

Thomas Burns  
651.621.8322 – Direct  
651.621.8323 – Facsimile  
tgburns@otcpas.com



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November 30, 2017

Daniel P. Wolf  
Executive Secretary  
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
121 Seventh Place E, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

Re: In the Matter of the Petition of West Central Telephone Association for Designation  
as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

Dear Mr. Wolf:

Enclosed via eFiling please find the Original Filing, Summary of Filing, Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“Petition”), and Affidavit of Service in the above entitled Docket on behalf of West Central Telephone Association (“WCTA”).

Sincerely,

*/s/ Thomas G. Burns*

Thomas G. Burns  
Consultant on behalf of West Central Telephone Association

**STATE OF MINNESOTA  
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Nancy Lange  
Dan Lipschultz  
Matt Schuerger  
John Tuma  
Katie Siebin

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

In the Matter of the Petition of West Central  
Telephone Association for Designation as an  
Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

MPUC Docket No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**ORIGINAL FILING**

West Central Telephone Association ("WCTA") requests the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") for an order designating it as an "eligible telecommunications carrier" ("ETC") for the limited purposes of providing local services under the Lifeline program.

The filing includes the following attachments:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Attachment 1 | One paragraph summary of the filing in accordance with Minn. Rules pt. <a href="#">7829.1300</a> .  |
| Attachment 2 | Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, which contains a description of the filing, the impact on Petitioner and affected ratepayers, and the reasons for the filings, provided in accordance with Minn. Rules pt. 7829.1300, subp. 4(F). |
| Attachment 3 | Affidavit of Service.   |

In addition, the following information is provided, in accordance with Minn. Rules pt. 7829.1300, subp. 4:

Utility:	West Central Telephone Association 308 Frontage Rd. Sebeka, MN 56477
Date of Filing	11/30/2017
Controlling Statute for Time in Processing the Filing	Minn. Rules pt. <a href="#">7811.1400</a> , subp. 12

If additional information is required, please contact me at 651.621.8322.

/s/ *Thomas G. Burns*

Thomas Burns  
Consultant on behalf of West Central Telephone Association

**STATE OF MINNESOTA  
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Nancy Lange	Chair
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In the Matter of the Petition of West Central  
Telephone Association for Designation as an  
Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

MPUC Docket No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF FILING**

West Central Telephone Association ("WCTA") requests the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") for an order designating it as an "Eligible Telecommunications Carrier" ("ETC") for the limited purposes of providing local services pursuant to the Lifeline program.

**STATE OF MINNESOTA  
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Nancy Lange	Chair
Dan Lipschultz	Vice Chair
Matt Schuerger	Commissioner
John Tuma	Commissioner
Katie Siebin	Commissioner

In the Matter of the Petition of West Central Telephone Association for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

MPUC Docket No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**PETITION FOR DESIGNATION AS AN  
ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER**

West Central Telephone Association hereby petitions the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for designation as an ETC for the limited purpose of receiving support for service provided pursuant to the federal Lifeline program.

In support of its Petition, WCTA states as follows:

- A. The legal name, address and telephone number of the Petitioner and its designated contact person are as follows:

West Central Telephone Association  
308 Frontage Rd.  
Sebeka, MN 56477

- B. The name and title of the officer or representative of WCTA authorizing this petition is Chad Bullock , whose signature appears at the end of this petition.
- C. The proposed effective date of designation of eligibility to receive Universal Service Support is immediately upon the Commission's issuance of an Order approving this Petition.
- D. The service area for which designation is sought, the local exchange carrier and whether the local exchange carrier is a rural telephone company is set forth following:
1. The service area for which WCTA requests designation as an ETC is the following Minnesota Exchanges: Staples and Wadena where CenturyLink QC is the ILEC.

A map of the Proposed Service Area is attached as [Exhibit 1](#).

