AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

Adoption Toolkit for School Districts

RESOURCE: AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM FULL ENROLLMENT OVERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT STAFF

DISTRICT NOTES

How to use this resource: The following document provides a comprehensive overview of the online ACP enrollment process (online enrollment system is available in English and Spanish). This guide will help you support your families in signing up for the ACP. It provides a step-by-step guide to assist families in the online enrollment process.

This document also provides links to paper forms to submit via mail. Should your family apply online or via a mailed paper application?

- Applying online is ideal, since approval may be immediate, but requires an internet connection, an email, and the ability to upload qualifying documents. Mailed applications are lengthier to process, especially if any documentation is missing or if the USAC is unable to confirm eligibility from the documents submitted.

Recommendations and best practices:

- The ACP Enrollment overview provides a summary of the contents of this enrollment guide.

AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

A Step-by-Step Guide for School Districts to Support Families

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PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) helps families connect to the Internet from home by providing a monthly benefit of up to $30 (up to $75 on qualifying Tribal Lands). The ACP is a long-term $14 billion program of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The ACP began December 31, 2021, replacing the Emergency Broadband Benefit (a temporary program tied to the pandemic). This guide will help you support your families in signing up for the ACP. It provides a step-by-step guide to assist families in the online enrollment process.

WHAT DOES THE BENEFIT PROVIDE?

- A discount of up to $30 a month for broadband service ($75 for on Tribal lands).
- A one-time discount of $100, with a co-payment of more than $10 but less than $50, toward the purchase of a connected device (laptop, desktop or tablet) through a participating provider.
- A household is eligible for one benefit and one discount.

1 HOW DOES THE FAMILY ENROLL?

Determines if they (or a dependent) are eligible for the ACP, and shows proof of eligibility. A household is eligible if a member meets at least ***one*** of the criteria below. The household may have to provide documents to demonstrate eligibility.

2

Applies via one of three options:

1. **Online at ACPBenefit.org** (National Verifier)
2. **Mail in an application** (**English** or **Spanish**) and return it along with proof of eligibility to: **ACP Support Center, P.O. Box 7081, London, KY 40742**
   - For more information, see the **ACP Application Instructions**
   - It is recommended to include a Household Worksheet with the application (English or Spanish). See the **Household Worksheet Instructions** for directions.
   - Print a cover sheet so that USAC can match documents with the application.
3. **Contact a participating broadband provider** directly to learn about their application process. For a full list of participating providers see: acpbenefit.org/companies-near-me/.
   (Note only certain providers have been approved by the FCC to use an alternate application process and to enroll households directly, so most will need to apply via the National Verifier).

3

Receives confirmation that they have qualified. The applicant selects a participating internet provider (also can search USAC's online tool)..

4

Contacts the internet service provider, provides their application ID, and selects one of the provider's service plan(s). Note that all internet plans are now eligible if the internet service provider is participating in the ACP.

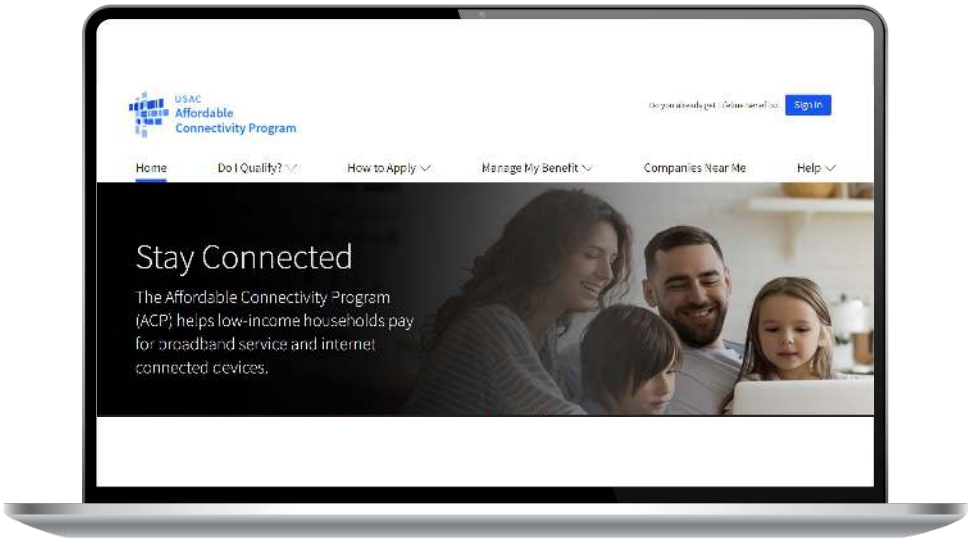
5

Enrolls with the internet service provider, provides the provider with their ACP code/approval

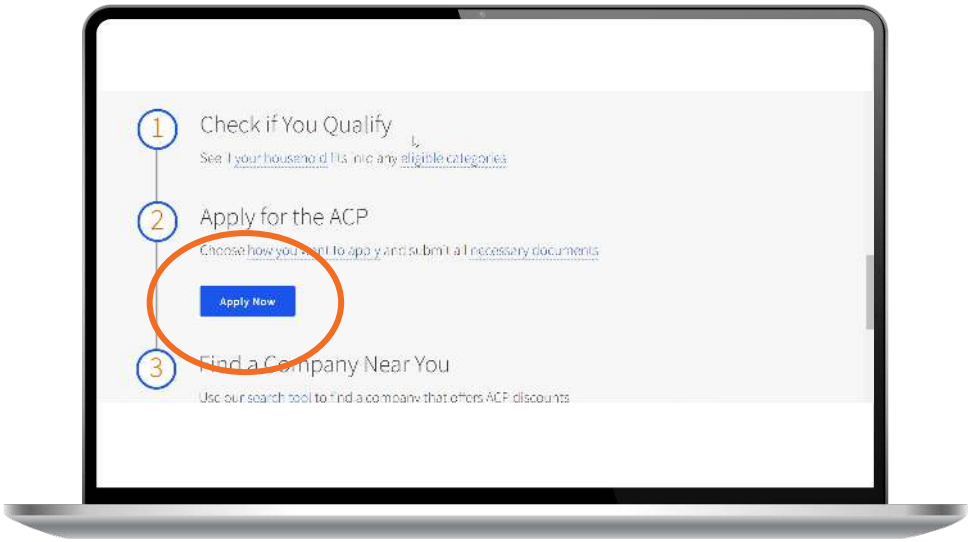
- The provider may also have their own application that the applicant needs to fill out.

