



## **Keeping Transition Aged Youth Connected: What Civil Legal Aid Providers Need to Know about the LifeLine Foster Youth and California LifeLine Programs**

*Having a cell phone and access to the internet has never been more crucial for transition aged youth. This access supports academic and employment success, keeps young people connected to family, community, and support networks, and provides information and resources that are needed to thrive and succeed in our rapidly changing technological world.*

*This Youth Law Center fact sheet provides information on two California state programs for which Transition Aged Youth may be eligible that will allow them to stay connected.*

### **CALIFORNIA LIFELINE FOSTER YOUTH PROGRAM**

#### **What is the LifeLine Foster Youth Program?**

The LifeLine Foster Youth Program is now a permanent program in California and is administered by Maximus and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The program provides eligible young people: (1) a new Motorola Moto G Power 5G Phone; (2) a phone charger and protective case; and (3) a free monthly phone plan that includes unlimited talk and text messaging, up to 25 GB of high-speed data, and up to 10 GB of mobile hotspot data.

#### **Who is eligible for the LifeLine Foster Youth Program?**

The following young people are currently eligible for the program:

- Youth ages 13-17 who are in foster care.
- Young people who are ages 18-21 and are in extended foster care.

This eligibility includes youth placed in a foster care placement by a probation department. In addition, young people are eligible for the program for 6 months after they leave foster care OR age 21, whichever comes first.

#### **How does a young person apply for the LifeLine Foster Youth Program?**

To begin the application process, a young person should register and create an account on the LifeLine Foster Youth Program portal: <https://californialifeline.com/Foster/en/account/register>. Once they create an account, they will be prompted to begin the application. A young person in extended foster care can apply on their own. All applicants will need proof of current foster care status.

#### **Where do I go if I need more information about the LifeLine Foster Youth Program?**

You can find a detailed FAQ document [here](#).

## CALIFORNIA LIFELINE PROGRAM

### What is the California LifeLine Program?

The California LifeLine is a program that provides low-to-no-cost phone service to eligible households in California. If an individual is eligible for the program, they will not pay full retail prices for phone service. The California LifeLine program will cover cell phone service or landline phone service. Most California cell phone LifeLine providers offer unlimited phone calls, unlimited text messages, and at least 6 GB of mobile data per month at no cost.

### Who is eligible for the California LifeLine Program?

Transition Aged Youth regardless of system involvement may be eligible for this program! Eligibility includes TAY who are “aging out” of the LifeLine Foster Youth Program as well as any TAY who meets the eligibility requirements (including those who have not been involved in the child welfare system).

An individual must be age 18—or judicially emancipated— or older to be eligible for the program. Eligibility is calculated per household. A household can be eligible in one of two ways:

- (1) **Program Based:** If you are enrolled in a benefit program like Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), CalFresh, CalWORKs, federal housing assistance like a Housing Choice Voucher/Foster Youth to Independence or Family Unification Program Voucher. (You can click [here](#) for a full list of qualifying programs; or
- (2) **Income Based:** if your household’s total annual gross income (the amount left after taxes) is at or less than the limits listed [here](#). Because many young people leaving the foster care or juvenile justice systems receive Medi-Cal or CalFresh, it is likely that they will be eligible for the California LifeLine Program.

### How does a transition aged youth apply for the California LifeLine Program?

Here are the steps to get started:

1. Search for a California LifeLine Service Provider by using this link [https://californialifeline.com/en/provider\\_search](https://californialifeline.com/en/provider_search) and inputting your zip code. You will be provided a list of eligible cell phone providers to choose from. You can choose the provider whose plan works best for you. You can also find out about providers in your area by calling the LifeLine Call Center at 1-866-272-0357.
2. To get cell phone service, you can sign up on the phone provider’s website, by calling the service provider, or in-person at their store or with their street team. (Street teams set up tables or pop-up tents in front of social service benefits offices or county buildings and help eligible people sign up for LifeLine.) You will need to submit basic information (i.e., name, birthday,

address, the last four digits of your Social Security Number, and whether you qualify via program-based or income-based eligibility) in order to apply.

**Where do I go if I need more information about the California LifeLine Program?**

You can find out more information about the California LifeLine program by going to the website:  
<https://www.californialifeline.com/en>