2. WCTA believes of CenturyLink QC is not a rural carrier as defined under [47 USC § 153\(44\)](#).

- E. WCTA's Petition for designation as an ETC for the Service Area is consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity, and satisfies the requirements for receiving universal service support under state and federal law, for the following reasons:

***WCTA POSSESSES THE INTENT AND CAPABILITY OF PROVIDING SERVICE UPON REASONABLE CUSTOMER REQUEST THROUGHOUT THE SERVICE AREA***

1. WCTA's Regulatory Authority – The Commission originally granted WCTA authority to provide local exchange service in the Proposed Service area in 2006 under Docket No: P431/NA-06-723.
2. WCTA's Facilities and Commitment to Serve - WCTA will provide broadband and voice telephone over its fiber-optic facilities. WCTA is committed to provide service to all customers making a reasonable request for service. WCTA certifies that it will: (a) provide service on a timely basis to requesting customers within the Service Area where WCTA's network already passes the potential customer's premises; and (b) provide service within a reasonable period of time, if the potential customer is within the Service Area but not passed by WCTA's current network facilities, if service can be provided at reasonable cost by constructing network facilities.
3. WCTA's Basic Universal Service Offering - WCTA will provide voice telephony in the Service Area. The services WCTA offers meet the Basic Local Service requirements under [Minn. Rule 7812.0600](#). WCTA has the ability and the intention to provide the voice telephony services required by [47 CFR § 54.101\(a\)](#)<sup>1</sup>:
  - 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 the emergency services provided by local government or other public safety organizations, such as 911 and enhanced 911
  - Toll limitation for qualifying low-income consumers<sup>2</sup>

The Lifeline service offering will be made available throughout the Service Area upon its designation as an ETC. WCTA's tariffs address customer eligibility provisions and the availability of subsidies under the Lifeline program<sup>3</sup> and the Minnesota Telephone Assistance Plan<sup>4</sup>. The applicable sections of WCTA's tariff are attached as [Exhibit 2](#). WCTA is committed to providing the supported services throughout the Service Area to customers who make a request for such services. The local usage plans offered are comparable to those offered by the incumbent local exchange carriers. WCTA's local calling scope will mirror those of the ILECs and

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<sup>1</sup> [FCC Connect America Order 11-161 rel. November 18, 2011](#) at ¶ 76-81 discusses the changes to [47 CFR § 51.101](#) and the required voice service offerings

<sup>2</sup>WCTA Local Exchange Tariff Book 2 Section 5 page 47

<sup>3</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff Book 2 Section 5, page 47-49

<sup>4</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff Book 2 Section 5, page 47-49

any mandatory Extended Area Service calling as part of the basic local service offering.

4. WCTA's Advertising Plan - WCTA currently advertises its services through several different channels of general distribution, including newspaper, and direct mail. WCTA will advertise the availability of its universal service offering throughout the Service Area through these same advertising channels it currently employs. In addition, the availability of the offering throughout the Service Area will be listed continuously on WCTA's web site: [www.wcta.net](http://www.wcta.net). The service offering will also be published at least annually in the local newspaper, and will be posted at the WCTA office in Sebeka, MN.
5. WCTA's 5-Year Plan for Use of Universal Service Support - Under the FCC's updated portability rules, WCTA will receive no federal high cost support for the Service Area. WCTA would receive Lifeline support to the extent it serves customers eligible for that program. WCTA would also be eligible to participate in FCC reverse auctions going forward.
6. WCTA's Ability to Remain Functional in Emergency Situations. WCTA's network will remain functional in emergency situations:

Commercial power outage: The central office serving WCTA's customers is equipped with electrical generators and battery power supply to provide service in the event of a commercial power outage.

Network failure: The interoffice facilities serving the Service Area are on a diverse routed fiber optic ring, which if cut will be automatically rerouted.

WCTA complies with the Commission's Rules in Chapter [7810](#) establishing minimum standards on various operational matters, such as 7810.3900 (Emergency Operations); 7810.4900 (Adequacy of Service); and 7810.5300 (Dial Service Requirements).

