

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of
Telecommunications Carriers Eligible for Universal
Service Support
WC Docket No. 09-197

ORDER

Adopted: December 15, 2022

Released: December 15, 2022

By the Chief, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. In this Order, we approve the request of T-Mobile Northeast LLC (T-Mobile) to relinquish its Lifeline-only eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) designation in Virginia, effective as of December 31, 2022.

2. Section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the Act), authorizes the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) to designate a carrier as an ETC when a state commission lacks jurisdiction.

3. On July 3, 2012, the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) and the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) designated T-Mobile as an ETC in one census tract in Virginia, contingent on T-Mobile receiving support in Mobility Fund Phase I.

1 See T-Mobile Northeast LLC's Petition for Relinquishment of its Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designation Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4), WC Docket No. 09-197 (filed September 1, 2022) (T-Mobile Virginia ETC Relinquishment Petition).

2 See id. at 2.

3 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6).

4 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4).

5 Petition of T-Mobile for FCC Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for Mobility Fund Phase I, WC Docket No. 09-197, Order, 27 FCC Rcd 7247 (WCB/WTB 2012).

6 See Petition of T-Mobile USA, Inc. for Designation as a Low-Income Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, Amended Petition of NTCH, Inc. for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, WC Docket No. 09-197, Order, 27 FCC Rcd 9495, 9500, para. 17 (WCB 2012).

the relinquishment of T-Mobile's high-cost designation in Virginia.<sup>7</sup> As the Commission granted T-Mobile's designation here, we can review the present relinquishment petition in accordance with the Act.<sup>8</sup>

4. The Bureau has determined that T-Mobile meets all of the requirements for relinquishment,<sup>9</sup> and most significantly, T-Mobile has committed to providing advance notice to impacted subscribers to inform them of their new service options after T-Mobile leaves the Lifeline program.<sup>10</sup> This notice process will afford T-Mobile's Lifeline customers time to select an alternative discounted calling plan from T-Mobile subsidiary Assurance Wireless, remain on their exiting plans without a Lifeline discount, or obtain discounted Lifeline service from another provider.<sup>11</sup> Based on these facts, we conclude that it is appropriate to grant T-Mobile's request to relinquish its ETC designation.<sup>12</sup>

5. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to the authority contained in section 214(e)(4) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 214(e)(4), and the authority delegated in sections 0.91 and 0.291 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.91, 0.291, the ETC designation of T-Mobile IS RELINQUISHED in Virginia (SAC 199016).<sup>13</sup>

6. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that T-Mobile SHALL TRANSMIT a copy of this Order to the relevant state commission in Virginia and the Universal Service Administrative Company.

7. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to section 1.102(b)(1) of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 1.102(b)(1), this order SHALL BE EFFECTIVE upon release.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Jodie C. Griffin  
Chief  
Telecommunications Access Policy Division  
Wireline Competition Bureau

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<sup>7</sup> *Telecommunications Carriers Eligible for Universal Service Support*, WC Docket No. 09-197, Order, 36 FCC Rcd 9377 (WCB 2021).

<sup>8</sup> The Act asserts that “[a] State commission (or the [Federal Communications] Commission in the case of a common carrier designated under paragraph (6)) shall permit an eligible telecommunications carrier to relinquish its designation . . . .” 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4).

<sup>9</sup> See T-Mobile Virginia ETC Relinquishment Petition at 2-4; 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4).

<sup>10</sup> See T-Mobile Virginia ETC Relinquishment Petition at 4; see also Letter to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC from Indra Sehdev Chalk, T-Mobile USA, Inc. at 1 (filed Nov. 10, 2022) (detailing T-Mobile's plan to give customers a 60-day period to transfer service before the company ends subsidized support for the customer).

<sup>11</sup> See *id.*

<sup>12</sup> See 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4).

<sup>13</sup> USAC shall discontinue the eligibility of the SAC 199016 assigned to T-Mobile in Virginia according to the effective dates established in this Order.