



# Public Service Commission

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Audrey Zibelman, Chair

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## **LIFELINE AWARENESS WEEK, SEPTEMBER 14-20** **— Monthly Phone Service Bill Discount for Income-Eligible Consumers —**

**ALBANY** — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today announced September 14-25, 2015, as “Lifeline Awareness Week” to encourage income-eligible customers to sign up for a discount on telephone service through the Lifeline program. The program provides qualified consumers with discounts for monthly residential phone bills for basic telephone service.

“Lifeline is an important federal initiative program that helps qualifying low-income consumers connect to the nation's communication network,” said Commission Chair Audrey Zibelman. “Having telephone service is a vital link to finding jobs, accessing health care services and calling for help in an emergency. The National Lifeline Awareness Week helps remind consumers and service providers about eligibility and other rules, including the annual recertification requirement, to make this program as efficient and effective as possible.”

There are currently more than one million wireless and wireline Lifeline subscribers in New York. The Commission is currently conducting a detailed examination of the state of telecommunications in New York State. That examination has determined that Lifeline continues to be a valuable program to ensure that residents have access to phone service, and assist New York in achieving its universal service goals.

Consumers interested in learning more about the Lifeline program, can do so at the following events:

**Albany Public Library**  
161 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY  
11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
September 14, 2015

**North Tonawanda Inter-Church Food Pantry**  
100 Ridge St., North Tonawanda, NY  
10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
September 17, 2015

**Cohoes Community Center**  
27 Remsen St., Cohoes, NY  
9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.  
September 16, 2015

**Alpha Phi Alpha Senior Center**  
220-01 Linden Blvd., Cambria Heights, NY  
1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.  
September 17, 2015

Lifeline information will be available at various Commission consumer events across the State throughout September. Under the Lifeline program, wireline customers receive a waiver of the federal subscriber line charge, a savings of at least \$75 annually, as well as a discount on their telephone service. The total discount varies depending on the telephone service provider. Lifeline is also

available from some wireless companies and benefits may include free phones, discounted rates and free minutes.

Customers participating in the following programs are eligible for the Lifeline program: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps), Medicaid, Non-Service Related Veterans' Disability or Surviving Spouse Pension, Free School Lunch Program, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Family Assistance or the Safety Net Assistance programs.

Customers whose income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines are also eligible to apply for the Lifeline discount. Only low-income consumers with proof of eligibility are qualified to enroll. Federal rules prohibit customers from receiving more than one Lifeline discount. Existing Lifeline subscribers must recertify their eligibility every year.