

# THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF THE ANNUAL FILING  
REQUIREMENTS FOR 2021 PERTAINING  
TO THE PROVISIONING OF LIFELINE  
UNIVERSAL SERVICE.

CASE NO. 21-1116-TP-COI

## ENTRY

Entered in the Journal on December 15, 2021

### I. SUMMARY

{¶ 1} All eligible telecommunications carriers must provide the Commission with the requisite recertification information provided to the Federal Communications Commission and the Universal Service Administrative Company.

### II. DISCUSSION

{¶ 2} On February 6, 2012, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Report and Order in *In the Matter of Lifeline and Link-Up Reform and Modernization, Lifeline and Link-Up, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Advancing Broadband Availability Through Digital Literacy Training*, WC Docket No. 11-42, WC Docket No. 03-109, WC Docket No. 96-45, WC Docket No. 12-23 (Lifeline Reform Order), adopting reforms that address waste, fraud, and abuse with regard to the federal Universal Service Fund (USF).

{¶ 3} Included within the FCC's Lifeline Reform Order was a directive for all Lifeline eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) to annually recertify their entire customer base no later than December 31, and to submit aggregated recertification data to the FCC and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) by January 31. Additionally, the FCC required ETCs to provide such recertification data to the relevant state commission, where the carrier is subject to state jurisdiction. Lifeline Reform Order at ¶148.

{¶ 4} The FCC in its *Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization et al.*, Third Report and Order, Further Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration, 31 FCC Rcd 3962, 4115-4517, 4120, (2016), adopted rules to change the subscriber eligibility recertification

process from once each calendar year to a rolling process based on each subscriber's service initiation date. Specifically, beginning with anniversary dates on July 1, 2017, the rolling recertification process requires subscriber eligibility to be recertified every 12 months following the subscriber's service initiation date. This requirement is codified at 47 C.F.R. 54.410(f).

{¶ 5} Ohio is one of those states where ETCs are subject to state jurisdiction. Therefore, all designated Ohio Lifeline ETCs are reminded of the rolling recertification obligation and the requirement of filing the applicable "Annual Lifeline Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Certification Form" (FCC Form 555) with the FCC and USAC by January 31, 2022. Additionally, if an ETC has not already done so, such recertification information should be electronically submitted to the Commission Staff at: [LLReCert@puc.state.oh.us](mailto:LLReCert@puc.state.oh.us).

### III. ORDER

{¶ 6} It is, therefore,

{¶ 7} ORDERED, That all ETCs comply with Paragraph 5. It is, further,

{¶ 8} ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served via the Commission's electronic mail Telephone Industry Service List, upon all incumbent local exchange carriers, all competitive local exchange carriers, all providers of telephone toll service, all wireless service providers registered with the Commission, the office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel, the Ohio Telecom Association, and all other interested persons of record.

COMMISSIONERS:

*Approving:*

Jenifer French, Chair

M. Beth Trombold

Lawrence K. Friedeman

Daniel R. Conway

Dennis P. Deters

JSA/mef

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**Case No(s). 21-1116-TP-COI**

Summary: Entry ordering that all eligible telecommunications carriers must provide the Commission with the requisite recertification information provided to the Federal Communications Commission and the Universal Service Administrative Company electronically filed by Heather A. Chilcote on behalf of Public Utilities Commission of Ohio