ACCESS THE NATIONAL VERIFIER ONLINE

The family visits: acpbenefit.org

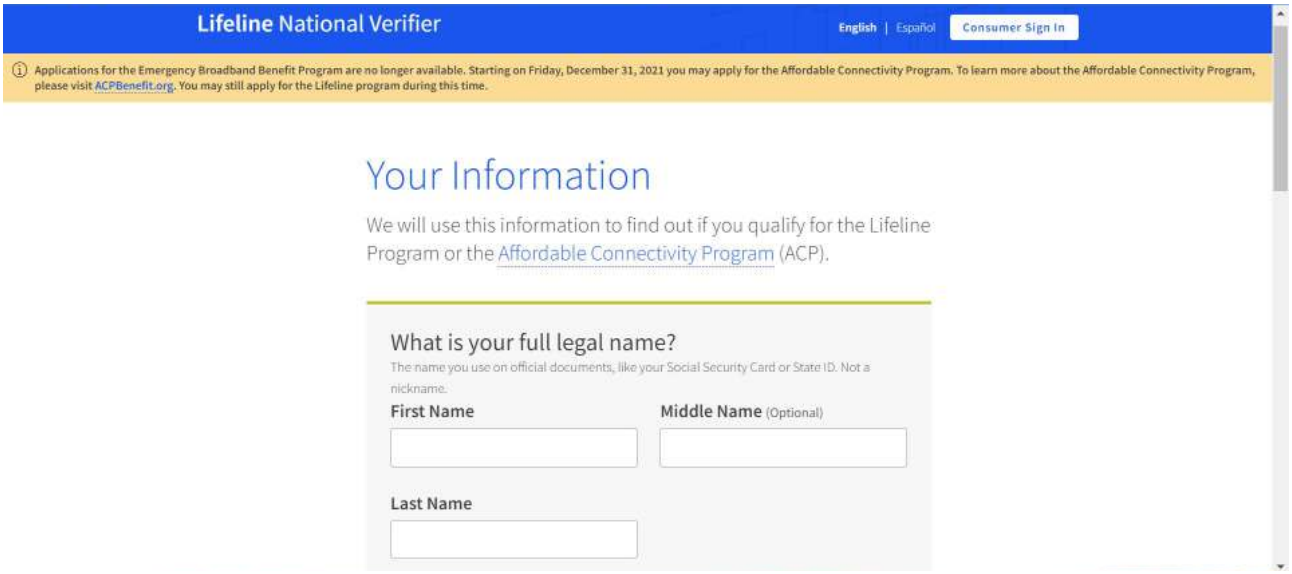


They scroll to the bottom of the page and select the “Apply Now” button



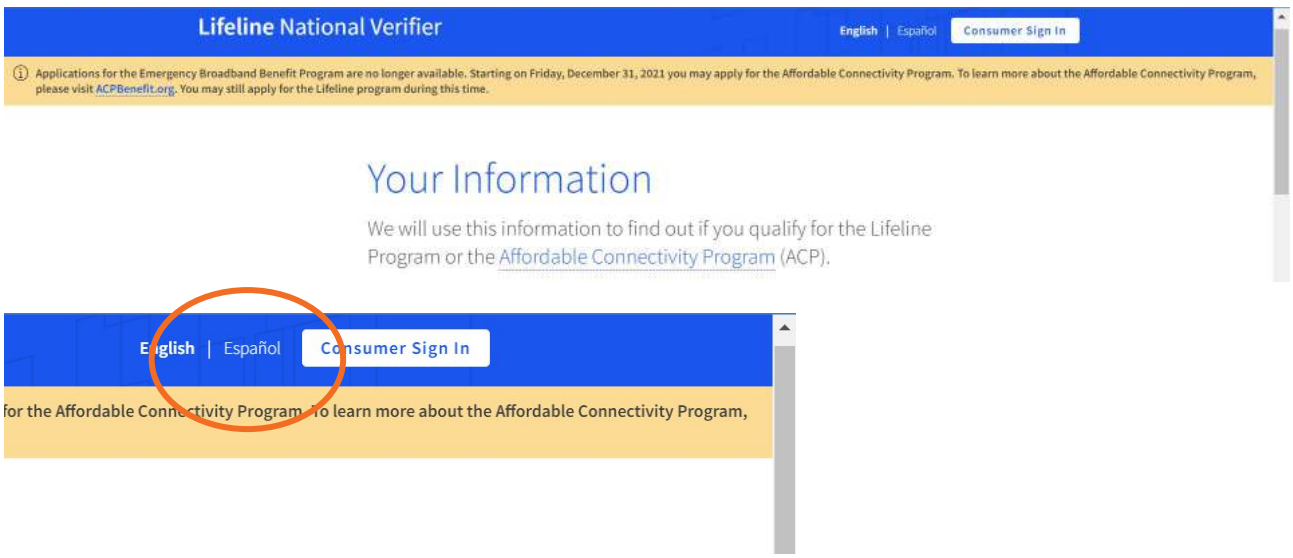
NATIONAL VERIFIER LANDING PAGE

When the family accesses the ACP National Verifier on their smartphone or computer, this is what they will see:



SELECT LANGUAGE

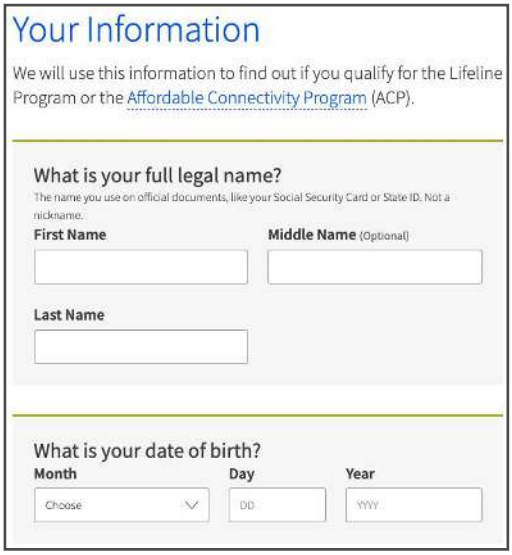
If the family member prefers to complete the application in Spanish, they select that option here:



STEP ONE: ENTER PERSONAL INFORMATION

Family member enters their personal information:

- First, Middle & Last Name
- Date of Birth



First and last name may only consist of letters, hyphens, spaces and single quotes

The first name should be the family member's legal name, not a nickname

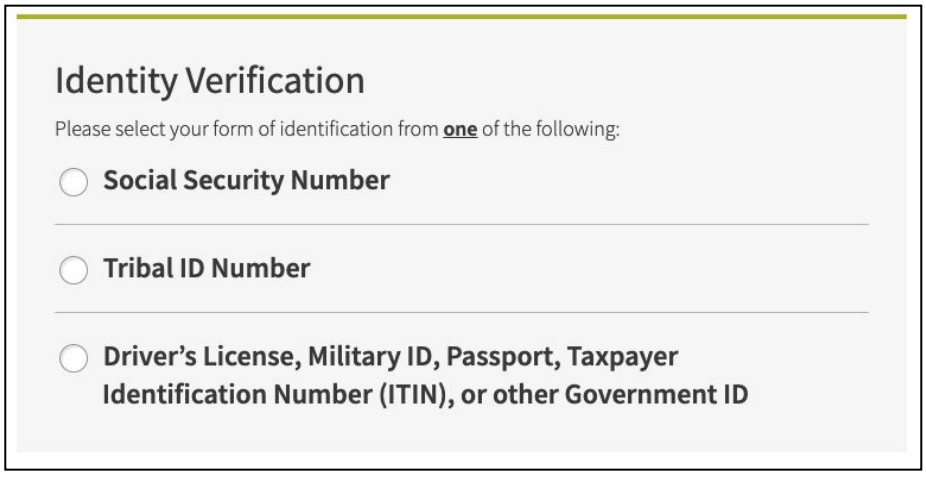
The last name must be at least 2 characters

