NOTICE OF TAP UPDATES AND REQUIREMENTS
Issued: February 12, 2021

In the Matter of Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) Review

PUC Docket Number: P999/CI-20-665
P999/CI-21-72

Background: At the December 23, 2020, agenda meeting, the Commission voted to change the TAP surcharge to $0.07 cents and the credit to $10.00. The Commission will continue monitoring enrollment in the TAP program.

Updates:
- Effective April 1, 2021: the monthly TAP Credit is $10.00 per household and the monthly TAP Surcharge is $0.07 per line.
- Effective April 2021: use of the 2021 April TAP Reporting Form. The form is available on the Commission’s website at mn.gov/puc select “For Utilities” select “Telecommunications.” See tab labeled “TAP Forms” select the 2021 April TAP Reporting Form.
- The Commission believes that a combination of raising the credit per household and broadening the mission and membership of the TAP-Lifeline Advisory Group to look at voice and broadband programming along with changes in communications technology is the appropriate response at this time.
- Commission staff will convene the TAP-Lifeline Advisory Group with a broader mission and membership to take a more holistic approach to low-income communication access by looking at both voice and broadband programming along with the inevitable migration due to technology changes and recent Federal Communications Commission programming changes. Staff has begun to coordinate with the Office of Broadband Development at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, as directed by the Commission.

Existing requirements on local service providers:
- Mail a notice annually to each residential consumer in a regular billing of the availability of TAP. A template is available for your use at mn.gov/puc select “For Utilities” select “Telecommunications.” See tab labeled “TAP Tools,” select “Template for Annual Notice to Residential Customers for Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) and the Federal Lifeline Programs.”
- Mail the TAP Application form to customers when requested. See mn.gov/puc select “For Utilities” select “Telecommunications.” See tab labeled “TAP Tools,” select TAP Application.
- If an ETC, complete an Annual Lifeline Recertification Form 555 with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and file those results in Docket P999/PR-21-20. There is no recertification process for TAP only subscribers.
Additional efforts by the Commission:

- The Commission agrees that the TAP Advisory Group can play an important role in exploring communications trends, including changes in TAP’s federal counterpart, Lifeline, and the migration away from landlines and toward mobile devices and broadband internet service. The Commission will direct the TAP Advisory Group to work with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development on these trends and issues.

- Commission staff will monitor the impact of National Verifier on TAP subscribers that also receive Lifeline.
- The Commission’s Lifeline - TAP Advisory Group will be consulted for ideas regarding outreach and enrollment.

Questions about this docket or Commission process and procedure? Contact Commission staff, Theresa Staples, at theresa.staples@state.mn.us or 651-201-2202.

Questions about the Commission’s outreach efforts? Contact CAO at consumer.puc@state.mn.us, 651-296-0406, or 1-800-657-3782.

Change your mailing preferences: Email docketing.puc@state.mn.us or call Leesa Norton at 651-201-2246.

To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 (voice). Consumers with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email consumer.puc@state.mn.us for assistance.