

Chapter 388-273 WAC

WASHINGTON TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(Formerly chapter 388-31 WAC)

WAC

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WAC 388-273-0010 Purpose of the Washington telephone assistance program. The Washington telephone assistance program (WTAP) is designed to help low-income households afford access to local telephone service. For the purposes of this chapter, "we" and "us" mean the department of social and health services (DSHS). "You" means the person who is applying and eligible for WTAP.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 01-09-023, § 388-273-0010, filed 4/9/01, effective 6/1/01.]

WAC 388-273-0020 Who may receive Washington telephone assistance program (WTAP)? (1) To receive WTAP benefits, you must:

- (a) Be age eighteen or older or, if under eighteen, be the responsible head of household, and either;
- (b) Be receiving one of the following programs from us:
 - (i) Temporary assistance for needy families (TANF);
 - (ii) State family assistance (SFA);
 - (iii) Pregnant women assistance (PWA);
 - (iv) Aged, blind, or disabled (ABD) cash assistance;
 - (v) Refugee assistance;
 - (vi) Food assistance;
 - (vii) State supplemental security income (SSI);
 - (viii) Medical assistance, including medicare cost sharing programs;
 - (ix) Community options program entry system (COPES);
 - (x) Chore services; or
- (c) Have completed using community service voice mail services, and been identified to the department as eligible for WTAP by the community agency that provided your community service voice mail program; and

(2) Apply to a local exchange company for WTAP and request the lowest available flat rate telephone service at the WTAP rate. In exchange areas where wireline service is not available without service extension, you may apply to a wireless carrier:

(a) **"Local exchange company"** means a telephone company that is required by the Washington utilities and transportation commission to offer WTAP benefits and offers local calling, i.e., calling without long distance charges.

(b) **"Flat rate service"** is telephone service with a single monthly payment that allows unlimited local calling for a specified length of time. The local exchange flat rate includes

any federal end user access charges and other charges necessary to obtain the service; and

(3) You must have the local telephone service billed in your name.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.005, 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.08A.100, 74.04.770, 74.04.0052, 74.04.655, 74.08.043, 74.08.335, and 2011 1st sp.s. c 36. 12-10-042, § 388-273-0020, filed 4/27/12, effective 6/1/12. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 2002 c 104. 02-18-106, § 388-273-0020, filed 9/3/02, effective 10/4/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440. 01-09-023, § 388-273-0020, filed 4/9/01, effective 6/1/01.]

WAC 388-273-0025 Benefits you receive as a WTAP participant. (1) WTAP participants receive a:

(a) Discount on local telephone flat rate services, when the flat rate is more than the WTAP assistance rate;

(b) Waiver of deposit requirements on local telephone service;

(c) Fifty percent discount on service connection fees through June 30, 2003. Effective July 1, 2003, fifty percent discount for the first connection; and for a second or subsequent connection when you ask for service at a new address. Any connection fee discounts available from other programs are added to the WTAP discount, to pay part or all of the remaining fifty percent; or

(d) Effective July 1, 2003, a community service voice mail box offered by a community agency that has been contracted with the department of community, trade and economic development to provide the service.

(2) WTAP benefits are limited to one residential line per household.

(3) Your benefits begin the date you are approved for WTAP assistance and continue through the next June 30, except if you qualified for telephone assistance through using the community services voice mail programs, you will receive one additional service year of benefits. "Service year" means the period beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the following calendar year.

(4) WTAP benefits do not include charges for line extension, optional extended area service, optional mileage, customer premises equipment, applicable taxes or delinquent balances owed to the telephone company.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 2003 c 134. 04-13-136, § 388-273-0025, filed 6/22/04, effective 7/23/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 2002 c 104. 02-18-106, § 388-273-0025, filed 9/3/02, effective 10/4/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440. 01-09-023, § 388-273-0025, filed 4/9/01, effective 6/1/01.]

WAC 388-273-0030 How you can apply for WTAP.

(1) You can apply for telephone benefits by contacting the local telephone company.

(2) The telephone company contacts us to verify that you are eligible for benefits under WAC 388-273-0020 before they add WTAP to your telephone account.

(3) You will know you are receiving WTAP benefits when you have a WTAP credit on your telephone bill.

(4) Effective July 1, 2003, you can apply for community service voice mail by contacting your local community service voice mail provider.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 2003 c 134, 04-13-136, § 388-273-0030, filed 6/22/04, effective 7/23/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 01-09-023, § 388-273-0030, filed 4/9/01, effective 6/1/01.]

(j) Preapproved documented indirect costs associated with implementing and maintaining WTAP.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 80.36.410 through 80.36.470, 05-15-152, § 388-273-0035, filed 7/19/05, effective 8/19/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 2003 c 134, 04-13-136, § 388-273-0035, filed 6/22/04, effective 7/23/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 80.36.440, 01-09-023, § 388-273-0035, filed 4/9/01, effective 6/1/01.]

WAC 388-273-0035 What we reimburse the local telephone company. (1) Within available funding limits, we reimburse local telephone companies for fully documented administrative and program expenses associated with WTAP. The reimbursable expenses are limited to:

(a) Program services provided to eligible households June 1, 2003 and beyond, and after eligibility for WTAP is verified;

(i) Monthly flat rate service.

We reimburse the local telephone company an amount equal to the monthly flat rate of the incumbent local exchange carrier providing service in the customer's exchange area, minus the WTAP assistance rate set by the commission, and minus the amount of federal lifeline program reimbursement available to an eligible telecommunications carrier. An "incumbent local exchange carrier" is a telephone company in the U.S. that was providing local service when the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was enacted, and is required to file tariffs with the commission. For all exchange areas, the WTAP reimbursement shall be limited to not more than nineteen dollars for each eligible household.

(ii) Connection fee.

We reimburse the local telephone company an amount equal to one-half the connection fee rate or twenty-two dollars, whichever is less, for your first connection at a given address. If you move, we will reimburse the local telephone company for your first connection at the new address.

(iii) Waiver of local deposit.

We reimburse the local telephone company an amount up to two times the WTAP assistance rate.

(b) Correct, verifiable billing items;

(c) One monthly invoice and supporting documentation submitted and received by WTAP by the fifteenth day following the month the expense occurred;

(d) Items charged in error that have been corrected within thirty days from the date we return the report of invoicing error to the local phone company;

(e) Salaries and benefits for time required to implement and maintain WTAP, with the exception that time required for the correction of billing, case number and client identification errors is not an allowable expense;

(f) Travel expenses for attending hearings, meetings, or training pertaining to WTAP;

(g) Expenses for supplies and materials for implementing and maintaining WTAP;

(h) Postage and handling for delivery of WTAP material;

(i) Administrative charge for change of service orders specified by tariffs; and