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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Order Instituting Rulemaking to
Update the California Universal
Telephone Service (California
LifeLine) Program.

Rulemaking 20-02-008

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE'S RULING CLARIFYING ACP PILOT
PROGRAMS WILL CONTINUE TO MAY 31, 2024**

This ruling clarifies the status of the California Universal Telephone Service Program (California LifeLine) pilot programs approved in Decision (D.) 23-06-003 to leverage Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) funds. As authorized in D.23-06-003, these pilot programs will continue through at least May 31, 2024. If the ACP receives additional federal funding, the pilot programs may continue up to June 8, 2025.¹

1. Background

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) administers the ACP to help low-income households access affordable broadband services. In D.23-06-003, the Commission approved two pilot programs for California LifeLine participants to leverage ACP funds to test participation rates, services, and use. These pilot programs conclude on the date that is the sooner of (a) two years after D.23-06-003's effective date of June 8, 2023, or (b) on the date that the ACP concludes.²

¹ If the ACP does not receive additional funding, the California LifeLine ACP pilot programs will conclude on May 31, 2024.

² D.23-06-003 at 47, Conclusion of Law no. 4.

On January 11, 2024, due to a lack of funding from Congress, the FCC released an Order announcing steps to wind down the ACP.³ On March 4, 2024, the FCC provided notice that the last fully funded month for the ACP benefit is April 2024.⁴ On March 19, 2024, the FCC announced that the estimated range of partial May 2024 reimbursements are \$7-\$16 per month for the non-tribal service benefit.⁵

2. Discussion

Because the FCC will make a partial ACP benefit available through May 31, 2024, authorized providers may continue participating in the pilot programs approved in D.23-06-003 for May 2024.⁶ Providers who continue their participation in the pilot programs shall comply with all rules and procedures of D.23-06-003 in coordination with or in addition to all FCC requirements. Such compliance includes the information gathering and reporting requirements in D.23-06-003, which is why the Commission launched the pilot programs.

Compliance also includes providing California LifeLine customers with at least 30 days' notice before transitioning from pilot service plans to standard California LifeLine service plans, discontinuing service, or making service terms more restrictive. If the ACP does not receive additional federal funding by April

³ See *Affordability Connectivity Program*, WC Docket No. 21-450, Order, DA 24-23 (January 11, 2024).

⁴ See *Affordability Connectivity Program*, WC Docket No. 21-450, Public Notice, DA 24-195 (March 4, 2024).

⁵ See *Affordability Connectivity Program*, WC Docket No. 21-450, Public Notice, DA 24-274 (March 19, 2024).

⁶ TracFone informed the Commission it will continue to participate. For May 2024, pilot providers will remain eligible to receive the California LifeLine subsidy authorized in D.23-06-003. However, the Commission will not compensate for the reduction in the federal ACP support.

30, 2024, authorized providers must provide California LifeLine customers notice by May 1, 2024.

IT IS RULED that:

1. The pilot programs authorized in D.23-06-003 will continue through May 31, 2024. If the ACP receives additional federal funding, the pilot programs may continue up to June 8, 2025.
2. Authorized providers may continue their participation in the pilot programs approved in D.23-06-003 provided they comply with all rules and procedures of D.23-06-003.
3. If the ACP does not receive additional federal funding by April 30, 2024, authorized providers must notify California LifeLine customers by May 1, 2024, that their service may be discontinued or otherwise changed.

Dated March 27, 2024, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ ROBYN PURCHIA
Robyn Purchia
Administrative Law Judge