



iFoster Phones for Foster Youth Frequently Asked Questions

Program

1. What is the “Phones for Foster Youth” pilot program?

- a. The “Phones for Foster Youth program” by iFoster and Boost Mobile is a pilot program under the FCC LifeLine program administered by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). LifeLine is a program to help make communications services more affordable for low-income consumers. LifeLine provides subscribers a discount on monthly telephone service purchased from participating providers in the marketplace. Subscribers can also purchase discounted broadband from participating providers.
- b. This pilot program is two years in duration with the goal of providing reliable communications services to current and former foster youth. A review of the pilot will be conducted by the CPUC to determine if and how the pilot will continue or be incorporated into existing CA LifeLine services.
- c. The CPUC is investing up to \$25 Million over two years of the pilot.

2. What type of phone will the youth be receiving?

- a. A brand new LG Empire Tribute Smart Phone <https://www.lg.com/us/cell-phones/lg-LMX220PM-Boost-tribute-empire>
- b. This may be replaced over time with a similar device based on new model versions and availability.

3. What is the service plan?

- a. The plan is unlimited talk and text and high speed data a month.
- a. Data does become metered after 3GB a month are used. Metering means that the high speed might be throttled so will be a bit slower at high data usage times, but data will continue to be unlimited for the month.
- b. The plan also includes the capability for the phone to be a hotspot for other devices.

4. What is the service coverage area?

- a. This program only operates in the State of California. Phone service is not available in any other state.
- b. This program utilizes the Boost Mobile network. Youth applicants can check if there is service available in their area by checking their address and zip code at: <https://www.boostmobile.com/coveragemap.html?INTNAV=UtilNav:CoverageMap>
- c. The program will only fully operate “in service” areas. “Roaming” service areas, the program will only provide 300 minutes of talk time and unlimited text (until talk time max is reached). WiFi capability will be available.



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- d. iFoster is working with the CPUC on alternatives for areas of the state where coverage is limited. These will be announced as soon as a viable alternative has been approved.
- 5. What is the start date and end date for this pilot program?**
 - a. Start Date: November 18, 2019
 - b. End Date: November 18, 2021
 - 6. Is this pilot program service available with another telecom carrier?**
 - a. And this point, no. If this changes, we will notify all current participants and provide options for new participants going forward.
 - 7. What happens to the youth's phone and service after the pilot program is concluded?**
 - a. iFoster and the CPUC will be working on extending this program either as transitioning
 - b. Data from voluntary quarterly surveys completed by youth participants will help inform CPUC decision on extending the pilot or providing a similar solution in a revised LifeLine program.
 - c. Options will exit upon the completion of the pilot and youth will be informed in advance of their options. Youth will be given choices for how and if they want to continue with LifeLine services.

Program Eligibility

- 1. How old does the youth need to be to get a phone?**
 - a. The program has been approved by the CPUC for youth 13-26 who have been in care on or after their 13th birthday (i.e. there was an open CPS case on their 13th birthday or later).
 - b. If guardianship was granted prior to age 13, but county child welfare payments continued to at least their 13th birthday, the youth is considered eligible for this program.
 - c. County Child Welfare can decide to limit the eligibility (by age or other factors) for any youth in care, including non-minor dependents. Please check with your County of Origin for any additional eligibility requirements or restrictions.
- 2. What if the youth turns 27 during the program?**
 - a. Youth can still keep their phone and service for the duration of the pilot program.
- 3. What are the required approvals for minors in care (13-17 inclusive)?**
 - a. County Child Welfare determines the minimum age eligibility for their county.
 - b. The youth, County Social Worker or designated County Child Welfare Approver, and Caregiver, Attorney, or other guardian designee need to sign application.



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- c. Ward of the Court letter or County Dependency letter.
- d. iFoster recommends completion of iFoster's Phones for Foster Youth digital literacy course for certification. This course is an online course with quizzes. The course can be completed by the youth themselves or be administered by a facilitator. The course is available online and iFoster will keep a record of youth participation, completion (and grades), and certification. Reports can be provided to Counties on youth participation, completion and certification.
- e. Counties may decide to have youth complete the course prior to receiving their phone or the course will be sent to a youth's phone via text upon activation of the phone for completion as part of service activation.
- f. Online course: <https://ispri.ng/Z3ZxL>

