Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission

Tariff No. T-7

The T-7 Tariff provides a central location for issues that affect many or all communications service providers. Terms, conditions, and rates contained herein, are available for concurrence by any provider in that provider's individual tariff. Use of the T-7 is not required. (T) (T)

Explanation of Symbols

(C) – to signify changed regulation or rate (See note below)
(D) – to signify discontinued or deleted rate or regulation
(I) – to signify increase
(N) – to signify new rate or regulation
(R) – to signify reduction
(S) – to signify reissued or relocated material/text
(T) – to signify a change in text but no change in rate or regulation

NOTE: When used in reference to a rate, the symbol (C) indicates that a changed rate or method of applying a rate will result in either an increase or a decrease for certain customers.

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1.0 INDIANA UNIVERSAL SERVICE SURCHARGE

1.1 Description

Pursuant to the requirements of the Final Order (March 17, 2004) in Cause No. 42144, all customer billings for intrastate retail telecommunications service on and after October 1, 2007 shall reflect an additional charge to fund the Indiana Universal Service Fund (IUSF). The purpose of the IUSF is to implement a competitively neutral funding mechanism that promotes universal telecommunications service to all Indiana residents by ensuring availability of basic telecommunications services at just, reasonable, and affordable rates that are reasonably comparable between urban and rural areas of Indiana.

1.2 Conditions

a. The surcharge shall be applied and remitted to the IUSF by all companies that provide intrastate retail telecommunications service, subject to the exclusions currently defined and described in the July 25, 2007 Docket Entry in Cause 42144. (Indiana Universal Service Fund Implementation Guidelines)

b. The surcharge will apply to billed intrastate retail telecommunications service revenues, as currently defined and described in the Final Order and Indiana Universal Service Fund Implementation Guidelines. The surcharge percentage multiplied by the billed intrastate retail telecommunications revenue charged to the end user customer for the prior month, less intrastate uncollectibles, shall be remitted to the IUSF administrator.

c. The surcharge is subject to change pursuant to the procedure set forth in the Final Order in Cause No. 42144 and the Final Order in Cause No. 42144-S3 (February 22, 2012).

1.3 Amount of Surcharge

Monthly Surcharge: 1.09 percent of billed intrastate retail telecommunications service revenues. (I)

1.4 Concurrence

To ensure compliance with the IUSF program, telecommunications providers serving Indiana customers shall be bound by:

a. this tariff by submitting a letter of concurrence to the IURC Communications Division;

b. their own equivalent tariff if the provider maintains a tariff at the IURC; or

c. the substantive provisions contained in this tariff shall be followed by all other providers that receive intrastate, retail telecommunications revenue.

2.0 LOW-INCOME PROGRAMS

2.1 Description

The Low-Income Program is a federal program, currently defined in 47 CFR 54.401, that reimburses eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) and lifeline broadband providers (LBPs) for reducing their monthly service charges for eligible fixed or mobile voice telephony service as defined in 47 C.F.R. 54. 400(m) or eligible broadband internet access service (BIAS) as defined in 47 C.F.R. 54.400(l) to eligible low-income customers. The Company participates in this assistance program to increase the availability of fixed or mobile voice telephony services, (BIAS), or bundle(s) containing fixed or mobile voice telephony service and BIAS, to all consumers in its service areas.

The Low-Income Program was approved pursuant to the Commission's Order of November 5, 1997, in Cause No. 40785. As stated on Page 10 of that Order, any telecommunications carriers desiring to be declared an ETC for the purpose of receiving interstate Universal Service Funds may file a concurrence in the Lifeline portion of the I.U.R.C. T-7 tariff, or a stand-alone tariff for such low-income programs. The structure of the program is outlined in the following paragraphs.

On April 27, 2016, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released the *Lifeline Link Up Reform and Modernization Order, Third Report and Order, Further Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration* on April 27, 2016. In that Order, the FCC added BIAS as a supported service and created a process for federal designation of LBP eligible telecommunications carriers.

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Lifeline service must be provided at or above the minimum service standards, and consistent with the implementation schedule and deadlines, established by the FCC in 47 CF.R. § 54.408.
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2.2 Definitions

The following terms shall be defined as follows:

Eligible Broadband Internet Access ("BIAS") – a "mass market retail service by wire or radio that provides the capacity to transmit data to and receive data from all or substantially all Internet endpoints, including any capabilities that are incidental to and enable the operation of the communications, but excluding dial-up service." (47 CFR 54.400(l).

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Eligible Voice Telephony Service – "voice grade access to the public switched network or its functional equivalent; minutes of use for local service provided at no additional charge to end users; access to emergency services provided by local government or other public safety organizations, such as 911 and enhanced 911, to the extent the local government in an eligible carrier's service area has implemented 911 or enhanced 911 systems; and toll limitation service to qualifying low-income consumers as provided in 47 CFR Part 54, Subpart E." 47 CFR 54.400(m).

