

## MEETING MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 22, 2021



### California Public Utilities Commission

# ULTS Administrative Committee Meeting

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

**When:** Wednesday, September 22, 2021 (9:00 am – 12:00 noon)

**Where:** webex meeting: [Join meeting](#)

<https://cpuc.webex.com/cpuc/j.php?MTID=mffd3b12342d541cd016113013531a8f6>

**Call-In Number:** [+1-415-655-0002](tel:+14156550002), [1467694995](tel:+14156551467)## United States Toll

## Agenda

9:00 – 9:05 a.m.	Introduction: James Ahlstedt, Chair
9:05 – 9:10 a.m.	Welcome: Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma
9:10 – 9:15 a.m.	Approval of Minutes: Committee reviews and approves the last meeting minutes prepared by the Communications Division (CD)
9:15 – 9:20 a.m.	Public Comments
9:20 – 10:00 a.m.	Closing the Digital Divide - Broadband <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Karen Eckersley</li><li>• Michael Minkus</li></ul>
10:00 – 10:35 a.m.	Communications Division Liaison Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Status of Proceedings:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Pilot Updates: <b>Robert Sansone</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Boost/CARE Termination</li><li>▪ iFoster – Extension</li><li>▪ CA LL Foster Youth Integration Workshop</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>• Other:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Proposed Decision: <b>Pending and will be voted on at the September 23, 2021 meeting</b></li><li>○ Renewal Working Group Update: <b>Mary Rottman</b></li></ul></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Renewal Suspension Update: <b>Clover Selden</b></li> <li>● Claim Status: <b>Hector Corral</b></li> </ul> <p>USAC Update: <b>David Avila</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● USAC-EBB Meeting Recap (issues escalated to USAC's CEO)</li> <li>● FCC/USAC – Federal Lifeline Update</li> </ul>
10:35 – 10:50 a.m.	<b>Fiscal Report: Lalaine Semana</b>
10:50 – 11:00 a.m.	<b>CAB Report: (TBD)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consumer Contact Statistics</li> </ul>
11:00 – 11:20 a.m.	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Party Contract Reports: Sarah Detweiler</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maximus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enrollment Statistics</li> <li>○ Approval and Denial Statistics</li> <li>○ Call Center Statistics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
11:20 – 11:45 a.m.	<b>Annual Report: James Ahlstedt</b>
11:45 – 11:55 a.m.	<b>Review of Administrative Committee Vacancy Status</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 9 open positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CLEC – 1 Alternate</li> <li>○ Consumer – 2 Alternates</li> <li>○ CBO – 2 Primary, 3 Alternates</li> <li>○ CPUC Public Advocates Office – 1 Alternate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
11:55 a.m.	<b>Future Meeting Date</b>
12:00 noon	<b>Adjournment</b>

## Member Roster

1	Large ILEC	Primary Alternate	Michael Foreman Charlie Born	AT&T California Frontier Communications
2	Small ILEC	Primary Alternate	Linda Lassen Lorrie Clark	Sierra Tel Sebastian
3	CLEC	Primary Alternate	Marcie Evans -----	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	Ken McEldowney -----	Consumer Action
7	Consumer	Primary Alternate	Vinhcent Le -----	Greenlining
8	CBO	Primary Alternate	Cesar Motts -----	Southeast Community Development Corp.

9	CBO	Primary Alternate	----- -----	
10	CBO	Primary Alternate	----- -----	
11	CPUC's Public Advocates Office	Primary Alternate	James Ahlstedt -----	Public Advocates Office

Minutes:

September 22, 2021

9:02am

1. Attendees:  
Charlie Born, Marcie Evens, Alex Gudkov, David Avila, James Ahlstedt, Michael Foreman, Cesar Motts, Linda Lassen, Vinhcent Le, Ken McEldowney,
2. Introduction: James A. - Opening remarks
3. Welcome: Commissioner Shiroma - Opening remarks
4. James A: Review of June 8, 2021, meeting notes and motion to adopt. Approved
5. Public Comments: None
6. Closing the Digital Divide:
  - a. Karen Eckersley – CA Broadband Gap Presentation:
    - i. Governor Gavin Newsom signs SB156 to Help Bridge the Digital Divide
    - ii. Middle Mile Network – Infrastructure, Access, and Affordability
      1. Middle Mile – \$3.25 billion
        - a. CDT Lead
      2. Last Mile - \$2 billion
        - a. Funding provided by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
      3. Loan Loss Reserve - \$750 million
        - a. Borrowed funding will be paid returned through operating funds
      4. Local Agency Technical Assistance - \$50 million
        - a. Builds on the success of the Tribal Technical Assistance Grants
      5. CA Advanced Services Fund (CASF) program changes
        - a. Deployment Rulemaking – [20-09-001](#)
        - b. Rulemaking CASF – [20-08-021](#)
    - iii. Information:  
statewidebroadband@cpuc.ca.gov

Questions:

James – What are the speed standards? Are there any minimum standards?

Karen – Yes. The criteria will cover the Treasury guidance and that's for 1.5mpbs download and 3mbps upload for unserved or underserved communities.

David - As we look at the funding amount, do we know how many homes will be connected? What will it take to cover all the homes?

Karen – CA contracted an outside agency to make these determinations, and this is their estimates, but we do not have that specific number just yet.

Alex – This is for infrastructure build, correct?

Karen – Yes, that's correct.

James – Just a follow up question and that's notifying customers of this public policy program so they can take advantage of these programs?

Karen – Yes, we are interested in the outreach as well.

James – 2026 seems aggressive. Is that a concern? Do you expect to meet that deadline?

Karen – We have every intention to spend every bit of this and it's good to have deadlines and we intend to meet it.

Linda – How is this related to Lifeline?

Karen – I would expect that any of the Last Mile providers would also be Lifeline providers. But we have asked those questions for the upcoming proceedings.

Linda – Will CA subsidize Broadband?

Karen – Yes, that will be part of the proceedings

1. Ken – The requirements should be to participate in the last Mile Program, must also provide Lifeline services as well.

## 7. Liaison Reports:

- a. Pilot Updates – Robert Sansone
  - i. Boost/CARE Termination – June 30, 2021
  - ii. iFoster extension through January 31, 2023 as part of the Decision 21-07-008 and SB546
  - iii. Holding a workshop on 10/22/21
  - iv. Questions:

James – Regarding the workshops next month, what are your expectations on participation?

Robert – Inform our stakeholders and staff on the status and discuss issues and recommendations. The questions tailored to get input from stakeholders.

- b. Provisions to GO153 Pending Decision vote on September 23, 2021.
- c. Renewal Working Group – Mary Rottman
  - i. Working on a final proposal and report forthcoming
- d. Renewal Suspension Update – Clover Sellden
  - i. Extended until December 31, 2021
  - ii. Also, working with CalFresh and implementing the process when the Renewals begin
  - iii. Commissioner Shiroma reiterated the importance of the Data Dip (CalFresh) program and complemented Clover’s group on their hard work.

Questions:

James – Looking to implement CalFresh data dip by Oct 1.

Clover – Yes (Lisa Bass later provided correction to planned date as Nov. 1, 2021)

Rosa – This will be for New Applications as well?

Clover – This is specific to Renewals during test mode.

Vincent – What have you learned about this process and using this process in the future?

Clover – This was a first for both DHS and LL so there were a lot of firsts and lessons learned

- e. Claims update – Hector Corral
  - i. Claims are current and any questions please email [lifelineclaim@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:lifelineclaim@cpuc.ca.gov)

## 8. USAC Update – David Avila

- i. FCC and Covid-19 Natural Disaster Waiver
  - 1. Suspended Annual Re-certification
  - 2. Suspended National Verifier Re-verifications
  - 3. Suspended Non-Usage De-enrollments
  - 4. Suspend 3-month of consecutive income eligibility proof
- ii. FCC and CPUC MSS
  - 1. July 30, 2021 broadband MSS set to 18Mbps
  - 2. June 1, 2021 requested filings to reconsider phase-out of voice services
- iii. Current Lifeline Issues
  - 1. Shortcomings in broadband MSS formula
  - 2. Lifeline Participation Rates – CA 705,796
  - 3. Covid-19 and Digital Divide
  - 4. EBB

Questions/Comments:

Ken – Can you speak to any outreach that the providers are doing?

