USAC as they need additional information to re-verify you. To continue receiving the monthly discount, you must provide all of the documented items requested in the letter.

We recommend preparing and mailing the necessary documents along with the provided cover sheet well in advance of the stated deadline, which is about 60 days from the date of the letter. Providing USAC ample processing time should prevent a possible lapse in your discount.

Contact Golden West For Help

Remember, Golden West is here to assist you with this process. Call **1-855-888-7777** with any questions or stop by one of our offices during business hours for help. Thank you for being a Golden West customer!

Sincerely,

Golden West



Reminder sent to Lifeline customers who had not yet completed reverification process.

December 6, 2019

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted],

Thank you for being a Golden West customer enrolled in the Federal Lifeline Program. The Federal Communication Commission's Lifeline program helps make communications services, including either phone or internet, more affordable for low-income consumers.

REMINDER - Lifeline Changes Require Everyone to Re-Verify Eligibility

The Universal Service Administrative Co. (USAC) recently took over administration of the Lifeline program in South Dakota. Now USAC needs to re-verify the eligibility of ALL LIFELINE customers this year.

Follow Letter Instructions & Respond ASAP

In November, you received a letter from USAC asking for additional information to re-verify you. To continue receiving the monthly discount, you must provide all of the items requested in the letter.

We recommend preparing and mailing the necessary documents along with the provided cover sheet prior to the stated deadline, January 6, 2020. Providing USAC ample processing time should prevent a possible lapse in your discount.

If you've already responded to USAC, please disregard this letter.

Contact Golden West For Help

Remember, Golden West is here to assist you with this process. Call **1-855-888-7777** with any questions or stop by one of our offices during business hours for help. Thank you for being a Golden West customer!

Sincerely,

Golden West

info@goldenwest.com | goldenwest.com
PO Box 411 | Wall, SD 57790
(O) 1-855-888-7777 | (F) 605-279-2727