7. WCTA's Satisfaction of Consumer Protection and Service Quality Standards – WCTA, is subject to, and complies with, the Commission's Rules pertaining to service quality and consumer protection. WCTA's tariff has specific provisions outlining the following terms addressing consumer protection issues:
  - Deposit and guarantee requirements<sup>5</sup>
  - Customer Billing<sup>6</sup>
  - Appropriate handling of customer complaints and billing disputes<sup>7</sup>
  - Disconnection and notice requirements<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff, Book 2, Section 2, page 10

<sup>6</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff, Book 2, Section 2, page 11

<sup>7</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff, Book 2, Section 2, page 12

<sup>8</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff, Book 2, Section 2, page 12-13

The specific provisions in WCTA's tariff, as well as the Commission's service quality rules by which WCTA is bound, will apply throughout the Service Area and assure a high level of service quality and consumer protection.

8. WCTA's Acknowledgement Regarding Equal Access – WCTA will provide equal access to long distance carriers within the Service Area.

***DESIGNATING WCTA AS AN ETC IN THE SERVICE AREA WILL SERVE THE PUBLIC INTEREST***

9. Public Interest - Designation of WCTA as an additional ETC in the Service Area is in the public interest, as determined under the standards of [47 CFR § 54.202\(c\)](#) and the Commission's Order issued October 31, 2005, in Docket No. P999/M-05-1169. Consumers will benefit from an increased choice in service providers, and there are unique advantages to WCTA's service offering.
10. Superior Service Offering - WCTA believes its service offerings are superior to that received by the ILECs' customers in the Service Area. WCTA presently has fiber to the home in Service Area and plans to place fiber to the home going forward, offering a technically superior network to that of ILECs.

WCTA believes customers will additionally benefit from choosing a locally owned and based provider which has demonstrated its commitment to, and success in, responding to the service needs of its residents.

11. Affordability – The local exchange services offered to WCTA's customers for universal service offerings are within the range of the ILEC's tariffed rates in the Service Area. WCTA's basic service offerings rates are identified in its Local Exchange Services<sup>9</sup> tariff.

Service	CL QC		WCTA	
	MRC	EAS	MRC	EAS
Residence	\$15.96	Staples \$0.52 Wadena \$1.16	\$18.00	N/A
Business	\$34.61	Staples \$1.28 Wadena \$2.82	\$21.75	N/A

In addition, WCTA will provide the benefit of Lifeline discounts to qualifying subscribers.

12. Commitment to Service Quality - As noted in Paragraph E.7 above, WCTA is a certified CLEC in Minnesota is subject to, and complies with, the Commission's Rules pertaining to service quality and consumer protection.

<sup>9</sup> WCTA Local Exchange Tariff, Book 2 Section 4, page 2



13. No Negative Impact on Universal Service Fund - As noted in Paragraph E.5 above, WCTA would not receive federal high cost USF.

***ETC CERTIFICATION***

14. Request for Certification - WCTA requests that the Commission certify its use of support effective as of the date of WCTA's ETC designation for the Service Area.
15. WCTA's Certification - In support of its certification request, WCTA hereby states that it will not receive federal high cost universal service support for the Service Area.

***CONCLUSION***

16. WCTA meets the requirements of both state and federal laws and regulations for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the requested Service Area. Pursuant to [47 USC § 214\(e\)](#), the Commission should designate WCTA as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for the Service Area. In so doing, the Commission will ensure that consumers in the Service Area have an opportunity to secure better and more reliable service at a rate equal to or less than that which they are currently paying. The consumers in the Service Area will benefit and the public interest will be served if WCTA's Petition is approved and it is designated as an ETC.

Wherefore, WCTA respectfully requests that the Commission:


- A. Designate West Central Telephone Association as an ETC for receipt of Lifeline service support with respect to the Service Areas specified in this Petition;
- B. For such other and further relief as the Commission may deem just and reasonable.