Make sure the name is entered exactly as it appears on the applicant's identification

STEP TWO: CONFIRM IDENTITY

The following are the options for the family to confirm their identity:

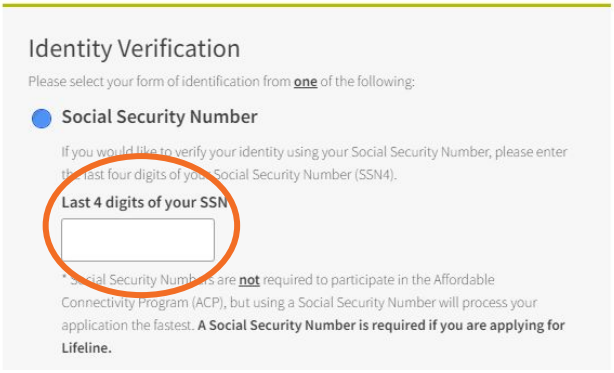
- **Social Security Number**
- **Tribal ID Number**
- **Driver's License, Military ID, Passport, Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), or other Government ID**



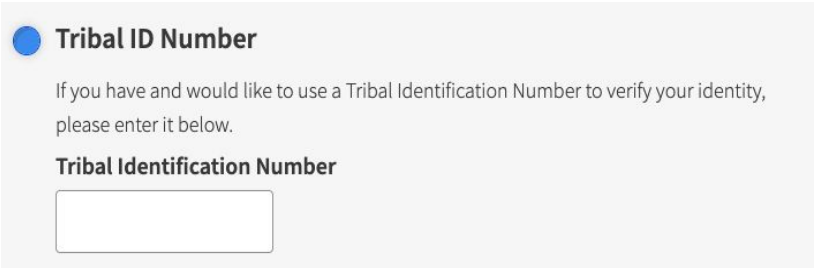
Depending on what the family member selects, each option will expand so they can enter their information.

STEP TWO CONT'D: CONFIRM IDENTITY

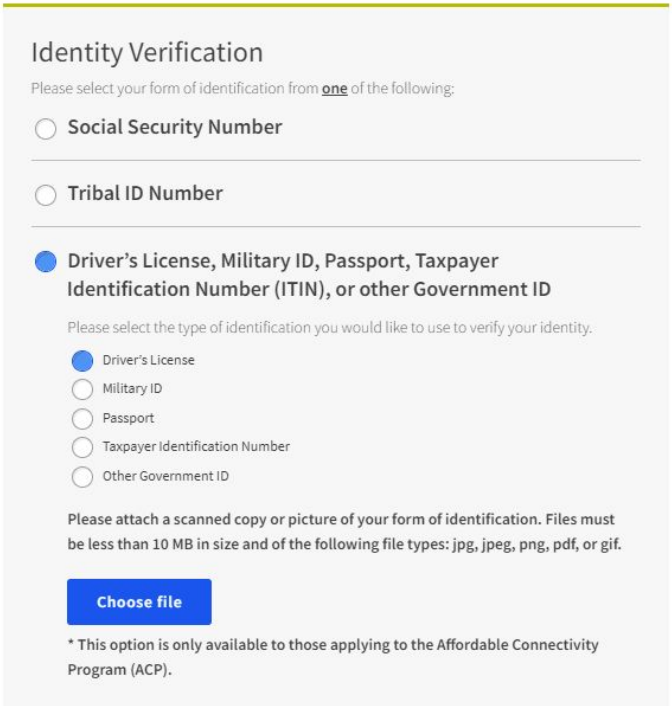
Social Security Number



Family member enters the last 4 digits of their social security number (SS#). A SS# is not required to participate in the ACP, but providing a SS# does process the application the fastest.



Family member can also choose to use a Tribal Identification Number, if applicable.



OTHER GOVERNMENT ID

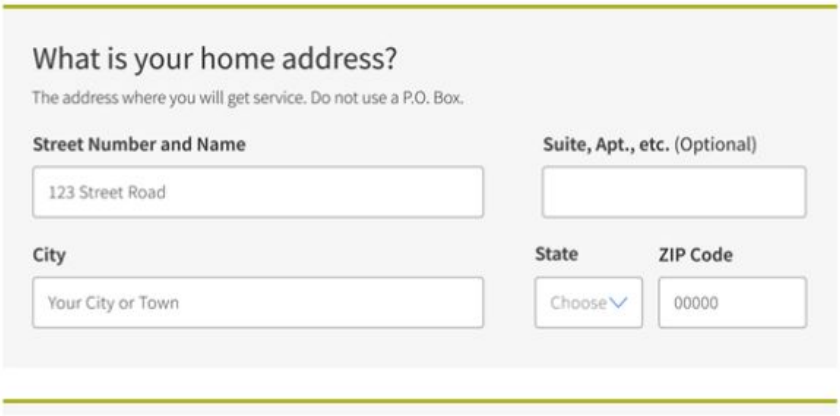
Driver's License, Military ID, Passport, Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), or other Government ID

They choose which form of ID to provide.

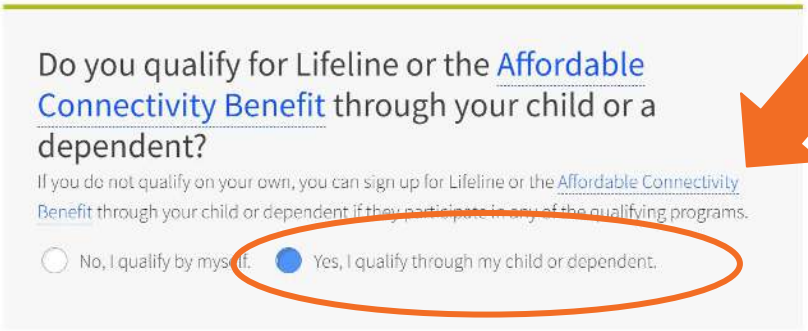
They will need to select a file from their computer and upload it. The file must be less than 10MB and in jpg, jpeg, png, pdf or gif. If applying on their smartphone, they can take a picture of the document and upload it. (If uploading a photo from their phone, it is recommended they choose the "small" size).

STEP THREE: ENTER ADDRESS

Ensure the full home address of where the family member wants to connect service, including unit or apartment number is entered.



STEP FOUR: QUALIFY AS THE APPLYING ADULT OR ON BEHALF OF THEIR DEPENDENT

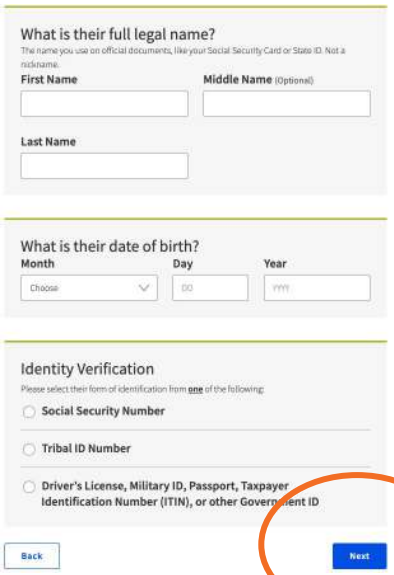


They can qualify as themself or through a child or dependent.

