



California Public Utilities Commission

ULTS Administrative Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes December 19, 2023

Please join the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for the Universal LifeLine Telephone Service Administrative Committee Meeting:

When: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 (9:00 a.m. – Noon)

Where: 100% Virtual

WebEx Meeting: <https://cpuc.webex.com/cpuc/j.php?MTID=m19f890f3e2580aaed2c42266699afb20>

Call-in Number: 1-855-282-6330 **Access Code:** 2485 157 1919 **Meeting password:** 2023 (2023 from phones and video systems)

Agenda

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| 9:00 a.m. – 9:05 a.m. | Introduction: David Avila, Chair |
| 9:05 a.m. – 9:10 a.m. | Welcome: Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma |
| 9:10 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. | Approval of Minutes: Committee reviews and approves the last meeting minutes prepared by the Communications Division (CD) |
| 9:15 a.m. – 9:20 a.m. | Public Comments |
| 9:20 a.m. – 9:40 a.m. | Equity and Access Grant Program – Stephanie Green |
| 9:40 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | CPUC Communications Division (CD) Updates: Robert Sansone • Foster Youth, SSN4 and Other Program Updates |
| 10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Third-Party Administrator - Maximus Report |
| 10:30 a.m. – 10:40 a.m. | BREAK |
| 10:40 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. | Benchmark Comparisons of CA LifeLine to Other States: Chris Burke |
| 10:50 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Fiscal Report: Lalaine Semana |

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| 11:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m. | CAB Consumer Contact Statistics Report: Rosa Sauer |
| 11:10 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. | Claims Status: Lisa Anthony |
| 11:20 a.m. – 11:35 a.m. | USAC Update: David Avila |
| 11:35 a.m. – 11:45 am | Review of Administrative Committee Vacancy Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 open positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Large ILEC – 1 Alternate o CLEC – 1 Alternate o Small ILEC – 1 Alternate o Consumer – 1 Primary, 1 Alternates o CBO – 1 Primary, 3 Alternates |
| Noon | Adjournment |

Member Roster

| | | | | |
|----|--|----------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Large ILEC | Primary Alternate | Chris Burke Vacant | Frontier Communications |
| 2 | Small ILEC | Primary Alternate | Linda Lassen Vacant | Sierra Tel |
| 3 | CLEC | Primary Alternate | Marcie Evans Vacant | Cox Communications |
| 4 | Wireless | Primary Alternate | David Avila Alex Gudkov | TracFone Wireless, Inc. TruConnect |
| 5 | Deaf / Hearing Impaired or Disabled Rep | Primary Alternate | Kate Woodford Brian Winic | Center for Accessible Technology CA Department of Rehabilitation |
| 6 | Consumer | Primary Alternate | Vacant Vacant | |
| 7 | Consumer | Primary Alternate | Vinhcent Le Caroline Siegel-Sing | Greenlining |
| 8 | CBO | Primary Alternate | Cesar Motts Vacant | Southeast Community Development Corp. |
| 9 | CBO | Primary Alternate | Andre Chapple Vacant | Faith Church, African American Empowerment, National Diversity Coalition, Answer City Outreach |
| 10 | CBO | Primary Alternate | Vacant Vacant | |
| 11 | CPUC's Public Advocates Office | Primary Alternate | Christopher Bartulo Sharmila Selvalakshmirajeswara | Public Advocates Office Public Advocates Office |

Meeting Minutes – ULTS-AC Meeting, December 20, 2023, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Attendees: 6 primary members and 4 alternate presents.

Primary members: Chris Burke, Linda lassen, Marcie Evans, David Avila, Kate Woodford, Vinhcent Le, Susan Mott, Andre Chapel, Christopher Bartulo.