4. What are the required approvals for non-minor dependents (18-20 inclusive)?

- a. The youth and County Social Worker need to sign off on the application.
- b. Ward of the Court letter or County Dependency letter.
- c. iFoster recommends completion of iFoster's Phones for Foster Youth digital literacy course for certification. This course is an online course with quizzes. The course can be completed by the youth themselves or be administered by a facilitator. The course is available online and iFoster will keep a record of youth participation, completion (and grades), and certification. Reports can be provided to Counties on youth participation, completion and certification.
- d. Counties may decide to have youth complete the course prior to receiving their phone or the course will be sent to a youth's phone via text upon activation of the phone for completion as part of service activation.
- e. Online course: <https://ispri.ng/Z3ZxL>

5. What are the required approvals for out-of-care former foster youth

- a. Youth needs to complete the application.
- b. If the youth is a minor, Caregiver, Attorney, or other guardian designee need to sign application.
- c. Youth needs to submit their Ward of the Court letter or County Dependency letter.

Application Process

1. How does the youth apply for a phone?

- a. Anyone on the "Phones for Foster Youth Wait List" will be sent an application via email starting on October 7, 2019.



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- b. iFoster will email out to all County contacts and other interested child welfare agencies the application starting on October 7, 2019.
- c. The application is available to all iFoster members by logging into the iFoster resource portal (www.ifoster.org) and selecting Phones for Foster Youth under Technology Resources starting on October 7, 2019.
- d. Youth will fill out an application and send the application (with the required approvals, as stated above) to iFoster via email (phone@ifoster.org) or upload to their personal Digital Locker at www.ifoster.org, along with their Ward of the Court or County Dependency letter.

2. What happens between application submission and phone delivery?

- a. Upon receipt of an application, iFoster will review and validate that the applicant is eligible for the Phones for Foster Youth pilot program and in a service area.
- b. iFoster will post an approval in a youth's iFoster account and the youth will receive a notification alert that they have been approved (call, email, or text to their designated contact listed on their application).
- c. Phones will begin shipping the week of November 18, 2019.
- d. The shipping tracking number to be able to track the shipment of their phone will be uploaded to a youth's iFoster account and the youth will receive a notification alert that their phone has been shipped (call, email, or text to their designated contact).
- e. A youth or their designee will need to be at the shipping address to receive the phone as a signature will be required.
- f. PLEASE NOTE: PHONES DO NOT ARRIVE WITH SERVICE ON. IFOSTER WILL NEED TO ACTIVATE EACH PHONE. Activation will happen once iFoster is notified by the shipping carrier that the phone has been received and signed for.
- g. iFoster will activate the phone with telecom services of free, unlimited voice, text, high speed data, and hotspot capability once the youth has received their phone.
- h. iFoster will call and text the youth to confirm service activation and the youth's possession of the phone.
- i. Youth have up to 1 business day to confirm activation back to iFoster otherwise service will be turned off and their account suspended.

3. Can the organizations, child welfare workers, or caregivers request applications on behalf of their youth?

- a. Yes, iFoster can send the applications to County Child Welfare, specific County Social Workers, other local CBOs serving foster youth, and Caregivers.



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Distribution of Phones and Service Activation

1. How will the youth receive phones? (Direct, individual shipment)

- a. The phone can be sent to the youth directly or to their designated location (i.e. CBO office) listed on their application. Prior to ordering the phone, iFoster will check with each youth applicant to ensure the shipping address is correct.
- b. A youth or their designee will need to be at the shipping address to receive the phone as a signature will be required.
- c. PLEASE NOTE: PHONES DO NOT ARRIVE WITH SERVICE ON. IFOSTER WILL NEED TO ACTIVATE EACH PHONE. Activation will happen once iFoster is notified by the shipping carrier that the phone has been received and signed for.
- d. iFoster will activate the phone with telecom services of free, unlimited voice, text, high speed data, and hotspot capability once the youth has received their phone.
- e. iFoster will call and text the youth to confirm service activation and the youth's possession of the phone.
- f. Youth have up to 1 business day to confirm activation back to iFoster otherwise service will be turned off and their account suspended.

2. Can County Child Welfare host an event to provide training and the phone?

- a. County Child Welfare may choose to receive bulk shipments of phones for specific events or trainings. However, each phone will be assigned in advance to a specific, eligible youth and can only be given to that youth.
- b. iFoster will work with a County to develop a plan for distribution and activation at the event, to return phones that are picked up at the event, and to develop plans for providing phones to youth who are approved, but do not attend the event.
- c. No agency will be allowed to retain any phones that have not been handed out at the event without the express written approval of iFoster.
- d. iFoster requires phones to be returned within 5 business days or to be picked up by iFoster per agreement between iFoster and County Child Welfare.