If they choose to qualify through a dependent, they will need to provide their dependent's details (the fields will drop down).

They will need to provide their dependent's:

- Full Legal Name
- Date of Birth
- Identity Verification (SS#, Tribal ID Number, Other Government ID)

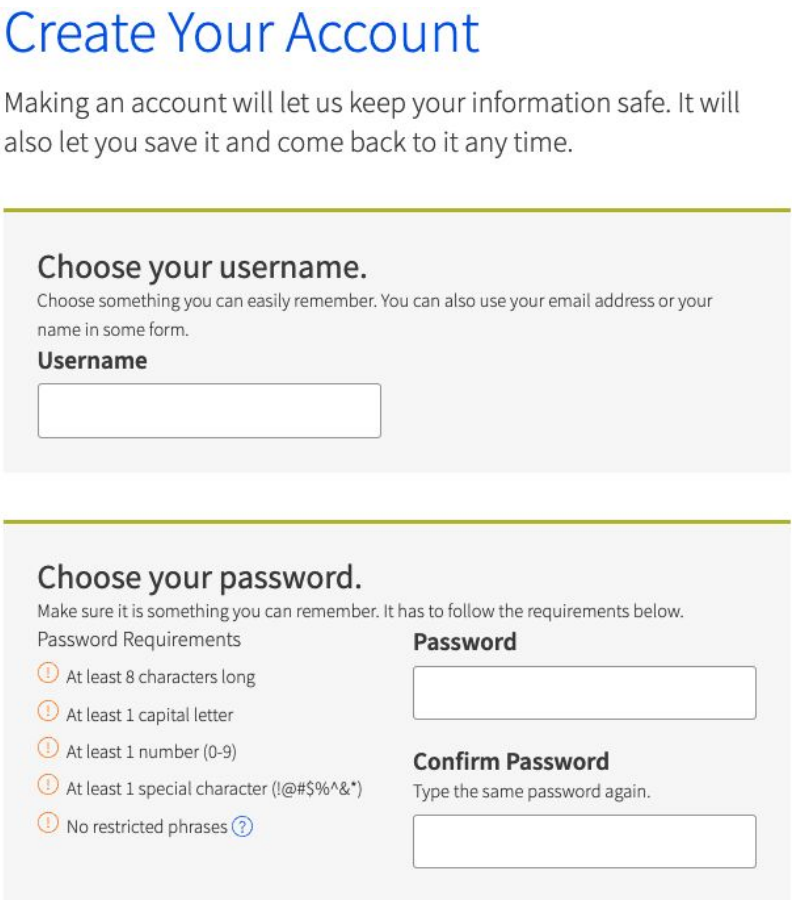


When the information is entered they press the "Next" button

Education SUPERHIGHWAY

STEP FIVE: CREATE AN ACCOUNT

They will then be prompted to create an account.



They will need to create a username and password:

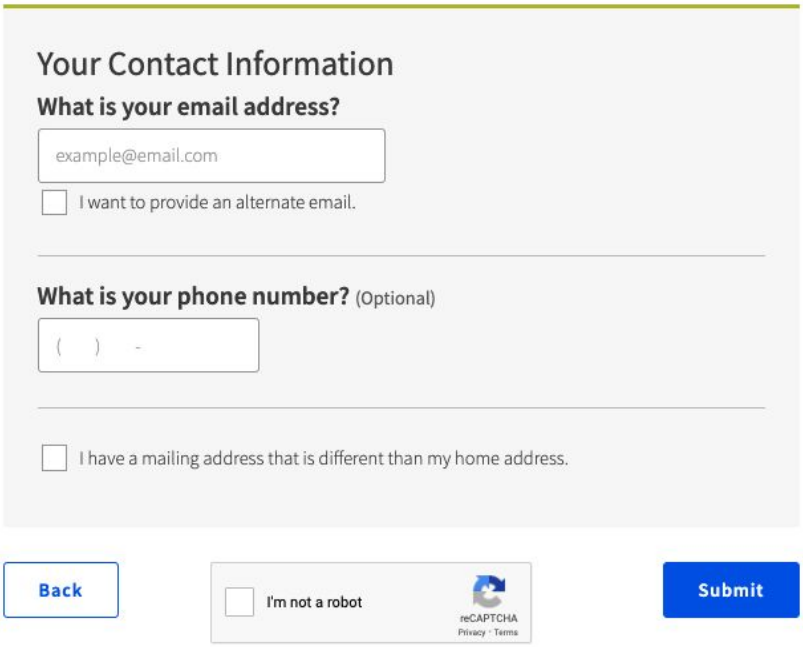
Username

Can be an email address or their name in some form.

Password

Will have to meet certain requirements:

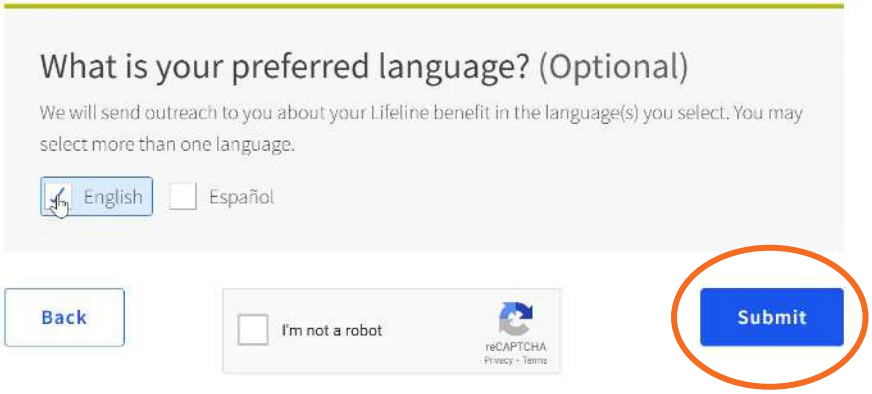
At least 8 characters long
At least 1 capital letter
At least 1 number (0-9)
At least 1 special character (!@#$%^&*)
No restricted phrases (selected username or the words: password, lifeline, fcc or usac)



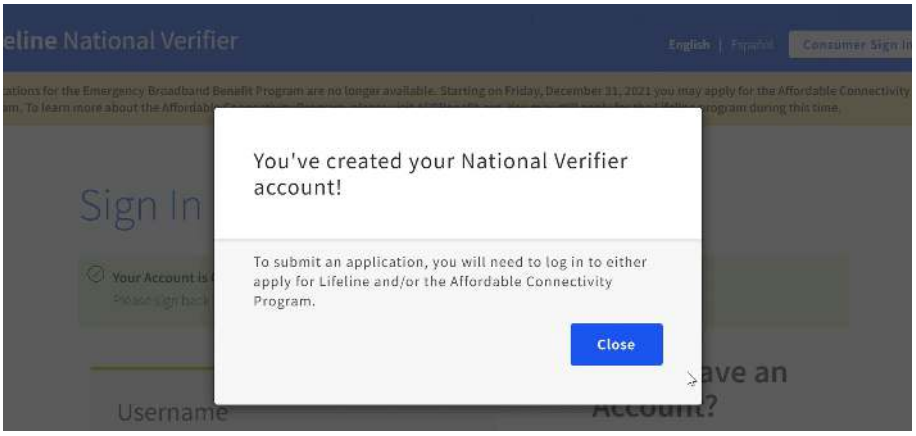
Email Address
They can also provide an alternate email as a back-up

Phone Number
Optional

If they check that they have a different mailing address than their home address, they will need to provide that at this time.

