**DA 19-686**

**Released: July 22, 2019**

**WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU ANNOUNCES COUNTIES WHERE CONDITIONAL FORBEARANCE FROM THE LIFELINE VOICE OBLIGATION APPLIES**

**WC Docket No. 11-42**

By this Public Notice, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces the counties in which conditional forbearance from the obligation to offer Lifeline-supported voice service applies, pursuant to the Commission’s *2016 Lifeline Order*.[[1]](#footnote-3) This forbearance applies only to the Lifeline voice obligation of eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) that are designated for purposes of receiving both high-cost and Lifeline support (high-cost/Lifeline ETCs), and not to Lifeline-only ETCs.[[2]](#footnote-4) The Appendix lists the counties where the Commission’s conditional forbearance from high-cost/Lifeline ETCs’ Lifeline voice obligation will apply effective on September 21, 2019.

The *2016 Lifeline Order* established conditional forbearance from Lifeline voice obligations in targeted areas where certain competitive conditions are met.[[3]](#footnote-5) To accomplish this forbearance, the Commission directed the Bureau to release a yearly public notice announcing the counties in which the competitive conditions are met.[[4]](#footnote-6) In particular, the Commission granted forbearance from high-cost/Lifeline ETCs’ obligation to offer and advertise Lifeline voice service in counties where the following conditions are met: (1) 51% of Lifeline subscribers in the county are obtaining broadband Internet access service; (2) there are at least three other providers of Lifeline broadband Internet access service that each serve at least 5% of the Lifeline broadband subscribers in that county; and (3) the ETC does not actually receive federal high-cost universal service support.[[5]](#footnote-7)

The counties listed in the Appendix meet the two competitive conditions;[[6]](#footnote-8) and for ETCs that are receiving high-cost support in these counties, the forbearance applies only in areas within the county where the ETC does not receive high-cost support.[[7]](#footnote-9) We note that this forbearance does not grant relief from the Lifeline voice obligation as to those Lifeline subscribers that the high-cost/Lifeline ETC serves as of the date of this Public Notice.[[8]](#footnote-10) Additionally, this forbearance does not preclude ETCs from electing to provide and receive reimbursement for Lifeline-discounted voice service.[[9]](#footnote-11)

This forbearance will apply in the counties identified in the Appendix of this Public Notice, to the extent that ETCs are not receiving federal high-cost universal service support in those areas, until 60 days after the Bureau issues a Public Notice in 2020 updating the list of counties in which the Commission’s conditional forbearance applies.[[10]](#footnote-12)

For further information, please contact Nathan Eagan, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, at (202) 418-0991, or at nathan.eagan@fcc.gov.

