

Maryland Office of People's Counsel
ALERT
OPC REVISED Consumer Guide Available
New Rules for Lifeline Assistance
Effective December 2, 2016
And
*Now *October 31, 2017**

On December 2, 2016, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) granted Maryland a waiver that allows it to postpone the new eligibility requirements for the Lifeline Assistance (Verizon Tel-Life) telephone program until October 31, 2017. The other Lifeline program changes (such as broadband eligibility) went into effect on December 2, 2016, as scheduled.

There are two major changes to Lifeline Assistance Rules, including this revised date:

- ✚ In addition to voice service, the Lifeline discount now applies to broadband service and bundled (voice and broadband) service. This change happened December 2, 2016.
- ✚ The automatic eligibility rules have changed in Maryland. As of December 2, 2016, Marylanders enrolled in federal Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit programs can now qualify for new Lifeline service. Maryland's current eligibility requirements for Lifeline will remain unchanged until October 31, 2017, when certain federal and state qualifying programs will be dropped.

Please visit our website at www.opc.maryland.gov to view or download a copy of OPC's "Lifeline Assistance: A Consumer Guide- Revised." We encourage you to share this with other organizations and agencies that work with households in need in your communities.

The revised guide replaces the older ones with December 1 and December 2, 2016 effective dates. **Please discard the earlier versions and replace with this Guide.**

If you would like a PDF or hard copy of the guide, please send an e-mail at DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov , or call 410-767-8150 (1-800-207-4055).

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