**VERIFICATION**

The undersigned, Chad Bullock, General Manager of West Central Telephone Association, certifies that he has reviewed this Petition and the facts stated therein, of which he has personal knowledge, and that the same are true and correct to the best of his present knowledge and belief.

Respectfully submitted,

West Central Telephone Association

By:   
Chad Bullock  
General Manager

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this 30th day of November, 2017.



Notary Public



**AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE**

In the Matter of the Petition of West Central  
Telephone Association for Designation as an  
Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

MPUC Docket No.: \_\_\_\_\_

I, Thomas Burns, state that on November 30, 2017 I caused copies of the attached Notice regarding the filing of West Central Telephone Association's application for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier to be filed using eService or mailed by United States first class mail postage prepaid thereon, to the following persons:

Dr. Dan Wolf (eFile) Executive Secretary	Linda Chavez (eFile) Minnesota Department of Commerce
Julie Anderson (eFile) Assistant Attorney General	Jason Topp (eFile) CenturyLink
	Chad Bullock (eFile) West Central Tel. Assn.

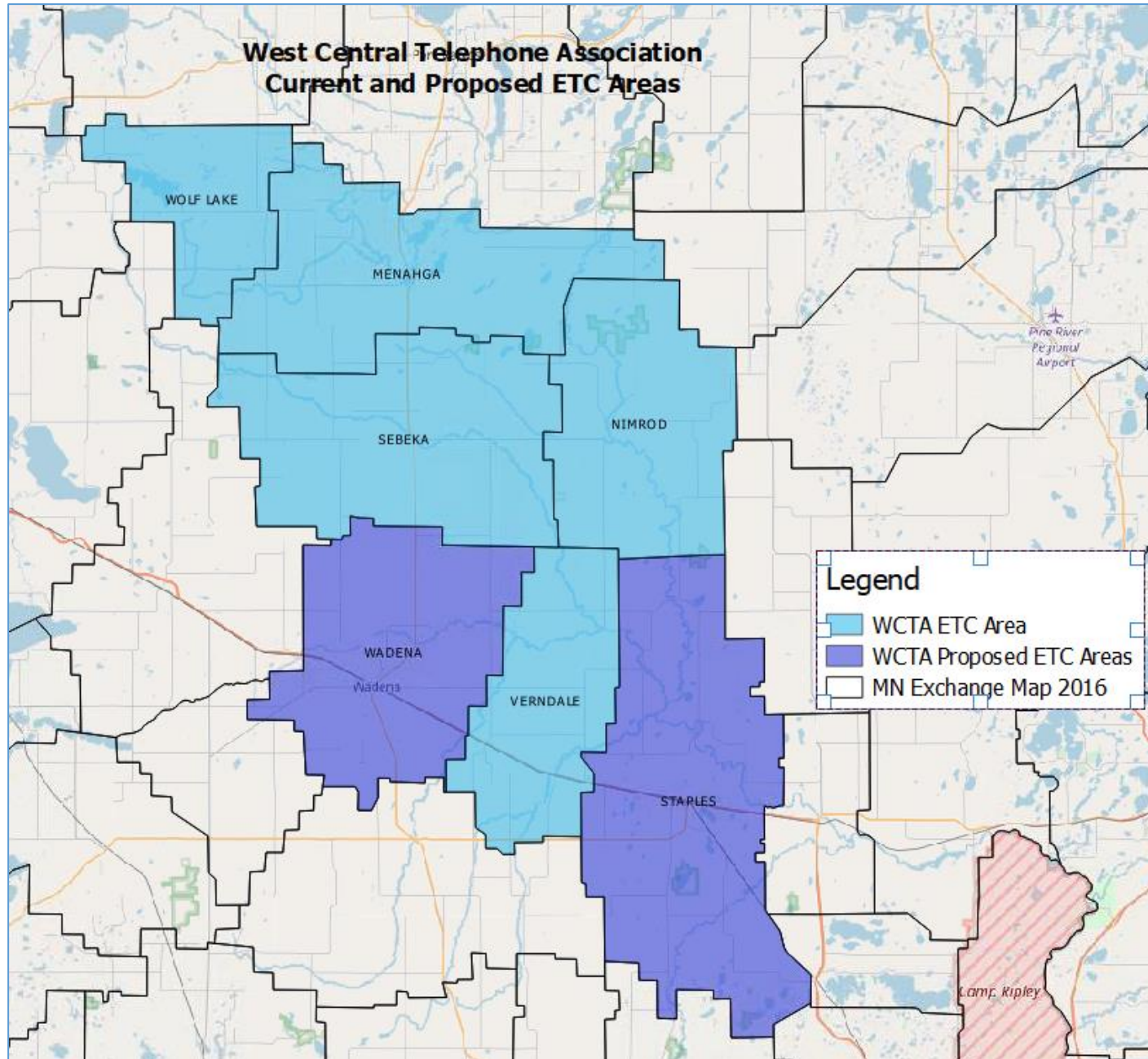


Exhibit 2  
Selected West Central Telephone Association Tariff Sections

The selected tariff pages following address:

- **Deposit and guarantee requirements**
- **Customer Billing**
- **Customer Complaints and Billing Disputes**
- **Disconnection and notice requirements**
- **Lifeline and MN TAP**
- **Basic Local Service Rates**

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 2  
Page 10

GENERAL REGULATIONS

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9. CREDIT POLICY

A. Deposit and Guarantee Requirements

The Company may require a deposit or guarantee of payment from any customer or applicant who has not established good credit with the Company. Deposit or guarantee of payment requirements as prescribed by the Company must be based upon standards which bear a reasonable relationship to the assurance of payment. The Company may determine whether a customer has established good credit with the Company, except as herein restricted:

- 1) A customer, who within the last 6 months has not had his service disconnected for nonpayment of a bill and has not been liable for disconnection of service for nonpayment of a bill, and the bill is not in dispute, shall be deemed to have established good credit.