**– FCC –**

**Appendix**

**Counties and County Equivalents, by State, Where Conditional Forbearance of Lifeline Voice Obligation Applies**

| **STATE** | **COUNTY** |
| --- | --- |
| AL | ESCAMBIA COUNTY |
| AZ | MOHAVE COUNTY |
| AZ | PIMA COUNTY |
| AZ | PINAL COUNTY |
| AZ | SANTA CRUZ COUNTY |
| AZ | YUMA COUNTY |
| AR | BENTON COUNTY |
| AR | CLARK COUNTY |
| AR | CLEVELAND COUNTY |
| AR | COLUMBIA COUNTY |
| AR | CONWAY COUNTY |
| AR | CRAIGHEAD COUNTY |
| AR | CRITTENDEN COUNTY |
| AR | CROSS COUNTY |
| AR | FAULKNER COUNTY |
| AR | GARLAND COUNTY |
| AR | GREENE COUNTY |
| AR | HEMPSTEAD COUNTY |
| AR | HOT SPRING COUNTY |
| AR | JACKSON COUNTY |
| AR | JOHNSON COUNTY |
| AR | LEE COUNTY |
| AR | LITTLE RIVER COUNTY |
| AR | LONOKE COUNTY |
| AR | MILLER COUNTY |
| AR | MISSISSIPPI COUNTY |
| AR | MONROE COUNTY |
| AR | NEVADA COUNTY |
| AR | OUACHITA COUNTY |
| AR | PHILLIPS COUNTY |
| AR | POINSETT COUNTY |
| AR | POPE COUNTY |
| AR | PRAIRIE COUNTY |
| AR | PULASKI COUNTY |
| AR | ST. FRANCIS COUNTY |
| AR | SALINE COUNTY |
| AR | UNION COUNTY |
| AR | WASHINGTON COUNTY |
| AR | WHITE COUNTY |
| CA | ALAMEDA COUNTY |
| CA | BUTTE COUNTY |
| CA | CONTRA COSTA COUNTY |
| CA | FRESNO COUNTY |
| CA | GLENN COUNTY |
| CA | HUMBOLDT COUNTY |
| CA | IMPERIAL COUNTY |
| CA | KERN COUNTY |
| CA | KINGS COUNTY |
| CA | LOS ANGELES COUNTY |
| CA | MADERA COUNTY |
| CA | MERCED COUNTY |
| CA | NAPA COUNTY |
| CA | ORANGE COUNTY |
| CA | PLACER COUNTY |
| CA | RIVERSIDE COUNTY |
| CA | SACRAMENTO COUNTY |
| CA | SAN BENITO COUNTY |
| CA | SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY |
| CA | SAN DIEGO COUNTY |
| CA | SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY |
| CA | SOLANO COUNTY |
| CA | STANISLAUS COUNTY |
| CA | SUTTER COUNTY |
| CA | TEHAMA COUNTY |
| CA | TULARE COUNTY |
| CA | VENTURA COUNTY |
| CA | YOLO COUNTY |
| CA | YUBA COUNTY |
| CO | BOULDER COUNTY |
| CO | EAGLE COUNTY |
| CO | EL PASO COUNTY |
| CO | WELD COUNTY |
| GA | BALDWIN COUNTY |
| GA | BIBB COUNTY |
| GA | BROOKS COUNTY |
| GA | BURKE COUNTY |
| GA | CHARLTON COUNTY |
| GA | CLARKE COUNTY |
| GA | CRISP COUNTY |
| GA | DEKALB COUNTY |
| GA | DOUGHERTY COUNTY |
| GA | FLOYD COUNTY |
| GA | FULTON COUNTY |
| GA | GLYNN COUNTY |
| GA | GORDON COUNTY |
| GA | HART COUNTY |
| GA | JONES COUNTY |
| GA | LOWNDES COUNTY |
| GA | MCINTOSH COUNTY |
| GA | OCONEE COUNTY |
| GA | PEACH COUNTY |
| GA | RICHMOND COUNTY |
| GA | TIFT COUNTY |
| GA | TURNER COUNTY |
| GA | WALKER COUNTY |
| GA | WORTH COUNTY |
| ID | FREMONT COUNTY |
| ID | ONEIDA COUNTY |
| IL | ALEXANDER COUNTY |
| IL | FAYETTE COUNTY |
| IN | FULTON COUNTY |
| KS | ATCHISON COUNTY |
| KS | BUTLER COUNTY |
| KS | CHEROKEE COUNTY |
| KS | COWLEY COUNTY |
| KS | DOUGLAS COUNTY |
| KS | HARVEY COUNTY |
| KS | JACKSON COUNTY |
| KS | LEAVENWORTH COUNTY |
| KS | RENO COUNTY |
| KS | SEDGWICK COUNTY |
| KS | SHAWNEE COUNTY |
| KS | SUMNER COUNTY |
| KS | WYANDOTTE COUNTY |
| KY | CALDWELL COUNTY |
| KY | CAMPBELL COUNTY |
| KY | CHRISTIAN COUNTY |
| KY | CLARK COUNTY |
| KY | DAVIESS COUNTY |
| KY | HENDERSON COUNTY |
| KY | HOPKINS COUNTY |
| KY | JEFFERSON COUNTY |
| KY | LOGAN COUNTY |
| KY | MCCRACKEN COUNTY |
| KY | MADISON COUNTY |
| KY | OLDHAM COUNTY |
| KY | SHELBY COUNTY |
| KY | SIMPSON COUNTY |
| KY | TODD COUNTY |
| KY | TRIMBLE COUNTY |
| KY | WARREN COUNTY |
| LA | ASCENSION PARISH |
| ME | ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY |
| MD | BALTIMORE COUNTY |
| MD | CHARLES COUNTY |
