

2006 Application Period

To Persons Interested in Maine's Public Interest Payphone (PIP) Program:

The Maine Legislature recently established a Public Interest Payphone (PIP) program to provide telephones in areas where traditional public telephones would not otherwise be deployed and in which a telephone will further public health, safety and welfare. PIPs are coinless phones that allow free local calls as well as the ability to place 911, prepaid calling card, collect, or credit card long distance calls. The PIP program is funded by telephone ratepayers through Maine's Universal Service Fund.

The Public Utilities Commission will begin its Annual PIP Application Period on July 1, 2006. The period will end on September 1, 2006. During this period organizations, businesses, or persons desiring a PIP at a specific location may submit applications using the form provided by the Commission. The application form is attached to this letter, and may also be found on the Commission's website: www.maine.gov/mpuc.

After September 1, 2006, the Commission will rank all the applications using the following criteria:

1. public welfare, health and safety considerations;
2. cost of providing the requested PIP service;
3. availability of wireless service in the area;
4. residential telephone service penetration in the area;
5. average income of the area; and
6. financial ability of the applicant to provide public telephone service.

Funding for the program is limited, and the Public Utilities Commission will determine which applicants receive PIPs. Once a vendor is selected by the Commission to supply the approved PIPs, applicants will be notified of the time frame during which installation will take place. Applications submitted after September 1, 2006 will be considered to the extent funding is available.

The application, as well as the Commission's PIP rule, is available on the Commission's website (www.maine.gov/mpuc) or by writing the Commission at: 242 State Street, 18 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0018.

If you have any questions regarding the Public Interest Payphone Program or the Application form, you may call the Consumer Assistance Division of the Commission at 1-800-452-4699.