Qualifying low-income subscriber – a subscriber who meets the low-income eligibility criteria established by the Federal Communications Commission, through:

a. Participation in at least one of the following federal programs[1]: Medicaid; Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) also known as food stamps; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8 (a Federal Housing Assistance Program administered by the Department of Urban Development); Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefits; **or**.

b. Annual Household Income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Toll blocking – a service provided by carriers that lets consumers elect not to allow the completion of outgoing toll calls from their telecommunications channel.

Toll control – a service provided by carriers that allows consumers to specify a certain amount of toll usage that may be incurred on their telecommunications channel per month or per billing cycle.

Toll limitation – denotes both toll blocking and toll control.

[1] 47 CFR 54.400(j).

2.0 LOW-INCOME PROGRAMS (Continued)

2.3 Lifeline Assistance

a. Description

Lifeline Assistance reduces an eligible Customer's monthly rate for the following services[2] meeting the minimum service requirements pursuant to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations in 47 C.F.R. 54.408:

1. eligible voice telephony service, as defined in 47 CFR 54.400(m); or
2. eligible broadband internet access service (BIAS), as defined in 47 CFR 54.400(l).

b. Regulations

1. Lifeline Assistance is available to all residential customers who meet the following eligibility requirements[3]:

   a) Customers must be participants in at least one of the following programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), federal public housing assistance or Section 8 (a Federal Housing Assistance Program administered by the Department of Urban Development), Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefits; **or**

   b) Annual Household Gross Income as defined in 47 C.F.R. 54.400(f) is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

   c) The customer is not already receiving Lifeline service from any Lifeline provider, and there is nobody else in the customer's household subscribed to a Lifeline service offered by any Lifeline provider. (T)

2. The National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier, also known as the National Verifier (NV), was launched in Indiana in March 2019 in compliance with FCC 16-38. A Lifeline provider must not seek reimbursement for providing Lifeline service unless the Lifeline provider has received proof from the NV that the subscriber meets income or program-based eligibility, as described in 47 C.F.R. 54.410(b)(2) and (c)(2), respectively. An eligible customer may request Lifeline assistance directly through the Lifeline provider, by mail, or an on-line consumer portal of the NV.
   https://www.checklifeline.org/lifeline (T)

[2] 47 CFR 54.400(n).
[3] 47 CFR 54.409.

3. Eligible Lifeline customers may apply the Lifeline discount to bundled services that include one or more of the services listed in subsection a., above, as long as one of the services in the bundle satisfies the minimum service standard requirements in section a. (S)

4. The Lifeline discount is limited to one discounted service and one subscriber per eligible household [4] per month.[5]

5. Pursuant to 47 CFR 54.401(a)(2), "Toll limitation service does not need to be offered for any Lifeline service that does not distinguish between toll and non-toll calls in the pricing of the service. If an eligible telecommunications carrier charges Lifeline subscribers a fee for toll calls that is in addition to the per month or per billing cycle price of the subscribers' Lifeline service, the carrier must offer toll limitation service at no charge to its subscribers as part of its Lifeline service offering."

6. Local service deposit requirements will be waived for customers who voluntarily receive Toll Blocking Service or Toll Control Service.

[4] The term "household" is defined in 47 CFR 54.400(h).
[5] This is consistent with the prohibition on "duplicative support", as defined in 47 CFR 54.400(g).

2.0 LOW-INCOME PROGRAMS (Continued)

2.3 Lifeline Assistance (Continued)

c. Credits

The following credits will apply for each customer eligible for Lifeline Assistance:

	Monthly Credit	
Federal credit for voice-only or bundled service that does not meet the minimum service standard	$5.25	(N)
Federal Credit for BIAS or bundled service that meets the minimum service standard	$9.25	

3.0 DUAL PARTY RELAY SERVICES SURCHARGE[5]

3.1 Description

Dual Party Relay Services for hearing impaired and speech impaired persons provide access to telephone services that are functionally equivalent to those provided to individuals not having hearing or speech impairments. Dual Party Relay Services are subject to rules and regulations as prescribed by the FCC (Disabilities Act of 1990, 47 U.S.C. 225) and the House of Enrolled Act 1608.

Dual Party Relay Access Service was approved pursuant to the Commission's Order of September 11, 2002, in Cause No. 39880-INTRAC4. Pursuant to that Order, "All Indiana local exchange telephone companies, prior to placing in effect the new surcharge, shall either concur in the IURC T-7 tariff, Section 4, or file a company-specific revised tariff with the Commission's Telecommunications Division." (Cause No. 39880-INTRAC4, Page 3)

This surcharge is imposed on each residence and business line (or line equivalent) to fund and recover the costs for developing and providing Dual Party Relay Services.

3.2 Amount of Surcharge

Charges	Monthly Surcharge
Per residence line or business line or line equivalent	$.03

[5]Material on this sheet formerly appeared on Part I, Section 4, 1st Revised Sheet 1.