

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE	:	
CERTIFICATION AND VERIFICATION PROCEDURES	:	
FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS ELIGIBLE	:	
TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS FROM THE FEDERAL	:	DOCKET NO. 4020
UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND AND CERTIFICATION	:	
AND VERIFICATION PROCESSES FOR COMPLIANCE	:	
WITH PROVIDING LIFELINE AND LINKUP SERVICE	:	

NOTICE OF RULEMAKING AND PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 39-1-1 and 42-35-3 of the Rhode Island General Laws, as amended, the Public Utilities Commission will conduct a public hearing on **Thursday, November 19, 2009 @ 9:30 AM** in Hearing Room A of the Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) at 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island for the purpose of affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, orally or in writing, in response to the Commission’s plan to adopt new rules entitled “Rules and Regulations Governing the Certification and Verification Procedures for Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive Payments From the Federal Universal Service Fund and Certification and Verification Processes for Compliance With Providing Lifeline and Linkup Service”, and to repeal related existing regulations.

The proposed rules and regulations reflect a comprehensive rewrite of the currently effective regulations entitled “*Certification of Telecommunications Carriers as Eligible to Receive Payments from the Federal Universal Service Fund*” effective date July 10, 1998. Accordingly, the Commission plans to repeal the existing rules and regulations through this rulemaking process.

The rules and regulations implement the Telecommunications Act of 1996, specifically 47 U.S.C. §§151–760 which gives the Commission authority to certify and designate Eligible Telecommunication Carriers (ETC) to receive subsidies from the federal Universal Service Fund to provide lifeline services to eligible consumers. It provides a process for telecommunications providers to demonstrate eligibility. Furthermore, the proposed rules adopt and implement additional requirements pursuant to federal laws, specifically, an FCC Order issued on April 29, 2004 which requires that non-default states, such as Rhode Island, to implement a procedure for ETCs to certify and verify customer eligibility and enrollment in Link-Up and Lifeline services in Rhode Island. It also provides a process for ETCs to verify continued eligibility of customers and to maintain records to demonstrate compliance with the federal law.

The Regulations will affect the interests of all current Eligible Telecommunications Carriers, presently Verizon Rhode Island and Cox Rhode Island Telcom LLC, or any carrier who may seek ETC status, along with residential consumers who seek to participate in the Link-Up and/or Lifeline programs.

The proposed rules and regulations are on file at Commission Clerk's Office at 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island. Copies of the proposed rules and regulations may be obtained in person, by mail by calling 780-2107 or accessed under the Commission's Docket Menu, Docket No. 4020 at www.ripuc.org.

Interested persons wishing to offer data, views, or arguments on the proposed rules and regulations may do so either orally, on the day of the hearing, or in writing, by submitting an original and nine (9) copies of their comments to the following address not later November 23, 2009:

Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk
Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, Rhode Island 02888

Reference is also made to R.I.G.L §§ 42-35, 39-1, 39-26.1 et seq., specifically, §§ 42-35-1, 42-35-2, 42-25-3, 42-35-4, 42-35-5, 39-1-15 and 39-26.1-3(e) and 39-26.1-5(e).

The Public Utilities Commission is accessible to the handicapped. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Commission's office by calling 941-4500, ext. 107, seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.

Luly Massaro, Commission Clerk
October 23, 2009