



# California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

## News Release

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Docket #: Res. T-16742

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### **PUC EXPANDS CALIFORNIA TELECONNECT FUND PROGRAM**

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) today expanded the California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) to focus efforts on providing educational institutions, health care institutions, community-based organizations and governmental institutions with access to advanced telecommunications services in recognition of their economic and societal impact.

The Commission previously established the CTF to provide discounts on selected telecommunications services to qualified schools, libraries, municipal or county government owned and operated hospitals or health clinics and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) offering health care, job training, job placement and/or education instruction. The program offers varying discounts and quantities of services to the different types of qualifying entities. The CTF program discounts are funded by surcharges on consumer telephone bills.

The CTF rules currently provide different types and quantities of services at varying discount levels. The changes to the CTF program rules adopted today will allow all qualifying entities to receive the same quantities and types of services at the highest discount levels, 50 percent. Among the services available to participating entities, Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) service is specifically named as a service eligible for CTF funding.

Today's decision also streamlines the CTF application for all participants, reflecting changes to the program qualifying requirements and application process. Applicants will now file directly with the Commission rather than the utility.

The decision adds hospital district owned and operated hospitals and health clinics to the list of health care institutions eligible to participate in the program. It also adopts a reporting requirement for carriers to file estimates of program expenses associated with reimbursements for CTF discounts for future periods.

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