- 2) A Company shall not require a deposit or a guarantee of payment based upon income, home ownership, residential location, employment tenure, nature of occupation, race, color, creed, sex, marital status, age, national origin, or any other criteria which does not bear a reasonable relationship to the assurance of payment or which is not authorized by this chapter.
- 3) The Company shall not use any credit reports other than those reflecting the purchase of utility services to determine the adequacy of a customer's credit history without the permission in writing of the customer. Any credit history so used shall be mailed to the customer in order to provide the customer an opportunity to review the data. Refusal of a customer to permit use of a credit rating or credit service other than that of a Company shall not affect the determination by the Company as to that customer's credit history.
- 4) Qualifying applicants for Lifeline Service may initiate service without paying a deposit if they voluntarily elect to have Toll Blocking on their line. Toll Blocking will be provided at no charge to Lifeline customers.

B. Deposit

When required, a customer may assure payment by submitting a deposit. A deposit shall not exceed an estimated two months' gross bill or existing two months' bill where applicable. All deposits shall be in addition to payment of an outstanding bill or a part of such bill as has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Company, except where such bill has been discharged in bankruptcy. A Company shall not require a deposit or a guarantee of payment without explaining in writing why that deposit or guarantee is being required and under what conditions, if any, the deposit will be diminished upon return. The deposit shall be refunded to the customer after 6 consecutive months of prompt payment of all bills to that Company. The Company may, at its option, refund the deposit by direct payment or as a credit on the bill. With notice any deposit of a customer shall be applied by the Company to a bill when the bill has been determined by the Company to be delinquent. Each Company shall issue a written receipt of deposit to each customer from whom a deposit is received and shall provide a means whereby a depositor may establish a claim if the receipt is unavailable.