Pairing with Digital Literacy Training for youth

1. Is the digital literacy training required for all youth?

- a. The course is not mandatory for this program, however iFoster recommends that minors and their caregivers review the online digital literacy course provided by iFoster:
<https://ispri.ng/Z3ZxL>



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- b. County Child Welfare may opt to make this course mandatory for a subset or all of their youth-in-care. iFoster will work with individual counties on implementation plans.

2. How will the digital literacy course be made available?

- a. The digital literacy course is hosted on an online platform that is accessible through the iFoster resource portal.
- b. The training is self-directed (youth can complete on their own) or can be used by facilitators for classroom training.
- c. The course will be sent via text to every youth to complete when their phone service is activated. However, County Child Welfare or other agencies may opt to have their youth-in-care complete the course in advance of receiving their phones. If this is a preference, iFoster will work with the County or Agency to enable this to happen.
- d. Youth can receive a certificate of completion for completing the course and earning at minimum of 80% on each module test.
- e. Certificates will be uploaded in to a youth's Digital Locker within the iFoster resource portal.
- f. County Child Welfare can request reports on participation, grades, completion, and certification of their youth in care.

3. Can County Child Welfare host digital literacy training as part of phone distribution?

- a. Yes. iFoster recommends this path as a way to distribute phones in bulk.
- b. County Child Welfare may choose to receive bulk shipments of phones for specific events or trainings. However, each phone will be assigned in advance to a specific, eligible youth and can only be given to that youth.
- c. iFoster will work with a County to develop a plan for distribution and activation at the event, to return phones that are picked up at the event, and to develop plans for providing phones to youth who are approved, but do not attend the event.
- d. No agency will be allowed to retain any phones that have not been handed out at the event without the express written approval of iFoster.
- e. iFoster requires phones to be returned within 5 business days or to be picked up by iFoster per agreement between iFoster and County Child Welfare.

Parental Controls for Caregivers

- 1. Can parental controls be installed on the phones?
 - a. Yes, Caregivers can install parental controls.
 - b. iFoster recommends Google family link which is free:
<https://families.google.com/familylink/>
 - c. iFoster can provide further information and assistance to any Caregiver desiring to install parental controls.



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Phone Service Usage

- 1. Can the youth make changes to their phone service plan? (Add apps etc)**
 - a. No, youth will not be able to make changes to their plan during the pilot.

- 2. What is the policy if a youth misuses their phone? How would County Child Welfare or a Caregiver request stopping service?**
 - a. Per the application, County Child Welfare or any iFoster designee may remove the phone from a youth who is misusing it per the terms of outlined in the application.
 - b. County Child Welfare or any other iFoster designee must call iFoster immediately to deactivate service: 1-855-936-7837.
 - c. iFoster can suspend phone service within minutes of receiving and approving a request for suspension call .
 - d. Once service is suspended, it can either be re-activated or terminated based on the joint decision of County Child Welfare and iFoster. All suspensions will automatically be terminated after 60 days if they have not been re-activated.

- 3. What if an eligible youth in care disagrees with County Child Welfare’s decision not to sign the application?**
 - a. If the youth disagrees with their County Social Worker’s decision, they would need to involve their attorney or legal advocate and discuss with their County Child Welfare.

- 4. Can a youth switch or upgrade their phone during the pilot?**
 - a. No.
 - b. However, if a youth loses or breaks their phone, a youth will be able to purchase a low cost replacement. All phones must be approved to operate on the Boost network and with the Phones for Foster Youth program.

- 5. What happens if a youth loses or breaks a phone, or the phone is stolen?**
 - a. The youth needs to contact iFoster immediately so iFoster can suspend service to that phone.
 - b. The youth may purchase a replacement phone (new or refurbished) at below retail price from iFoster.
 - c. In certain circumstances, at iFoster’s discretion, a youth may receive a replacement phone free of charge.
 - d. If the phone is stolen, iFoster will require a police report to re-activate phone service and/or determine if a replacement phone will be provided.

- 6. What if a youth has an open CPS case on our county but lives in another state are they eligible?**
 - a. A youth must reside in the State of California.
 - b. Phone service is limited to the State of California. The phone will not operate out-of-state.