Alternates: Alex Gudkov, Brian Winic, Caroline Siegel-Singh, Sharmila Selvalakshmirajeswara

Other Attendees: Lisa Anthony, Robert Sansone, Rosa Sauer, Lalaine L. Semana, Cheryl Wynn, Sindy J. Yun, Rosa Sauer, Jim Graettinger, Danyl Cordoba, Rebecca Amissah-McKinney, Rick DiLollo, Sydney Williams, Kellie Jones, Judy Holiday

Introduction: David Avila – Opening remarks

Approval of Minutes:

- Chris Burke – Motion to approve.
- Vinhcent - Second
- Motion approved by the committee members.

Public Comments:

- **Danielle bond:** how to create a whitelist for non-profit organization addresses?
David Avila: the household worksheet enables shelters and non-profit organizations to use their addresses as a whitelist.
Robert Sansone: but the screening is done by the service providers before it reaches Maximus, we'll continue to work with service providers to solve this problem.

Equity and Access Grant Program – Stephanie Green:

See presentation: #1

Equity and Access Grant Program Overview

- Background
- Funding Summary
- Public Participation Grant Program
- Application Windows
- Eligible Entities
- Eligibility Requirements
- Eligible Activity Participation Roles
- Eligible Participation Actions for Compensation:
- Application Process:
 - Apply.
 - Apply, Ask, and Stay Informed.

Questions/Comments:

David Avila: what is the Purpose of the funds?

Stephanie Green: Not the Expert on the Bylaws, but UTLS meetings that are not covered by the bylaws could be covered by this grant. I'm going to defer this to Kelly, or Lisa our legal advisors who are more intimately involved with the bylaws.

Marcie Evans: How many applications were received?

Stephanie Green: 4-5

Marcie Evans: The total amount available on the accounts is 28.5 million does the remaining 1.5 million the cost of the overall program, Or is that set aside elsewhere?

Stephanie Green: The remaining 1.5 million is for administrative costs and also the tribal cost set aside.

CPUC Communications Division (CD) Updates: Robert Sansone:

- The Pilot Rolling For commission decision with 82,000 Participants majority being on Lower tier B,
- I Foster Participation 11,700 participants.
- SSN4 ongoing Goal, working toward creating a pathway, and no public update now.

Questions/Comments:

David Avila: SSN4 pathway is an open room or there is a set date?

Robert Sanson: no public notice yet, staff internally working on an administrative solution.

3rd Party Administrator – Maximus Report: Jim Graettinger

See presentation: #2

Completed initiatives:

- Enhanced TPA's "Customer Escalation" Process – September 12
- California LifeLine Customer Portal, Phase I – December 15
- Co-branded Flyer with Anthem Blue Cross,

Question / Comments:

David Avila: How is the Anthem Blue Cross customer's enrollment experience?

Jim Graettinger: The Anthem Blue Cross process is educational only to engage with individuals, eligible to inform them about LifeLine. Down the road, we plan to partner with providers to confirm eligibility using their database.

Robert Sansone: far down-the-road proposition, because the customers must engage with service providers before starting the application process. The second phase of the portal will be separating the application process and establishing eligibility before engaging with service providers.

Upcoming initiatives:

- California Lifeline Customer Portal, Phase II
- Implementing a "lookback" for weekly USAC federal broadband-only subscribers lists.
- Program and operation reports.

Questions/Comments:

Marcie Evans: have we looked for Hard denial that returned after 30 days?

Jim Graettinger: During COVID: when 5000 customers were removed for non-usage, we tracked them for a year to determine who came back, around 20% of the customers came back.

Benchmark Comparisons of CA LifeLine to Other States: Chris Burke

See presentations: #3 A

Top 10 States By 1life1line Eligible Households:

- Whether the level of participation is driven by the level of competition or the competitive carriers?

It's fairly consistent in the level of incumbent Vs competitors,

The majority of competitors are Wireless but for California 8 % are Wireline.

Questions/Comments:

Robert Sansone: TX has more service providers than California and NY, but they have more subscribers.

Chris Burke: TX More Rural, has multiple companies under one name, as well as the nature of the geographics of TX.

Robert: Sansone: Why do some smaller States have higher subscribers?

Chris Burke: Keep in mind those are Federal USAC numbers and the state participation not included.

The larger portion of participants falls under the state program.