| MD | DORCHESTER COUNTY |
| MD | HARFORD COUNTY |
| MD | HOWARD COUNTY |
| MD | BALTIMORE CITY |
| MI | ANTRIM COUNTY |
| MI | ARENAC COUNTY |
| MI | BERRIEN COUNTY |
| MI | GLADWIN COUNTY |
| MI | GRATIOT COUNTY |
| MI | HILLSDALE COUNTY |
| MI | LAKE COUNTY |
| MI | OTSEGO COUNTY |
| MI | SAGINAW COUNTY |
| MI | WAYNE COUNTY |
| MN | BECKER COUNTY |
| MN | CARLTON COUNTY |
| MN | CHISAGO COUNTY |
| MN | CLAY COUNTY |
| MN | DAKOTA COUNTY |
| MN | FREEBORN COUNTY |
| MN | HENNEPIN COUNTY |
| MN | ISANTI COUNTY |
| MN | ITASCA COUNTY |
| MN | JACKSON COUNTY |
| MN | KANABEC COUNTY |
| MN | LYON COUNTY |
| MN | MARTIN COUNTY |
| MN | MILLE LACS COUNTY |
| MN | NICOLLET COUNTY |
| MN | POLK COUNTY |
| MN | RAMSEY COUNTY |
| MN | ST. LOUIS COUNTY |
| MN | STEARNS COUNTY |
| MN | WABASHA COUNTY |
| MN | WASHINGTON COUNTY |
| MS | WINSTON COUNTY |
| MO | BOONE COUNTY |
| MO | JACKSON COUNTY |
| MO | JASPER COUNTY |
| MO | MISSISSIPPI COUNTY |
| MO | NEW MADRID COUNTY |
| MO | ST. LOUIS COUNTY |
| MO | SCOTT COUNTY |
| MO | ST. LOUIS CITY |
| NV | NYE COUNTY |
| NM | CIBOLA COUNTY |
| NM | LOS ALAMOS COUNTY |
| ND | BOTTINEAU COUNTY |
| OH | CUYAHOGA COUNTY |
| OH | LORAIN COUNTY |
| OH | TRUMBULL COUNTY |
| OK | ADAIR COUNTY |
| OK | ATOKA COUNTY |
| OK | BECKHAM COUNTY |
| OK | BRYAN COUNTY |
| OK | CANADIAN COUNTY |
| OK | CARTER COUNTY |
| OK | CHOCTAW COUNTY |
| OK | CLEVELAND COUNTY |
| OK | COAL COUNTY |
| OK | CRAIG COUNTY |
| OK | CREEK COUNTY |
| OK | CUSTER COUNTY |
| OK | DELAWARE COUNTY |
| OK | GARVIN COUNTY |
| OK | GRADY COUNTY |
| OK | HUGHES COUNTY |
| OK | KAY COUNTY |
| OK | LATIMER COUNTY |
| OK | LE FLORE COUNTY |
| OK | LINCOLN COUNTY |
| OK | LOVE COUNTY |
| OK | MCCURTAIN COUNTY |
| OK | MAYES COUNTY |
| OK | MUSKOGEE COUNTY |
| OK | NOBLE COUNTY |
| OK | OKMULGEE COUNTY |
| OK | OTTAWA COUNTY |
| OK | PAYNE COUNTY |
| OK | PITTSBURG COUNTY |
| OK | POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY |
| OK | PUSHMATAHA COUNTY |
| OK | ROGER MILLS COUNTY |
| OK | SEMINOLE COUNTY |
| OK | STEPHENS COUNTY |
| OK | TULSA COUNTY |
| OK | WAGONER COUNTY |
| OR | BAKER COUNTY |
| PA | ALLEGHENY COUNTY |
| PA | BEAVER COUNTY |
| PA | BERKS COUNTY |
| PA | BUCKS COUNTY |
| PA | CAMBRIA COUNTY |
| PA | MONTGOMERY COUNTY |
| PA | PHILADELPHIA COUNTY |
| PA | PIKE COUNTY |
| PA | VENANGO COUNTY |
| PA | WARREN COUNTY |
| PA | WASHINGTON COUNTY |
| PA | WESTMORELAND COUNTY |
| RI | BRISTOL COUNTY |
| RI | KENT COUNTY |
| RI | NEWPORT COUNTY |
| RI | PROVIDENCE COUNTY |
| RI | WASHINGTON COUNTY |
| SC | CHARLESTON COUNTY |
| SC | CLARENDON COUNTY |
| SC | FAIRFIELD COUNTY |
| SC | FLORENCE COUNTY |
| SC | MARION COUNTY |
| SC | NEWBERRY COUNTY |
| SC | ORANGEBURG COUNTY |
| SC | RICHLAND COUNTY |
| SD | LYMAN COUNTY |
| SD | MCCOOK COUNTY |
| TX | ANDERSON COUNTY |
| TX | ANGELINA COUNTY |
| TX | ARANSAS COUNTY |
| TX | ATASCOSA COUNTY |
| TX | AUSTIN COUNTY |
| TX | BANDERA COUNTY |
| TX | BASTROP COUNTY |
| TX | BEE COUNTY |
| TX | BELL COUNTY |
| TX | BEXAR COUNTY |
| TX | BLANCO COUNTY |
| TX | BOSQUE COUNTY |
| TX | BRAZORIA COUNTY |
| TX | BRAZOS COUNTY |
| TX | BROOKS COUNTY |
| TX | BROWN COUNTY |
| TX | BURLESON COUNTY |
| TX | BURNET COUNTY |
| TX | CALDWELL COUNTY |
| TX | CALHOUN COUNTY |
| TX | CAMERON COUNTY |
| TX | CAMP COUNTY |
| TX | CASS COUNTY |
| TX | CHAMBERS COUNTY |
| TX | CHEROKEE COUNTY |
| TX | CHILDRESS COUNTY |
| TX | CLAY COUNTY |
| TX | COLEMAN COUNTY |
| TX | COLLIN COUNTY |
| TX | COLORADO COUNTY |
