

Stay Connected !

HOW CAN I GET HELP PAYING FOR TELEPHONE SERVICE?

Financial assistance is available in Idaho to help qualified low-income individuals pay for telephone service. The Idaho Telephone Service Assistance Program (ITSAP) offers a \$2.50 discount on monthly telephone bills. A separate program – the Federal Communication Commission’s Lifeline Program (Lifeline) - offers a monthly discount of \$9.25.

HOW MUCH WILL I SAVE?

\$11.75 off your monthly telephone bill if you qualify for both ITSAP (the State of Idaho’s program) and Lifeline (Federal Program). The discount applies to only **one** telephone number **per household**.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To qualify for both ITSAP and Lifeline, you must be a residential customer who is:

- ❖ Head of the household.
- ❖ Income eligible (income cannot exceed 135% of Federal Poverty Guidelines).
- ❖ The name and telephone number on your application must match telephone company records.

HOW DO I APPLY?

- ❖ Contact a Community Action Partnership office or an Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Regional Office.
- ❖ If you are eligible, your name and telephone number will be submitted to your local telephone company.

WHAT IF MY INCOME IS MORE THAN 135% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES?

- ❖ If your income exceeds 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), you do not qualify for ITSAP. However, you may qualify for Lifeline if you are a participant in one of the following federal assistance programs:
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
 - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
 - National School Lunch Program’s Free Lunch Program
- ❖ If your income exceeds 135% FPG and you are a participant in one of these programs, you must apply for Lifeline directly with your local telephone company.

IS TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR CELLULAR (WIRELESS) SERVICE?

Some cellular companies offer telephone assistance discounts. See the list of **Eligible Telecommunication Carriers** (<http://www.puc.idaho.gov/telecom/etc%20list.PDF>) on the Commission's website. If you already receive assistance for landline service, you cannot receive an additional discount for cellular service. Some cellular companies only participate in the Federal Lifeline Program. Customers of those companies are not eligible to receive the ITSAP (state) discount and must apply directly to the cellular company for Lifeline (federal) assistance.

WHAT IF I LIVE ON TRIBAL LANDS?

Under programs established by the Federal Communications Commission, a customer living on tribal lands may be eligible for additional federal financial assistance for local telephone service. Assistance is also available for the cost of setting up new telephone service. Contact your tribal office or your local Community Action Partnership office for more information.

DO I NEED TO APPLY EVERY YEAR?

Yes. If you still meet the eligibility criteria and wish to continue receiving financial assistance, you must re-apply every year.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ITSAP

The Idaho Telephone Assistance Program (ITSAP) provides a communication "lifeline" to those who might not otherwise be able to afford telephone service. It also enhances the value of service for everyone by increasing the number of people who can be reached by telephone. A small surcharge is applied to every Idaho telephone line each month to reimburse local telephone companies for the cost of state discounts under ITSAP. The surcharge is waived for customers receiving the ITSAP discount. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) reviews the surcharge annually and may increase or decrease the surcharge.