See presentation: #3 b.

- Graph of Puerto Rico Lifeline Claims from 2018 – 2023.
- Lifeline claims spike in the year after major hurricanes:
2017 hurricanes – Maria and Irma,
2022 hurricanes – Fiona and Nicole

See presentation: #3 c.

- Graph of California Lifeline Claims from 2018 – 2023.
- PR and California are demographically different and disaster size is different. PR Hurricane affects the entire state but California wildfires don't affect the whole state.

Fiscal Report: Lalaine Semana

See Presentation: #4

- The current fiscal year for the period ending October 31, 2023
- Total Revenue: \$73,526,953
- Total Appropriation: \$718,322,194
- Total Expenditures: \$40,086,802
- Outstanding Encumbrance: \$ 17,058,416
- Remaining/Available Appropriation: \$661,176,976
- Total Available Cash as of June 30, 2023: \$499,994,800
- Cash available as of today: 524,000,000

Questions/Comments:

no questions

CAB Consumer Contact Statistics Report: Rosa Sauer

Consumer Affairs Branch LifeLine Overview

See Presentation: #5

- Consumer Affairs Branch LifeLine Overview
 - CAB has dedicated specialists and consumer affairs specialists to assist consumers with LifeLine-related issues:
 - Appealing LifeLine denials
 - Disputing various issues with LifeLine Service Provider
 - Requesting information on LifeLine application process
 - Resolving consumer questions or complaints with LifeLine application process regarding Rules/General Order 153; a lot of consumers have knowledge of the General Order
 - Resolving issues with wireless devices; is a non-jurisdictional issue for us; however, we do reach out to the Service Providers and see what it is that we can do for them.
- LifeLine Contacts Received by CAB: September 2023 – November 2023
- LifeLine Contacts Closed by CAB September 2023 – November 2023
- LifeLine Contacts Received and Closed by CAB - 15-Month Trend
- Top LifeLine Contact Categories Received by CAB: June 2023 – August 2023

Questions/Comments:

David Avila: Are you seeing any indications that December and January will be the busiest?

Rosa Sauer: we had a large spike this December and after doing some research, we received 78 Complaints appealing LifeLine's Denial claiming that they put their initials in step 2 of the application. Maximus had an issue in September with the Spanish consumer application step 2 not being scanned. Will set with Maximus to overturn those denials.

Claims Status: Lisa Anthony

See presentation #6: Claims Processing Update

- September 2023 – Received almost all wireless and wireline claims for the month. CPUC has completed review and approvals for almost all claims that have been submitted.
- October 2023 – Service Providers have until December 29th to submit October claims however, we have received and processed a large portion of October claims to date. 85 % Wireless, 74 % Wireline received.
- November 2023 – We are starting to receive claims for November and are processing them as received.; November claims are due by January 31st.

Questions/Comments:

David Avila: Did the claim amount Change on February 1st?

Marcie Evans: No, on January 1st.

David Avila: Do service providers need to provide advice letters?

Robert Sansone: Yes, they need to.

USAC Update: David Avila

See Presentation #7

Federal Lifeline and ACP Update.

- Federal Lifeline Participation
- California ACP Participation and Disbursements by Congressional District
- National Verifier/NLAD Updates
- Lifeline National Verifier/NLAD
- Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
- ACP Updates
- Total ACP Subscribers by Verification Method
- Total ACP Subscribers by Verification Method
- FCC COVID-19 and Natural Disaster Waivers
- Lifeline National Verifier Database Connections

Review of Administrative Committee Vacancy Status

- 9 open positions

o Large ILEC – 1 Alternate

o CLEC – 1 Alternate

o Small ILEC – 1 Alternate

o Consumer – 1 Primary, 1 Alternates

o CBO – 1 Primary, 3 Alternates

Future Q4 Meeting Date: TBD

- Questions/Comments:

Marcie Evans: Can it be closer to the beginning of March?

Robert Sansone: It can be any day in the quarter.

Meeting adjourned: 11:35 a.m.