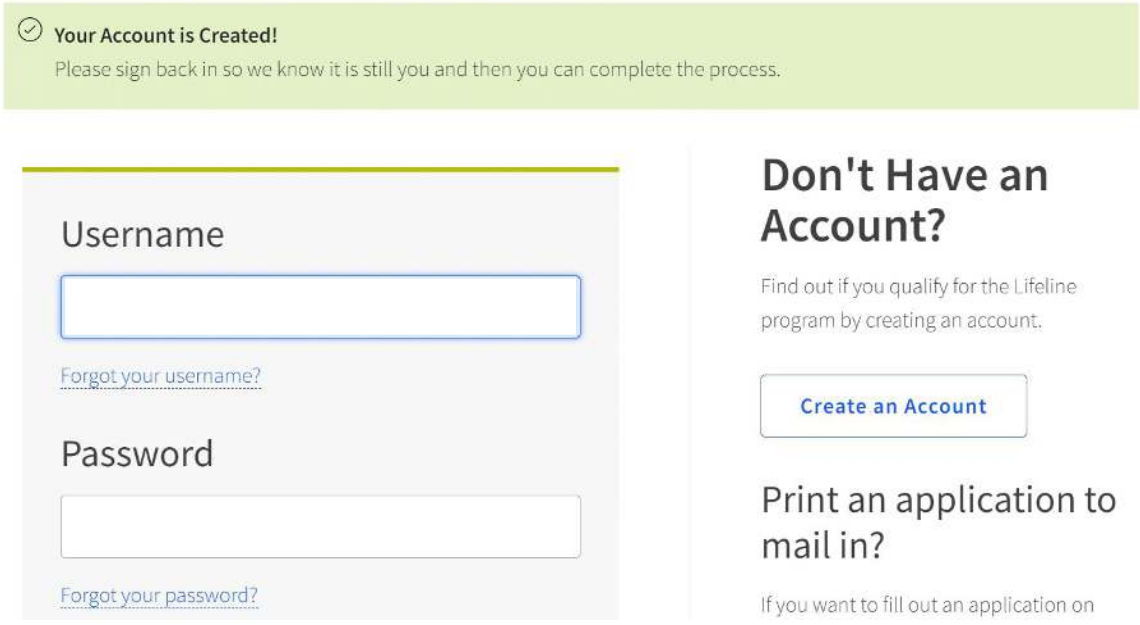


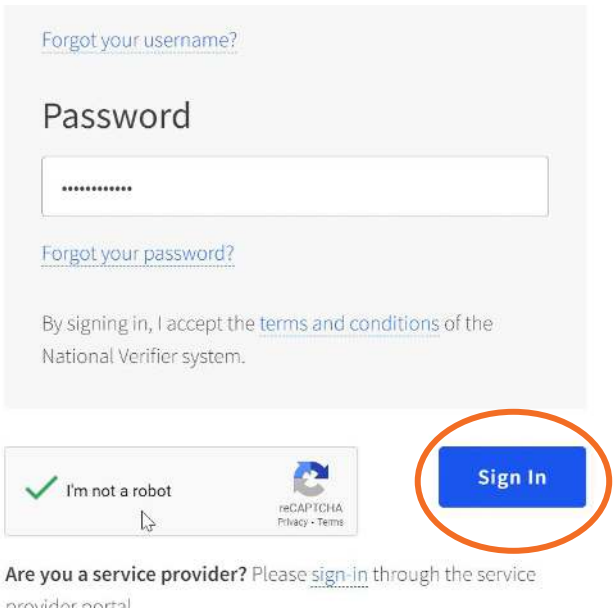
Select preferred language and "I am not a robot" and press the "Submit" button



The family member has now created an account! Click "Close."

THE FAMILY MEMBER HAS NOW CREATED AN ACCOUNT! SIGN IN WITH USERNAME AND PASSWORD THAT WAS CREATED

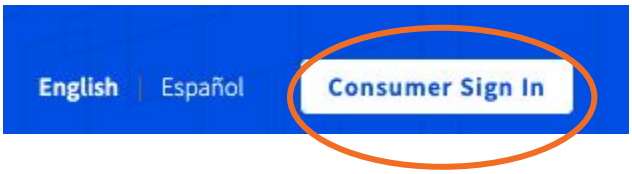




Select preferred language and "I am not a robot" and press the "Submit" button

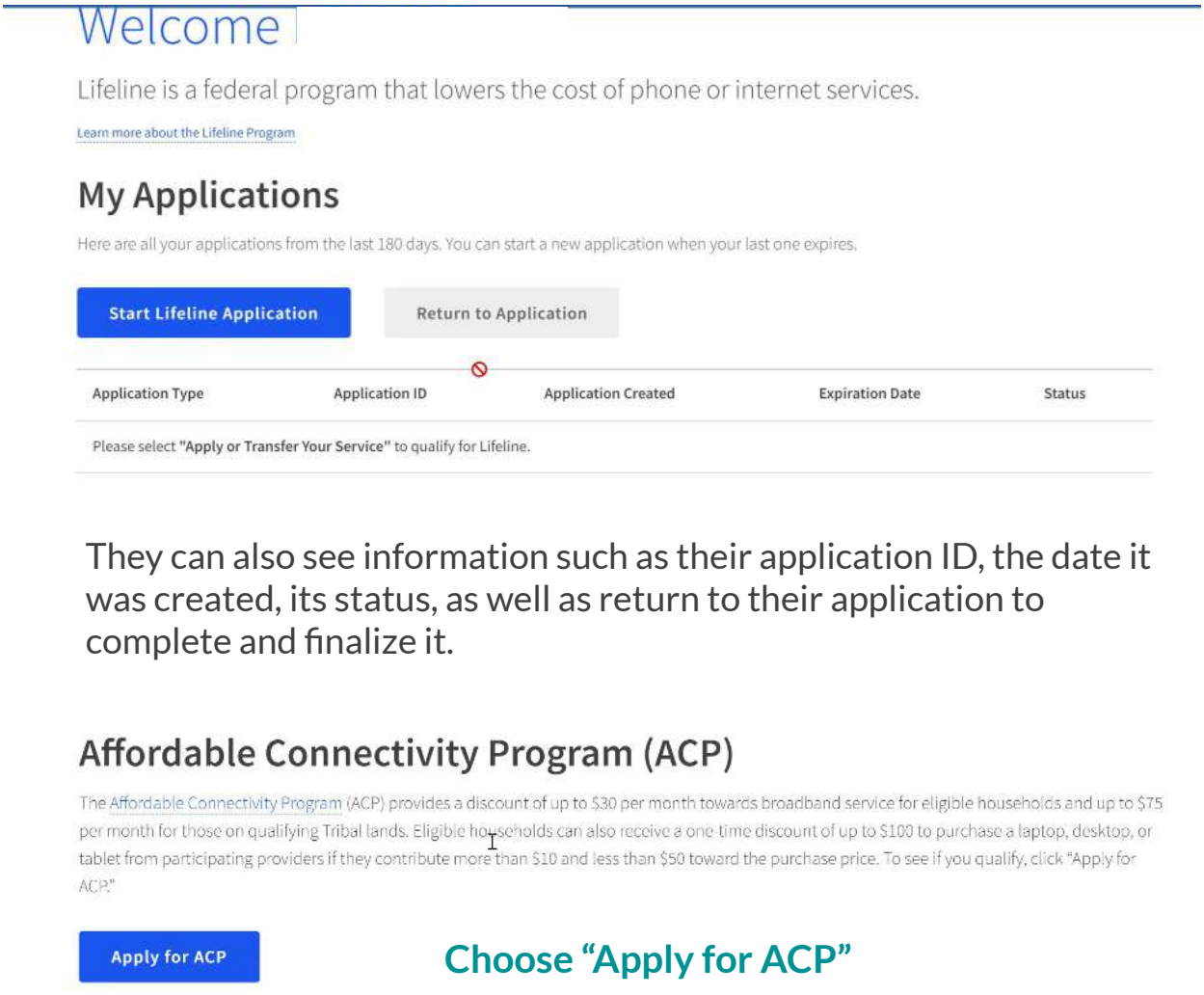
The family should record their username and password