Effective: 9-9-2016

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GENERAL REGULATIONS

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9. CREDIT POLICY (Continued)

B. Deposit (Continued)

Interest shall be paid on deposits in excess of \$20 at the rate set by the Commissioner of the Department of Commerce as required by Minnesota Statute 325E.02. The interest rate may be found on the Department of Commerce website at [www.commerce.state.mn.us](http://www.commerce.state.mn.us). Interest on deposits shall be payable from the date of deposit to the date of refund or disconnection. The Company may, at its option, pay the interest at intervals it chooses but at least annually, by direct payment, or as a credit on bills.

Upon termination of service, the deposit with accrued interest shall be credited to the final bill and the balance shall be returned within 45 days to the customer.

C. Guarantee of Payment

The Company may accept, in lieu of deposit, a contract signed by a guarantor satisfactory to the Company whereby payment of a specified sum, not exceeding the deposit requirement is guaranteed. The term of such contract shall be for no longer than 12 months, but shall automatically terminate after the customer has closed and paid the account with the Company, or at the guarantor's request upon 60 days' written notice to the Company. Upon termination of a guarantee contract or whenever the Company deems same insufficient as to amount or surety, a cash deposit or a new or additional guarantee may be required for good cause upon reasonable written notice to the customer.

The service of any customer who fails to comply with these requirements may be disconnected upon notice as prescribed in Minnesota Rules. The Company shall mail the guarantor copies of all disconnect notices sent to the customer whose account he has guaranteed unless the guarantor waives such notice in writing.

10. CUSTOMER BILLING

- A. Regular bills will be issued periodically (monthly, quarterly). For billing purposes each month is presumed to have thirty days.
- B. Special bills for long distance telecommunications service may be issued at any time when charges are unusually high and the Company is uncertain as to the customer's ability to pay such charges.
- C. Services which are charged for at monthly rates are billed in advance for one month's service.
- D. Services which are charged for at other than monthly rates are billed in arrears, except when payment for messages is made by cash deposit in the coin telephone.
- E. Detail call information, such as the time at which made, duration and destination may be provided for long distance telecommunications message service.
- F. Retroactive billing adjustments will not be made for a period exceeding three years.

11. PAYMENT FOR SERVICE

- A. The customer is responsible for the payment of rates and charges for all services furnished including, but not limited to, calls originated or accepted at a customer's service location.

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 2  
Page 12

GENERAL REGULATIONS

11. PAYMENT FOR SERVICE (Continued)

B. Bills are due when rendered and may be paid at any of the Company's public business offices or other authorized payment locations.

C. Charges for a message originated or accepted at a coin telephone shall be paid by cash deposit in the coin telephone unless arrangements for billing have been made.

D. Non-sufficient Fund or No Account Checks and Dishonored Credit or Debit Card Payments.

When a customer pays the monthly bill with a non-sufficient fund or no account check or makes a payment with a dishonored credit card or debit card, a charge (see Section 6, page 2) will be made to that customer to cover the administrative costs incurred in handling the transaction.

E. Customer Complaints and/or Billing Disputes

Customer inquiries or complaints regarding service or accounting may be made in writing or by telephone to the Company at:

308 Frontage Rd.  
PO Box 304  
Sebeka, Minnesota 56477-0304  
(218) 837-5151

Any objection to billed charges should be reported promptly to the Company. Adjustments to Customers' bills shall be made to the extent that records are available and/or circumstances exist which reasonably indicate that such charges are not in accordance with approved rates or that an adjustment may otherwise be appropriate. Where overbilling of a subscriber occurs, due either to Company or subscriber error, no liability exists which will require the Company to pay any interest, dividend or other compensation on the amount overbilled.

If after an investigation and review by the Company a disagreement remains as to the disputed charges, the customer may file a complaint, in writing or by telephone, to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission at:

121 Seventh Place East  
Suite 350  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147  
(800) 657-3782

12. FAILURE TO PAY FOR SERVICE

A. Regular Monthly Bills

1) A customer is considered to be delinquent in the payment of a regular monthly bill when the sum due is not received on or before the twentieth calendar day following the day the bill is either mailed or delivered by other means.

