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**For Immediate Release**

**AUTOMATED CONNECTION BETWEEN MEDICAID AND LIFELINE  
DATABASES GOES LIVE**

***Connection between Lifeline National Eligibility Verifier and Medicaid Can  
Verify Eligibility of Up To 60% of Lifeline Population***

WASHINGTON, September 18, 2019—The FCC took a major step forward in its efforts to streamline and strengthen consumer eligibility verification for the Lifeline program, as a nationwide automated connection between the Medicaid program and the Lifeline National Eligibility Verifier went live Tuesday.

The connection between the Medicaid and Lifeline databases means that the eligibility of up to 60% of the Lifeline-eligible population can be confirmed automatically. Automation will streamline the process for both subscribers and service providers, and result in more effective protection against waste, fraud, and abuse.

Lifeline is the FCC program that provides subsidies to make phone and broadband service more affordable for low-income consumers. Medicaid, which is overseen by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), provides health coverage to millions of Americans, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults, and people with disabilities.

“This partnership between Medicaid and Lifeline is a major step in the implementation of the Verifier,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “I would like to thank CMS Administrator Seema Verma for her agency’s work with us to bring the economic, educational, and social benefits of Lifeline-enabled broadband to low-income Americans, while helping us reduce waste, fraud, and abuse in the program.”

Said Administrator Verma, “Americans deserve a government that functions efficiently, and delivering on that promise requires a commitment to innovation and partnership. Sharing our data with our federal partners strengthens program integrity, protects taxpayer dollars, and improves customer service.”

The FCC established the National Eligibility Verifier in 2016 to create an independent third-party eligibility verification process, rather than relying solely on Lifeline service providers, which have a conflict of interest in the process. To date, the Verifier has launched in 38 states and territories, and the program administrator, the Universal Service Administrative Co. (USAC), is working to roll out the Verifier to the rest of the United States by the end of the year—in line with the schedule the Commission laid out for the Verifier in 2016.

Establishing automated connections with existing state and federal programs by which applicants can demonstrate eligibility for Lifeline is key to the efficient and effective operation of the Verifier. The FCC has been working closely with state, federal, and Tribal agencies to make these connections. In addition to the connection with CMS that went live Tuesday, the FCC has established automated connections with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and with twelve states.

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