If they need to sign in from the main USAC landing page, this is where they would log into their account:



DASHBOARD

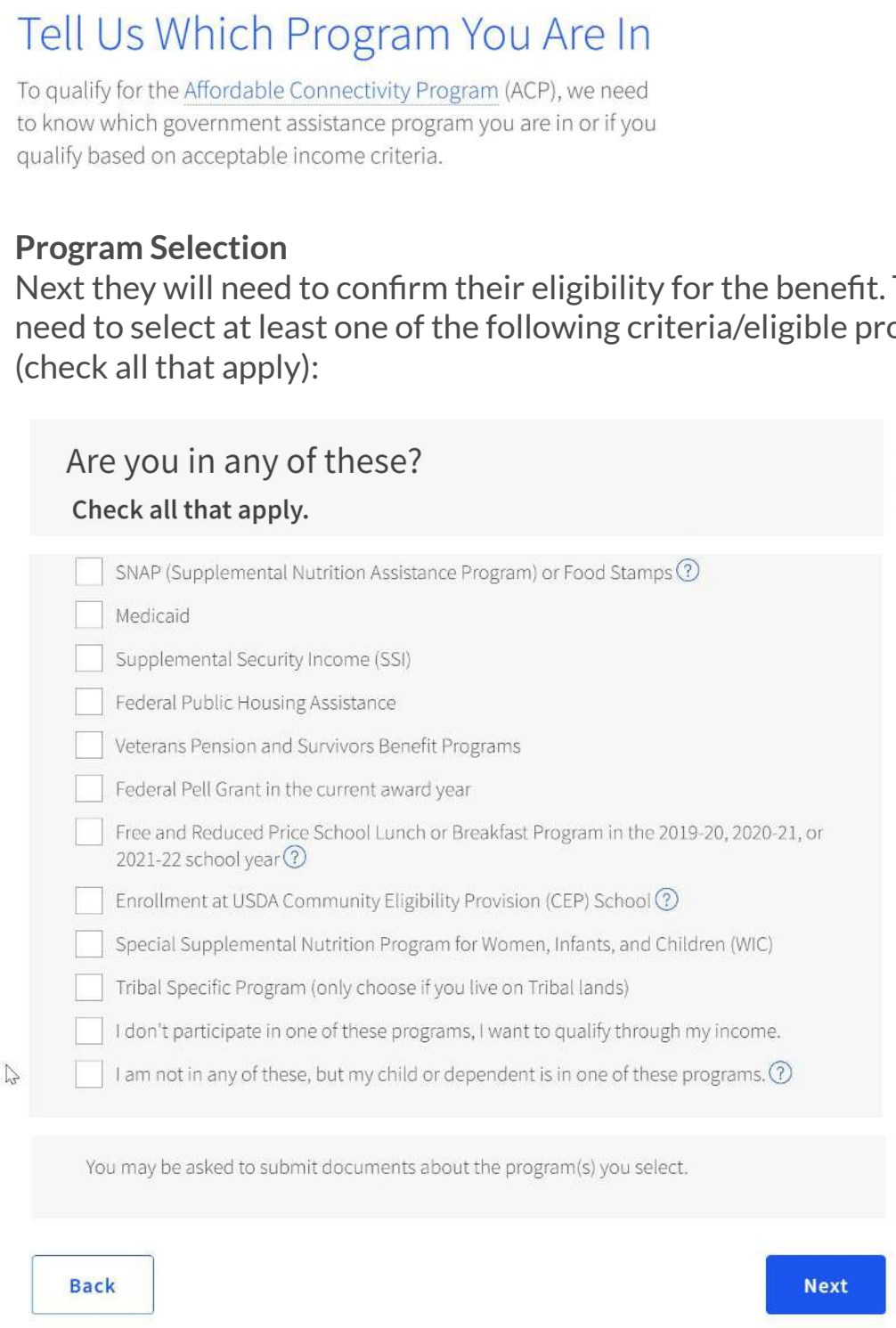
The applicant will be taken to the dashboard where they can view, access, and return to their application.



They can also see information such as their application ID, the date it was created, its status, as well as return to their application to complete and finalize it.

Choose “Apply for ACP”

STEP SIX: CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY



Program Selection

Next they will need to confirm their eligibility for the benefit. They will need to select at least one of the following criteria/eligible programs (check all that apply):

Select the option(s) and press the "Next" button

THE OPTIONS ARE

Participation in Lifeline

Income Eligibility

- 200% of the federal poverty guidelines

Participation in government assistance programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Participation in Free and Reduced Price School Meal program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current year