2) When a customer is delinquent in the payment of a regular monthly bill, the Company may disconnect the service not sooner than five days after mailing or delivery of written notice of intention to disconnect.

B. Special Bills

1) A customer is delinquent in the payment of a special bill when the sum due is not paid within ten days of due date when bill is rendered.

Effective: 9-9-2016



WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 2  
Page 13

GENERAL REGULATIONS

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12. FAILURE TO PAY FOR SERVICE (Continued)

C. Late Payment Charge

- 1) A late payment charge of 1.5% applies to all billed balances.
- 2) The late payment charge does not apply to unpaid balances associated with disputed amounts. Undisputed amounts on the same bill may be subject to the late payment charge.
- 3) Collection procedures, temporary disconnection of service, advance payments and the requirements for deposit are unaffected by the application of a late payment charge.
- 4) The late payment charge does not apply to the following:  
Bills rendered more than ten (10) days after bill date.

13. RESTORAL OF SERVICE

- A. If a customer's service is restored after having been disconnected in accordance with this Tariff and a Company service order to terminate such service has not been completed when such service is restored, the customer will be required to pay Service Charges specified in Section 6 of this Tariff.
- B. When a customer's service has been disconnected in accordance with this Tariff and the service has been terminated through the completion of a Company service order, service will be re-established only upon the basis of an application for new service.

14. TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The customer has no proprietary right in a telephone number; and the Company may change the telephone number of a customer whenever, in the conduct of its business, it deems it desirable to do so. The company will adhere to any applicable FCC numbering rules when dealing with telephone number activity, including number changes.

15. DIRECTORIES

- A. The Company will furnish to its customers, without charge, its directory as necessary for the efficient use of the service. Copies of other directories may be provided at a nominal charge.
- B. Directories regularly furnished to customers remain the property of the Company. No binder, holder or auxiliary cover, except as provided or authorized by the Company, shall be used in conjunction with any directory furnished by the Company.
- C. No liability for damages arising from errors in or omissions of directory listings, or listings obtained from the Directory Assistance operator, shall attach to the Company. In the case of additional or extra listings for which a charge is made, its liability shall be limited to the monthly rate for each such listing for the charge period during which the error or omission continues.

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Effective: 9-9-2016

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 4  
Page 2

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LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

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E. Rates

Class of Service

Monthly  
Rates

BUSINESS:  
One Party

\$ 21.75

RESIDENCE:  
One Party

18.00

All rates are billed in advance. Payment for service is due on the statement due date.

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Effective: 9-9-2016

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 4  
Page 3

LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

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Extended Area Service (EAS)

Exchange

EAS to Exchange

Wadena

Bertha-Hewitt  
New York Mills-Bluffton  
Deer Creek  
Nimrod  
Sebeka  
Verndale

Staples

Leader  
Motley  
Verndale

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Effective: 9-9-2016

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 5  
Page 47  
Revision 1

GENERAL SERVICES

LIFELINE ASSISTANCE AND MINNESOTA TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE PLAN (TAP) (T)

The Lifeline Assistance Program (Lifeline), established by the Federal Communications Commission under 47CFR54, is a means of maintaining and preserving universal service by providing a reduction in the recurring price of basic telephone, mobile, or broadband service to qualifying low-income residential subscribers. (T)

TAP is a state sponsored assistance program under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 237 and is designed to make telephone service accessible to qualifying low-income residential households. Through this program, eligible households will receive a monthly discount on their telephone service.

