

T.30 § 218 (c)(1) Revised language to address changes made by the FCC Modernization Order of 2016 and 47 C.F.R § 54.401 et seq (listing federal eligibility criteria)

Proposed Revisions to 30 V.S.A. 218(c):

Definitions:

Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) are those telecommunications providers designated as such by the Public Service Board pursuant to Federal law.

(c)(1) The Public Service Board shall take any action necessary to enable the State of Vermont and telecommunications companies offering service in Vermont to participate in the Federal Communications Commission telephone Lifeline program and the Vermont Lifeline program, as described in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) A household who qualifies for participation in the Federal Communications Commission Lifeline under criteria established by the Federal Communications Commission or other federal law or regulation shall be eligible to receive a Vermont Lifeline benefit for wireline voice telephone service. The Vermont Lifeline benefit established under this subdivision shall be set at an amount not to exceed the credit afforded a household as of October 31, 2017 or \$4.25, whichever is greater, and shall be applied as a supplement to a wireline voice benefit received through participation in the Federal Communications Commission Lifeline program. However, in no event shall the aggregate amount of the credits received through the federal and state benefit programs described in this subdivision exceed the monthly basic service charge, including any standard usage and mileage charges.

(3) Companies designated as Eligible Telecommunications Carriers by the Board shall verify eligibility for receipt of the Vermont and federal Lifeline benefit in compliance with any applicable law or regulation or as directed by the Vermont Agency of Human Services. The Vermont Agency of Human Services shall be responsible for providing the Federal Communications Commission or its agent with categorical eligibility data regarding applicant's status in qualifying programs under the Agency of Human's Services administration.

(4) Persons eligible to receive benefits under the Federal Communications Lifeline program shall receive such federal benefits pursuant to applicable federal law and regulations issued by the Federal Communications Commission.

(5) Notwithstanding any provisions of this subsection to the contrary, a 1 subscriber who is enrolled in the Lifeline program and has obtained a final 2 relief from abuse order in accordance with the provisions of 15 V.S.A. chapter 3 21 or 33 V.S.A. chapter 69 shall qualify for a Lifeline benefit credit for the amount of the incremental charges imposed by the local telecommunications company for treating the number of the subscriber as nonpublished and any charges required to change from a published to a nonpublished number. For purposes of this section, "nonpublished" means that the customer's telephone number is not listed in any published directories, is not listed on directory assistance records of the company, and is not made available on request by a member of the general public, notwithstanding any claim of

emergency a requesting party may present. The Department shall develop an application form and certification process for obtaining this Lifeline benefit credit.

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