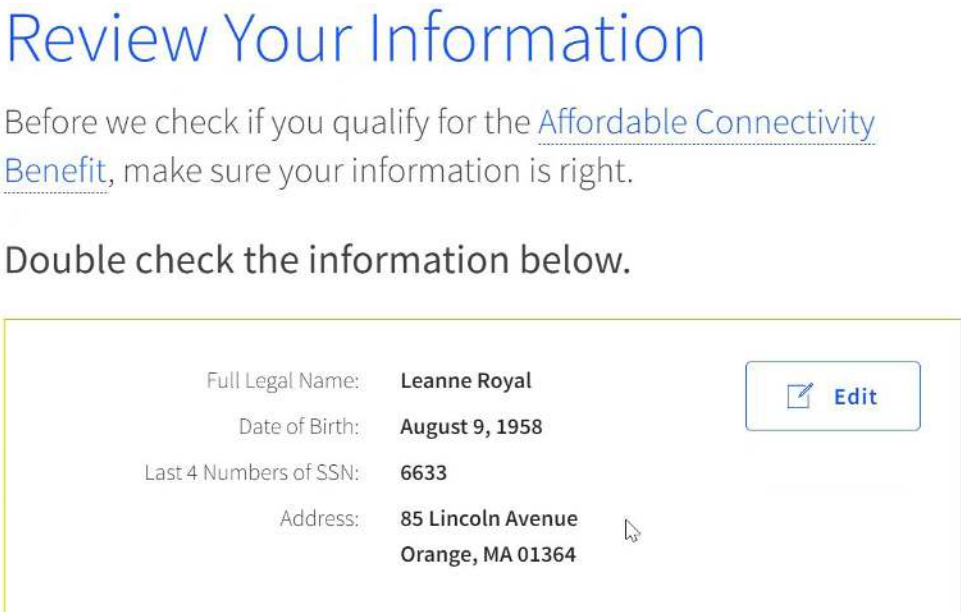
Tribal specific programs:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Head Start (only households meeting the income qualifying standard)
- Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

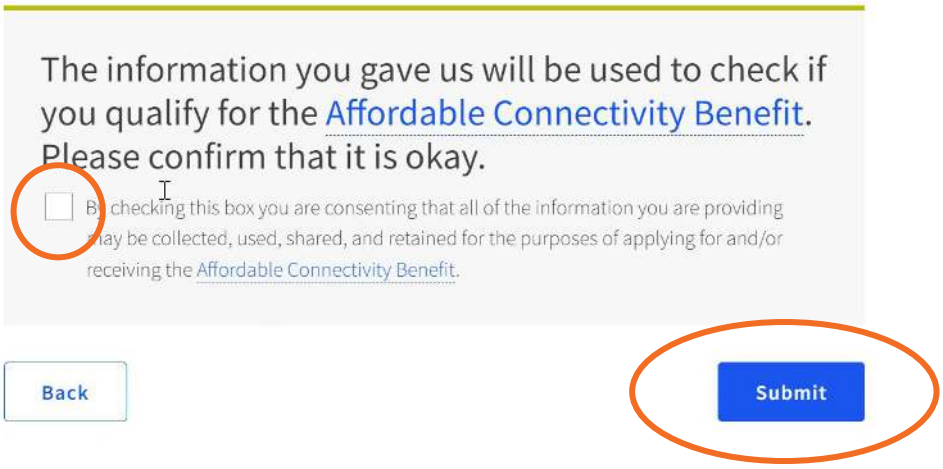
Depending on what the applicant chooses, they may need to provide documentation. See Appendix One at the end of this guide about what information these documents need to include.

Families can qualify through their child or dependent, for example, if their student participates in the free or reduced lunch or breakfast program, or if their school participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). For CEP schools or districts, USAC automatically checks the name of the CEP school/district against the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) database. The family will need to select the student's school from a dropdown list, as well as provide documentation showing the student's enrollment in the qualifying year, such as a report card or an official school document that states the school name, student name, school address and contact information, and school year. Districts may want to prepare a letter for families confirming their student's enrollment so they have it ready when applying for the ACP.

STEP SEVEN: REVIEW INFORMATION



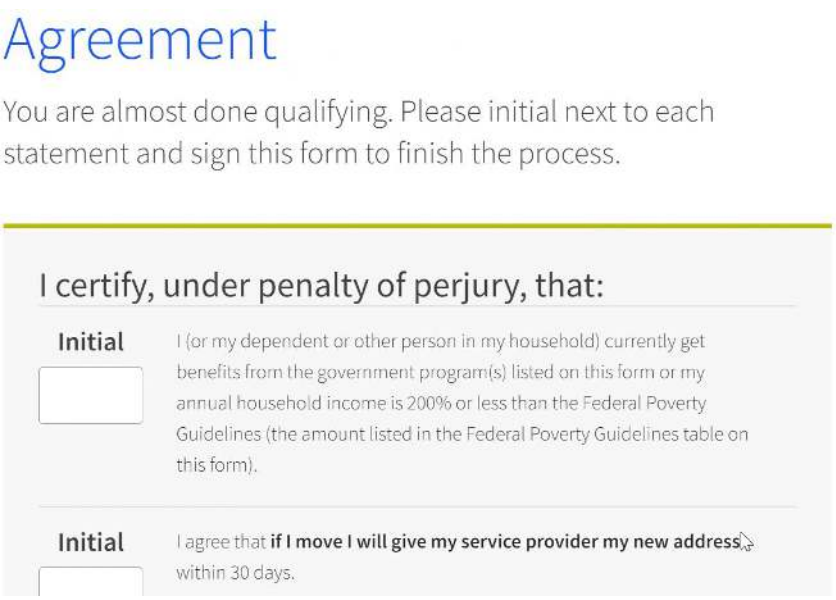
They will need to review and confirm the accuracy of the information they provided, as well as consent to this information being collected, used, shared, and retained for the purposes of applying for the ACP.



They check the box and press the "Submit" button

STEP EIGHT: SIGN AGREEMENT

They initial next to each paragraph that the information is accurate and they will follow the terms of the ACP (the full agreement can be found at the end of this guide).



Type their full legal name in the signature box and check the box that they understand this digital signature is the same as if they signed with a pen. Make sure the first and last name are capitalized.

