

Good News Department

Helping Families In Need In A Recession

(NAPSA)—Many Americans who are looking for work may get a helping hand in the form of free cell phone service.

In order to look for work, you need a working phone, and that's a problem for many people living below the federal poverty line, as they may not be able to afford phone service. According to a recent survey by PKS Research, adults with an income of less than \$25,000 are just as likely to use a mobile phone for employment searches as those with higher incomes.

Assurance Wireless is a new program that offers a free wireless phone plus 200 free voice minutes of national local and long-distance monthly calling to eligible customers.

Having a contact number and the ability to return calls to a prospective employer are important tools in a job search. Studies show that phone access can improve the chances of securing employment as well as provide a way to stay connected with families during emergencies.

Who's Eligible?

Consumers eligible for Assurance Wireless include those who generally participate in Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA or Section 8), Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or the National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program. Customers may also qualify based on low household income.



Studies show that having a phone improves the chances of securing a job.

Assurance Wireless is currently available in Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia and continues to expand. Eligibility varies by state.

"Programs like this are so important for helping individuals and families stay on, or get back on, their feet and succeed in these difficult financial times," says business columnist and personal finance expert Louis Barajas.

Users get a free voice mail account and call waiting, caller ID and access to 911 in case of emergency. Beyond the 200 free voice minutes per month, customers can prepay for additional services as needed. To get started, call (800) 395-2171, apply and provide documentation.

For More Information

For more information, you can call the toll-free number or visit www.assurancewireless.com. Information is available in English and Spanish.

