



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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## WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL LIFELINE ELIGIBILITY VERIFIER IN FOUR ADDITIONAL STATES

### WC Docket No. 11-42

By this Public Notice, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces the launch of the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier) in Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee as of December 4, 2018.<sup>1</sup> The Commission established the National Verifier in the *2016 Lifeline Order* to make eligibility determinations and perform a variety of other functions necessary to enroll subscribers into the Lifeline program.<sup>2</sup>

As with previous states where the National Verifier has been launched, the next four states joining the National Verifier on December 4, 2018 will have a soft launch period before fully launching.<sup>3</sup> The soft launch period will allow Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs) to become familiar with the National Verifier and adjust and test their systems and business processes before use of the National Verifier becomes mandatory. In addition, as of September 19, 2018, USAC has made a pre-production test environment available to ETCs to improve their ability to conduct sample transactions and train their employees for readiness. In contrast to the service provider portal available during the soft launch, to which ETCs should only submit true data for consumers seeking to apply in the Lifeline program, the pre-production environment allows ETCs to use test data that does not reflect actual Lifeline applicants. ETCs are able to submit sample test data in the pre-production environment during soft launch to better train employees on how to use the National Verifier system. If an ETC uses existing eligibility processes to enroll subscribers during the soft launch period, the ETC must comply with the Commission's existing rules for eligibility determinations.<sup>4</sup>

During the soft launch, only ETCs will have access to the National Verifier. Consumers will be able to access the National Verifier at a later date once the full launch takes place. In addition, in states where the National Verifier has soft launched, USAC will use the National Verifier to re-verify the eligibility of consumers that already participate in the Lifeline program.<sup>5</sup> Any consumer whose eligibility cannot be verified in this process will be de-enrolled from the program. Finally, on the date of the full launch, all eligibility determinations and recertifications in these four states must be conducted by the

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<sup>1</sup> See *Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization et al.*, Third Report and Order, Further Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration, 31 FCC Rcd 3962, 4021, para. 165 (2016) (*2016 Lifeline Order*) (directing the Bureau to “issue a notification to all interested participants providing information about effective dates and any other relevant obligations” as USAC deploys the National Verifier in each state).

<sup>2</sup> See *id.* at 4006, para. 126.

<sup>3</sup> *Wireline Competition Bureau Announces the Initial Launch of the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier Database*, WC Docket No. 11-42, Public Notice, DA 18-627 (WCB June 18, 2018); *Wireline Competition Bureau Announces the Launch of the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier in Five Additional States and One Territory*, WC Docket No. 11-42, Public Notice, DA 18-1042 (WCB Oct. 11, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> See 47 CFR §§ 54.410(a), 54.410(b)(1), 54.410(c)(1), 54.410(d), 54.410(g).

<sup>5</sup> See USAC, Lifeline National Verifier Plan, WC Docket Nos. 11-42, 17-287, 09-197 and 10-90 (filed July 31, 2018).

National Verifier, pursuant to the Commission's rules.<sup>6</sup> As of the soft launch date of December 4, 2018, ETCs should not begin any recertifications for Lifeline subscribers in the four states listed above and should finish any currently open recertifications for Lifeline subscribers in these states.

For further information, please contact either Allison Jones at (202) 418-1571, [allison.jones@fcc.gov](mailto:allison.jones@fcc.gov) or Allison Baker at (202) 418-8128, [allison.baker@fcc.gov](mailto:allison.baker@fcc.gov), both of the Wireline Competition Bureau's Telecommunications Access Policy Division.

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<sup>6</sup> 47 CFR §§ 54.400(o), 54.407(a), 54.410(b)(2), 54.410(c)(2), 54.410(f)(2)(iv), 54.410(f)(3)-(5), 54.410(h).