
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
Lifeline/Link-Up Assistance Programs

FNS 630 Lifeline/Link-Up Assistance Programs
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630.01 LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Lifeline Assistance Program is designed to promote universal service by helping low-income individuals afford telephone service. Lifeline Assistance allows those eligible low-income customers to receive a credit on their monthly telephone bill.

The Link-Up Program provides low-income persons a discount toward the cost of establishing local telephone service.

630.02 LIFELINE/LINK-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS REQUIREMENTS

- A. Customers must receive Food and Nutrition Services benefits, LIEAP, CIP, Weatherization, Housing Authority or Section 8 Assistance, Work First Family Assistance, Medicaid, or Supplemental Security Income;
- B. Head of household must have the telephone service listed in his/her name; **and**
- C. Receive the telephone bill.

NOTE: Verification of receipt of Food and Nutrition Services benefits or other low-income assistance must come from the authorizing agency.

630.03 LIFELINE PROGRAM PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATIONS/REAPPLICATIONS IN THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES PROGRAM

- A. Explain the Lifeline and Link-Up Assistance Programs to the applicant. Provide a brochure, if available.
- B. If the applicant meets the eligibility requirements and wants to apply for the Lifeline Assistance Program, have him/her sign the [DSS-8168-I](#). Hold the [DSS-8168-I](#) until the disposition of the Food and Nutrition Services Program application. Verification of the telephone bill is not required for the client to apply for the Lifeline Program.
- C. If the application is approved, complete the information on the [DSS-8168-I](#). Enter the head of household's social security number in the appropriate block on the form. Ensure the information written on the [DSS-8168-I](#) is correct and legible.
- D. Mail the completed [DSS-8168-I](#), without delay, to the appropriate telephone company. File a copy in the case record.
- E. Upon receipt of the [DSS-8168-I](#), the telephone company verifies the recipient's name and telephone number and keys the information into its system. The recipient receives the credit with his next billing cycle.
- F. A list of telephone providers and addresses is located in the FSIS User's Manual [Figure 503-3](#).

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- G. An electronic file is sent monthly from DHHS containing the household's phone information to participating phone companies for verification of receipt of benefits. The Lifeline credit is deleted from the customer's phone bill if the customer no longer receives benefits from any of the listed programs.
- H. If the application is denied or withdrawn, file the form in the case file. Do not forward to the telephone company.

630.04 LIFELINE PROGRAM PROCEDURES FOR ONGOING FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES PROGRAM CASES

- A. If the recipient is not currently receiving the credit, explain the Lifeline Assistance Program to him.
- B. If the head of household meets the eligibility requirements and wants to apply for the program, complete the [DSS-8168-I](#). Enter the payee's social security number in the appropriate block. Ensure information written on the [DSS-8168-I](#) is correct and legible.
- C. Mail the completed [DSS-8168-I](#), without delay, to the appropriate telephone company. File a copy in the case record.
- D. Upon receipt of the [DSS-8168-I](#), the telephone company verifies the recipient's name and telephone number and keys the information into its system. The recipient receives the credit with his next billing cycle.
- E. A list of telephone providers and addresses is located in the FSIS User's Manual [Figure 503-3](#).

630.05 PROCEDURES FOR RECEIVING LINK-UP ASSISTANCE FOR NEW PHONE SERVICE

A person requesting new telephone service will apply for service at the local telephone company. The telephone company will either mail the application form to the appropriate local agency or will give the client the application form to be taken to the appropriate local agency to be signed and for the agency to verify that the client is receiving benefits that make him eligible for Link-Up Assistance. Complete the form, and return it to the telephone company. In order for the person to receive the discount, the telephone company should not install the telephone until they receive the form. When the telephone company receives the [DSS-8168-I](#), the Link-Up discount will appear on the first bill.