

# Phones for Families Update for Family Support Programs - Effective Immediately

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Under the original funding source, Phones for Families will continue to be able to provide phones to families enrolled in Family Support Programs, including MIECHV, FSSD, and FaDSS programs.

## **FSSD, FaDSS, and other family support programs:**

Phones for Families funding for FSSD and FaDSS programs will continue for a limited amount of time until funding runs out. We currently expect funding to last until December 2021 but the exact date will depend on how many phones are being used.

## **MIECHV Programs:**

Phones for Families funding for MIECHV programs will continue beyond the expiration of the funds for all family support programs due to a new funding stream that will be coming in soon. For this reason, it will be important for Phones for Families and MIECHV programs to track which phones are given out to MIECHV families. MIECHV programs that have unused phones need to submit a request for a phone before distributing it for tracking purposes.

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## **Information about the Phones for Families program**

### **Requirements of the Phones for Families program:**

- Family Support Programs must create policy about how the program will manage the phones.
- All families receiving a phone must complete the “Loaner Agreement for Electronic Device and Cellular Data Plan Activation” form.
- Programs must communicate to Risa when a phone becomes damaged, has been lost, or is no longer in use by a family so the phone can be disconnected. Phones can be disconnected temporarily or permanently.

### **How to request a phone:**

- Complete survey found here - <https://forms.gle/PcJtEqXTQpLgNU5u5>
  - **Note: This link has changed since previous communications.**
- Complete one survey per phone needed.
- Phones will be allocated among programs on a first come first serve basis.
- When the phone request is received, Risa will determine which location has the closest phone for you. She will send an email to you and that location to facilitate the transfer of the phone. If the phone is in the same area as the program, the program may be asked to pick up the phone. Otherwise the phone will be mailed.

### **Management of the phone:**

- If a phone is not being used once it has been requested, please email Risa. It takes less than a day to turn a phone on or off.
  - For any troubleshooting with the device or connectivity please contact Risa. Please do not ask families to call US Cellular directly or bring the phone into a store as they cannot help the family without approval from Risa.
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## Use of Phones for Families phones once funding is spent

### Phones distributed to families:

All programs that have been provided a phone that will be disconnected will be notified as soon as the disconnect date is identified. Every attempt will be to give at least one month's notice. Families will be able to keep the phone after the phone is disconnected. If the family using the phone still needs a phone after it is disconnected there are a couple of options.

1. The family may continue to use the phone on WIFI hotspots only. The phone can be used to make phones calls and receive texts through apps such as Google Voice, Messenger, and WhatsApp. This will mean there will not be a cell phone number tied to a typical phone/text/data plan on the phone.
2. After the phone is disconnected the family may switch the phone over to a prepaid account with US Cellular. This will mean the phone number will change.

Families also may be eligible for communication assistance programs available to individuals with a financial barrier in paying for a cell phone. Below are links for two programs that are available to families:

<https://iub.iowa.gov/consumers/lifeline-telephone-assistance-program>

<https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>

### Phones that have come back from families or are in the office:

Programs with phones that aren't distributed to families will be able to keep the phone to use in the future. Programs may choose to utilize either of the options identified above as new families enter services and cover any fees associated with that option.

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If there are any questions please contact:

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