| TX | COMAL COUNTY |
| TX | COMANCHE COUNTY |
| TX | COOKE COUNTY |
| TX | CORYELL COUNTY |
| TX | DALLAS COUNTY |
| TX | DEAF SMITH COUNTY |
| TX | DENTON COUNTY |
| TX | DEWITT COUNTY |
| TX | DIMMIT COUNTY |
| TX | DUVAL COUNTY |
| TX | EASTLAND COUNTY |
| TX | ECTOR COUNTY |
| TX | ELLIS COUNTY |
| TX | EL PASO COUNTY |
| TX | ERATH COUNTY |
| TX | FALLS COUNTY |
| TX | FANNIN COUNTY |
| TX | FAYETTE COUNTY |
| TX | FLOYD COUNTY |
| TX | FORT BEND COUNTY |
| TX | FRANKLIN COUNTY |
| TX | FREESTONE COUNTY |
| TX | FRIO COUNTY |
| TX | GALVESTON COUNTY |
| TX | GILLESPIE COUNTY |
| TX | GOLIAD COUNTY |
| TX | GONZALES COUNTY |
| TX | GRAY COUNTY |
| TX | GRAYSON COUNTY |
| TX | GREGG COUNTY |
| TX | GRIMES COUNTY |
| TX | GUADALUPE COUNTY |
| TX | HALE COUNTY |
| TX | HARDEMAN COUNTY |
| TX | HARDIN COUNTY |
| TX | HARRIS COUNTY |
| TX | HARRISON COUNTY |
| TX | HAYS COUNTY |
| TX | HIDALGO COUNTY |
| TX | HILL COUNTY |
| TX | HOOD COUNTY |
| TX | HOPKINS COUNTY |
| TX | HOWARD COUNTY |
| TX | HUNT COUNTY |
| TX | HUTCHINSON COUNTY |
| TX | JACKSON COUNTY |
| TX | JASPER COUNTY |
| TX | JEFFERSON COUNTY |
| TX | JIM WELLS COUNTY |
| TX | JOHNSON COUNTY |
| TX | JONES COUNTY |
| TX | KARNES COUNTY |
| TX | KAUFMAN COUNTY |
| TX | KENDALL COUNTY |
| TX | KLEBERG COUNTY |
| TX | LAMAR COUNTY |
| TX | LAMPASAS COUNTY |
| TX | LA SALLE COUNTY |
| TX | LAVACA COUNTY |
| TX | LEE COUNTY |
| TX | LIBERTY COUNTY |
| TX | LIVE OAK COUNTY |
| TX | LLANO COUNTY |
| TX | LUBBOCK COUNTY |
| TX | MCLENNAN COUNTY |
| TX | MADISON COUNTY |
| TX | MARION COUNTY |
| TX | MATAGORDA COUNTY |
| TX | MAVERICK COUNTY |
| TX | MEDINA COUNTY |
| TX | MIDLAND COUNTY |
| TX | MILAM COUNTY |
| TX | MITCHELL COUNTY |
| TX | MONTAGUE COUNTY |
| TX | MONTGOMERY COUNTY |
| TX | NACOGDOCHES COUNTY |
| TX | NAVARRO COUNTY |
| TX | NOLAN COUNTY |
| TX | NUECES COUNTY |
| TX | ORANGE COUNTY |
| TX | PALO PINTO COUNTY |
| TX | PANOLA COUNTY |
| TX | PARKER COUNTY |
| TX | PECOS COUNTY |
| TX | POLK COUNTY |
| TX | POTTER COUNTY |
| TX | RAINS COUNTY |
| TX | RANDALL COUNTY |
| TX | REAGAN COUNTY |
| TX | REFUGIO COUNTY |
| TX | ROBERTSON COUNTY |
| TX | ROCKWALL COUNTY |
| TX | RUNNELS COUNTY |
| TX | RUSK COUNTY |
| TX | SAN JACINTO COUNTY |
| TX | SAN PATRICIO COUNTY |
| TX | SCURRY COUNTY |
| TX | SMITH COUNTY |
| TX | STARR COUNTY |
| TX | TARRANT COUNTY |
| TX | TAYLOR COUNTY |
| TX | TITUS COUNTY |
| TX | TOM GREEN COUNTY |
| TX | TRAVIS COUNTY |
| TX | TYLER COUNTY |
| TX | UVALDE COUNTY |
| TX | VAL VERDE COUNTY |
| TX | VAN ZANDT COUNTY |
| TX | VICTORIA COUNTY |
| TX | WALKER COUNTY |
| TX | WALLER COUNTY |
| TX | WARD COUNTY |
| TX | WASHINGTON COUNTY |
| TX | WEBB COUNTY |
| TX | WHARTON COUNTY |
| TX | WICHITA COUNTY |
| TX | WILBARGER COUNTY |
| TX | WILLACY COUNTY |
| TX | WILLIAMSON COUNTY |
| TX | WILSON COUNTY |
| TX | WISE COUNTY |
| TX | WOOD COUNTY |
| TX | ZAPATA COUNTY |
| TX | ZAVALA COUNTY |
| WA | SAN JUAN COUNTY |
| WA | YAKIMA COUNTY |
| WV | BOONE COUNTY |
| WV | FAYETTE COUNTY |
| WV | JACKSON COUNTY |
| WV | MASON COUNTY |
| WV | MERCER COUNTY |
| WV | RALEIGH COUNTY |
| WV | ROANE COUNTY |
| WV | SUMMERS COUNTY |
| WI | MENOMINEE COUNTY |
| PR | AGUADA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | AGUAS BUENAS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | ANASCO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | ARECIBO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | BARCELONETA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | BARRANQUITAS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | BAYAMON MUNICIPIO |