Press the "Submit" button

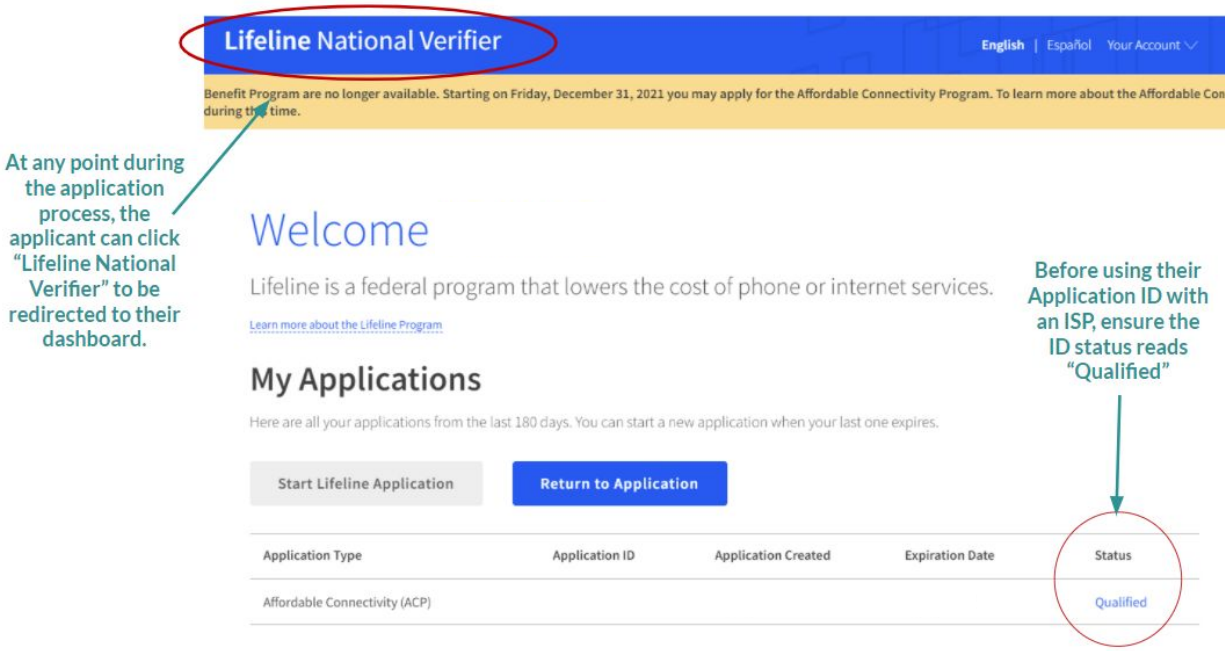
CONFIRMATION OF QUALIFICATION FOR THE ACP

They will receive the following confirmation page once they've been qualified. The next step will be for them to contact their internet company to tell them they have been approved by USAC and to select an eligible service plan. Note that they have 120 days to sign up with a participating provider.

You Qualify for the Affordable Connectivity Benefit! Now, it's time to sign up with a provider.

Your application has been approved. If you haven't already done so, your next step is to sign up with a participating internet company by (based on US Eastern Time) so you can begin receiving discounted broadband service through the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

Instruct the applicant to navigate to their dashboard where they can ensure their application ID is ready to be used with an internet company.



The next step will be for them to contact their internet company to tell them they have been approved by USAC and to select an eligible service plan. Note that they have 120 days to sign up with a participating provider.

If you do NOT sign up by , you will have to reapply for the Affordable Connectvity Benefit.

Even if you want to receive the benefit from your current broadband service provider, you still need to contact them to start receiving the benefit.

How to Sign Up with a Provider

1. Contact an internet company to pick a service plan and begin receiving your monthly Affordable Connectivity Benefit discount.

   If you are interested in a connected device, click here for a list of companies that offer connected devices. Not all companies participating in the program are offering connected devices. You will need to enroll with a company to receive your broadband AND device benefit.

2. Tell the provider that you have been approved by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).

3. **IMPORTANT TIP:** Give the provider the following information as it appears on your application so they can sign you up:

Live on Tribal lands? Press the button below to see if you qualified for Tribal benefits:

Click “Contact an internet company” to find a provider

**The applicant should also note their Application/Verification ID for their records*

NEED HELP?

If families have any questions or need assistance, they can contact the ACP Support Center of the Universal Service Administrative Co, who administers the ACP on behalf of the FCC via:

E: ACPSupport@usac.org

T: (877) 384-2575

Seven days a week, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET

APPENDIX ONE: GOVERNMENT ID's AND OTHER QUALIFYING DOCUMENTS

Some applications may be processed immediately (generally if using a Social Security number), but others may require additional documentation. USAC may also contact the applicant if they need additional information to confirm eligibility once an application is submitted. The following provides examples, as well as some helpful tips, as to what these documents need to include.

IDENTITY VERIFICATION

If the applicant needs to provide additional information to verify identity:

Documentation must include	Document Examples and Tips:
• Your first and last name • Your date of birth	• Valid government, military, state or Tribal ID • Birth Certificate • U.S. Driver's license • Passport • Certificate of U.S. Citizenship or Naturalization • Permanent Resident Card or Green Card • Government assistance program document • Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) document (does not need to include date of birth)

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

If the applicant qualifies through their income, they ***may*** need to show documents that their annual income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Documentation must include	Document Examples and Tips:
• Your (or your dependent's) first and last name • Your annual income	• Prior year's state, federal, or Tribal tax return • Current income statement from your employer or a paycheck stub • A Social Security statement of benefits • Veterans Administration statement of benefits • Unemployment or Worker's Compensation statement of benefits • Divorce decree, child support award, or a similar official document showing your income • A retirement/pension statement of benefits

QUALIFYING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

If the applicant (or dependent) participates in one of the qualifying programs, they may need to provide a letter or official document as proof.

Documentation must include	Document Examples and Tips:
• Your (or your dependent's) first and last name • The name of the qualifying program, such as SNAP • The name of the government, Tribal entity, program administrator, school, school district, university, or college that issued the document • An issue date within the last 12 months or a future expiration date • For the Free and Reduced Price School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, documents can be from either the 2019-20, 2020-21, or 2021-22 school year • For Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools, documents must show that the student is enrolled in a CEP School for the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, or 2021-2022 school years. Acceptable documentation includes a report card that shows the student's name, school name, and school year, or a letter from the school confirming the student is enrolled in the CEP school. • For Federal Pell Grants, documents should be from the current award year and can include screenshots of a StudentAid.gov dashboard	• Benefit award letter • Approval letter • Statement of benefits • Benefit verification letter

APPENDIX TWO: FULL TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT

Agreement

You must initial next to each statement. If you fail to initial each statement, your application will be considered incomplete

I agree, under penalty of perjury, to the following statements:

- ❑ I (or my dependent or other person in my household) currently get benefits from the government program(s) listed on this form or my annual household income is 200% or less than the Federal Poverty Guidelines (the amount listed in the Federal Poverty Guidelines table on this form).

- ❑ I agree that if I move I will give my service provider my new address within 30 days.

- ❑ I understand that I have to tell my service provider within 30 days if I do not qualify for the ACP anymore, including:
  - ❑ 1.) I, or the person in my household that qualifies, do not qualify through a government program or income anymore.
  - ❑ 2.) Either I or someone in my household gets more than one ACP benefit.

- ❑ I know that my household can only get one ACP benefit and, to the best of my knowledge, my household is not getting more than one ACP benefit. I understand that I can only receive one connected device (desktop, laptop, or tablet) through the ACP, even if I switch ACP providers.

- ❑ I agree that all of the information I provide on this form may be collected, used, shared, and retained for the purposes of applying for and/or receiving the ACP benefit. I understand that if this information is not provided to the Program Administrator, I will not be able to get ACP benefits. If the laws of my state or Tribal government require it, I agree that the state or Tribal government may share information about my benefits for a qualifying program with the ACP Administrator. The information shared by the state or Tribal government will be used only to help find out if I can get an ACP benefit.

- ❑ For my household, I affirm and understand that the ACP is a federal government subsidy that reduces my broadband internet access service bill and at the conclusion of the program, my household will be subject to the provider's undiscounted general rates, terms, and conditions if my household continues to subscribe to the service.

- ❑ All the answers and agreements that I provided on this form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

❑ **II know that willingly giving false or fraudulent information to get ACP benefits is punishable by law and can result in fines, jail time, de-enrollment, or being barred from the program.**

❑ **I was truthful about whether or not I am a resident of Tribal lands, as defined in the "Your Information" section of this form. FCC FORM 5645 Affordable Connectivity Program Application Form A**

Your Signature

Type your full legal name below

❑ I understand this is a digital signature, and it is the same as if I signed by name with a pen