David – There are a lot of cable companies like Comcast working out in the communities. There's opportunity for consumer options and attractive for companies to market to those groups.

James – I would like to hear what those carriers are hearing from the customers and their experiences.

David – API upgrade is needed

Marcie – Mismatched account information between LL and EBB or other state databases.

Jason – IEH forms for LL benefits cannot be used for USAC for EBB.

9. Fiscal Report – Lalaine Semana
  - a. 20/21 Fiscal Report as of June 30, 2021
    - i. Total Revenue: \$299,455,351.00
    - ii. Appropriation: \$54,701,850.00
    - iii. Cash: \$344,631,914.00

Questions/Comments:

David – When there are funds leftover, where does that go? Do you lose what you don't use?

Lalaine – You will lose the appropriations. Every year there is a new appropriation for the budget.

James – Which committee meeting approves the LL budget?

(Insert into meeting chatroom by Mary Rottman - From the ULTS-AC Charter - Duties: Pursuant to Pub. Util. Code § 273(a), on or before March 31 of each year the ULTSAC shall submit a proposed budget to the Commission's Communications Division. The proposed budget shall include estimated program expenditures and the Committee's projected expenses for the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) that will commence the following fiscal year thereafter.)

James – Would like to have a deeper discussion on this subject at next meeting for better understanding.

10. CAB Report – Rosa Sauer
  - a. 13-month trend received and closed by CAB

Questions/comments:

James – Are there inquiries regarding their removal from the program?

Rosa – Yes. It's mostly one carrier but mostly due to removal for non-usage.

Alex – Can I suggest a 15-month trend to keep up with the quarterly meetings?

Rosa – Yes.

11. TPA Report – Sarah Detweiler

- a. Cancelled Renewals resumption due to FCC order
- b. Completed requirements for CalFresh data dip
- c. Operations Report on Forms and Call Center activity

Questions/comments:

Alex – Do you see differences in trend before and after May 2021 in the number of transfers between carriers of EBB programs? Should have a label within the SP related issues.

David – Is Maximus using CMS database when checking for eligibility? It is a big need today?

Sarah – No. As of today, we are not using any sort of database matching yet.

12. Annual Report – James Ahlstedt

- a. Presentation of rough draft of Annual Report and feedback to Mary R.

Questions/comments:

David – How do we manage the changes and what are the next steps once the updates are made?

James – Let's go through some of the updates now.

\*Spelling and format suggestions

\*Content, approach, and recommendations including: WFA, Audits, TPA Reporting, TPA RFP processes and deadlines. Coordinate with other committees and programs to extend the LL Program

Should the document include "lessons learned"

What about follow-up on recommendations or results of process improvement audits?

Commissioner Shiroma - audit rules and laws followed by the Commission would apply. Need to confirm what information can be shared with the Committee.

Linda L. – suggested including audit results (summary) in the annual report

Commissioner Shiroma - suggested Communication Division give a presentation on the audit and recommendations

James A. – Suggested in this year's annual report, target waste fraud & abuse

Future reports could provide more audit findings. Due to Bagley Keene rules all items in a report must be shared with the Committee. A subcommittee of 2 could work on recommendations and send them to the Commissioner

Decided to wait until next year to conduct a more substantive discussion, possibly create a new section in the Annual Report to address waste, fraud & abuse.

Other additions suggested for the Annual Report:

- Vacancy status for the Committee
- Increase coordination with the LIOB and DCA groups and share ideas

13. Administrative Committee Vacancy Status

- a. Priority for next meeting
  - i. Public Advocacy Position – Alternate candidate was unable to join
- b. CBO has the most openings – needs more focus to add members

14. Future meeting date – Early Dec., date TBD

Meeting adjourned: 11:52