

GETTING A FREE PHONE

A refugee family typically obtains a cell phone within their first week or two in Sacramento which is used primarily by the head of household. Usually a friend or relative assists the family in obtaining the cell phone/SIM card. These initial phones/SIM cards tend to be brand name plans (T-Mobile, Sprint etc.). Once a family receives their Social Security cards (two to four weeks after arrival), they qualify for free phones for the other family members.

Note, at certain 99 cent store locations, there are pop-up booths towards the front of the store where refugees can apply for a free phone without a social security card. They must provide photo identification and their EBT card. They will receive a smartphone with 2GB of data.

[California Lifeline](#) is a state program that provides discounted home phone and cell phone services to eligible households. Eligibility requirements include being enrolled in a support program or certain income qualifications.

[SafeLink Wireless](#) will provide a free phone to one member per household for families that meet certain eligibility requirements as determined by the State of California. The requirements are based on the families participation in support programs (such as MediCal, WIC, TANF, etc.) and income qualifications.

Customers receive unlimited voice calls and unlimited text messages and 500 MB of data per month. The monthly allowance is effective for 12 months and the family will need to re-qualify every year.