| PR | CATANO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | CIALES MUNICIPIO |
| PR | COMERIO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | COROZAL MUNICIPIO |
| PR | CULEBRA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | DORADO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | FLORIDA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | GUAYANILLA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | GUAYNABO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | HATILLO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | HORMIGUEROS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | HUMACAO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | ISABELA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | JAYUYA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | JUANA DIAZ MUNICIPIO |
| PR | JUNCOS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | LARES MUNICIPIO |
| PR | LAS MARIAS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | LAS PIEDRAS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | MARICAO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | MOCA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | MOROVIS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | NAGUABO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | NARANJITO MUNICIPIO |
| PR | PONCE MUNICIPIO |
| PR | RINCON MUNICIPIO |
| PR | SABANA GRANDE MUNICIPIO |
| PR | SALINAS MUNICIPIO |
| PR | SAN GERMAN MUNICIPIO |
| PR | SAN JUAN MUNICIPIO |
| PR | SAN SEBASTIAN MUNICIPIO |
| PR | SANTA ISABEL MUNICIPIO |
| PR | TOA ALTA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | TOA BAJA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | VEGA ALTA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | VEGA BAJA MUNICIPIO |
| PR | YAUCO MUNICIPIO |

1. *Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 11-42 et al., Third Report and Order, Further Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration, 31 FCC Rcd 3962, 4082-4093, paras. 335-60 (2016) (*2016 Lifeline Order*). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
2. *Id.* at 4078-79, para. 325. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
3. *Id.* at 4079, para. 326. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
4. *Id.* at 4093, para. 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
5. *Id.* at 4082-83, 4090-93, paras. 335, 354-60. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
6. Using National Lifeline Accountability Database data as of March 2019, approximately 77% of the counties identified in the Appendix were also eligible for this conditional forbearance in 2018. The remaining 23% of the counties newly met both competitive conditions in 2019. There are also 698 counties that are no longer eligible for conditional forbearance because they do not meet the two competitive conditions in 2018. *See Wireline Competition Bureau Announces Counties Where Conditional Forbearance From the Lifeline Voice Obligation Applies*, Public Notice, 33 FCC Rcd 7303 (WCB 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
7. *Id.* at 4093, para. 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
8. *Id.* at 4083, 4085, paras. 335, 340. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
9. *Id.* at 4085, para. 342. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
10. *Id.* at 4093, para. 360. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)