1. General

- a. Lifeline provides for a federally-funded discount credit to a low-income residential customers telephone, mobile or broadband service charges. (N)
- b. Federal Universal Service Charge (FUSC) will not be billed to Lifeline customers.
- c. Local service for Lifeline subscribers may not be disconnected for non-payment of toll charges.
  - 1). Toll Restriction Service will be provided to Lifeline subscribers at no charge.
  - 2). Lifeline subscribers are not required to accept Toll Restriction Service as a condition to avoid disconnection of local service for non-payment of toll.
  - 3). Lifeline subscribers are not required to pay a service deposit in order to initiate service if the subscriber voluntarily elects to receive Toll Restriction Service.
- d. Partial payments from Lifeline subscribers will be applied first to local service charges and then to toll charges.

2. Eligibility Requirements

- a. Lifeline will be provided for one (1) eligible service per household, at the subscriber's principal place of residence, to those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements.
- b. The applicant has income at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or participates in one of the following programs:
  - Medicaid/Medical Assistance
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Supplemental Security Income
  - Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
  - Veterans Pension Benefit Program

Effective: 11-17-2017

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 5  
Page 48  
Revision 1

GENERAL SERVICES

LIFELINE ASSISTANCE AND MINNESOTA TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE PLAN (TAP) (Continued) (N)

2. Eligibility Requirements (Continued)

Individuals who do not qualify under any of the above but live on or near a federally recognized reservation may qualify for Lifeline Assistance if the applicant receives benefits from at least one of the following programs:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Head Start (only for those meeting its income qualifying standard)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

c. The applicant signs a document certifying under penalty of perjury that the applicant receives benefits from one of the programs listed and identifying the program or programs from which that consumer receives benefits.

d. The applicant signs a document agreeing to notify the carrier if that consumer ceases to participate in the program or programs. When the company is notified by the customer that the customer no longer participates in one of the above programs, the federal credits to that customer's monthly charges shall cease beginning with the start of the billing cycle beginning in the month after the month in which notification is received.

3. Eligibility Revocation

If the telephone company discovers that conditions exist that disqualify the recipient of Lifeline Assistance, the customer will be de-enrolled from the Lifeline Assistance Program. The customer will be billed retroactively to whichever is the most recent of the dates Lifeline assistance commenced or the recipient no longer qualified for the service not to exceed 12 months.

4. Eligibility for the State TAP Credit

a. The state TAP credit is only available to residential subscribers who meet the eligibility requirements for the Federal Lifeline Assistance discount in 2 above.

b. The customer must reside in Minnesota or have moved to Minnesota and intend to remain.

Effective: 11-17-2017

WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION  
SEBEKA, MINNESOTA

Book 2  
Section 5  
Page 49  
Revision 1

GENERAL SERVICES

LIFELINE AND MINNESOTA TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE PLAN (TAP) (Continued)

(N)

5. Regulations

- a. The Federal Lifeline and state TAP credit will begin at the customer's earliest possible billing cycle but no later than the second billing cycle after the date the application for the Federal Lifeline and state TAP credit is received by the telephone company.
- b. A service charge shall not be billed to establish qualification for either the Federal Lifeline or state TAP credit.
- c. When a customer enrolls for the state TAP credit, the Company is reimbursed for the cost of the service order activity.

6. Funding

The Federal Lifeline Credit is funded through the FCC universal service program. The state TAP credit shall be funded through the state Telephone Assistance Plan Surcharge on residence and business access lines which pay the 911 surcharge.

7. Rates

State TAP Surcharge

The surcharge rate is the effective rate ordered by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The company is responsible for billing, collecting and remitting the surcharge to appropriate government agency.

Monthly Rate

State TAP Credit

Note 1

Federal Lifeline Credit

Note 2

Note 1: The State TAP Credit is the effective rate ordered by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. Information regarding the Credit rate can be accessed at the Minnesota Department of Commerce Web site at: <http://mn.gov/commerce/>

Note 2: The Federal Lifeline Credit is the effective rate ordered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Information regarding the Credit rate can be accessed at the FCC Web site at: <http://www.fcc.gov/>

Effective: 11-17-2017