

MassHealth Member & Provider Resource

Telephone and Internet Connectivity for Telehealth

Updated October 2022

The following information is intended to be a resource to help members and providers who have questions about receiving services through telehealth. The information in this document is accurate as of the date of publication.

Subsidized Internet Service and Internet Connected Devices

[Lifeline](#) and the [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) are federal programs that help low-income households pay for internet service and internet connected devices.

Members can receive both the Affordable Connectivity Program and Lifeline benefits. The benefits can be applied to the same qualifying service or separately to a Lifeline service and an Affordable Connectivity Program service with the same or different providers. For example, an eligible household could have a Lifeline-supported mobile phone service and a separate home internet service that is supported through the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Affordable Connectivity Program

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, health care, and more. All MassHealth members are eligible to participate in the ACP, which provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households. ACP-eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers.

As of October 2022, to deliver maximum cost savings to families, 20 leading internet providers are offering ACP-eligible households a high-speed internet plan for no more than \$30 per month. **Eligible families who pair their ACP benefit with one of these plans can receive high-speed internet at no cost.**

Eligibility

There are three ways to qualify for the ACP benefit:

1. Income-based eligibility (household income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines)
2. Program-based eligibility (Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Supplemental Security Income, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Certain Federally Recognized/State Tribal Assistance Programs, Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit, Free and Reduced School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, Federal Pell Grant, and Lifeline)
3. Through a participating broadband provider's existing low-income internet program

Lifeline Program

Lifeline is a federal program that provides no-cost or low-cost phone service to low-income households. All MassHealth members are eligible to participate in the Lifeline program, which provides a \$9.25 discount from a certified Lifeline service provider. Lifeline subscribers have the choice of applying their benefit discount to either a home phone or internet plan or a wireless phone plan with internet, which includes a free mobile phone. Only one Lifeline program discount is available per household, defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses.

Eligibility

There are two ways to qualify for the Lifeline program:

1. Income-based eligibility (household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines)
2. Program-based eligibility (Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Supplemental Security Income, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Certain Federally Recognized/State Tribal Assistance Programs, and Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit)

Enrolling in Lifeline or the Affordable Connectivity Program

To apply for Lifeline or ACP, use the federal [National Verifier application system](#). The National Verifier is a centralized system established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and operated by Universal Services that verifies applicants' eligibility and recertifies subscriber eligibility annually.

Members who would like assistance from a service provider when applying can use the “[Companies Near Me](#)” tool to locate a program service provider in their area. After their eligibility is confirmed, members can enroll with a Lifeline or ACP service provider to select a plan and have the discount applied to their bill.

Note: Eligible households must both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan in order to enroll.

Eligibility and enrollment information is available at www.lifelinesupport.org and www.affordableconnectivity.gov.