

# **THE UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT'S GUIDE TO FREE GOVERNMENT CELL PHONES**



**by [FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net](http://FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net)**

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Printed in the United States of America

First Printing, June 2013

FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to President Barack Obama,  
who didn't start the free government cell phone program,  
but whose name will be forever linked to what  
is now known as the "ObamaPhone."

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# INTRODUCTION

Yes. The answer is definitely yes.

If you're an undocumented immigrant (known in some circles as an illegal alien), you are eligible to receive a free government cell phone. A free American government cell phone.

The free government cell phone program is growing rapidly. The program has grown from 2008 expenditures of \$823 million to over \$2.2 billion in 2012, helping out between 15–20 million people.

Much to our surprise, there are no regulations that prohibit undocumented immigrants from getting these phones. In fact, based on our research we assume many undocumented immigrants are already using the free government cell phone program to help in landing jobs, to keep in touch with doctors and other medical professionals, to stay in touch with their family, and to reach 911 in emergency situations.

*The Undocumented Immigrant's Guide to Free Government Cell Phones* will teach you everything you need to know to get your own free cell phone, thanks to the generous U.S. government. It's not illegal. You just have to know the rules and how far they can be bent without being broken.

The free phones are available in almost every state, but since California is home to more undocumented immigrants than any other state, we are going to explain the rules as they exist in California. But rest assured it is just as easy to get a free phone almost anywhere, because the regulations are very similar from state to state.

Start reading. And before long you can start talking on your free cell phone, compliments of the United States government.

## CHAPTER 1:

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### **Get a free phone and free minutes. Every month.**

When you participate in Lifeline Assistance, the official name for the free government cell phone program, you will be given a modern cell phone with a camera and texting capabilities, made by a major manufacturer such as LG, Motorola or Samsung. You'll be able to make and receive calls, snap photos and send and receive text messages, just like you can with any other cell phone.

Your cell phone will come with a plan that includes at least 250 free minutes of airtime each month. And often you'll be able to add more minutes (maybe even unlimited minutes) for a very low monthly fee.



In each state you'll have a selection of phone companies that work with the government's free cell phone program. So you can compare the plans of each provider to determine which one works best for you. In California, for example, there are two major free cell phone providers from which to choose.

Millions of people in America are already talking on their free government cell phones. Are you ready to join them?

## CHAPTER 2:

### The Rules

Let's make one thing clear right up front: Lifeline Assistance, the free government cell phone program, has no rule stating that recipients must be a citizen of the United States. None whatsoever.

Now let's make another thing clear: You won't be asked to prove your citizenship if you apply for a free government cell phone. You won't even be asked if you are an American citizen. The question does not appear anywhere on the form.



Therefore, the free government cell phone program is open to anyone — including undocumented immigrants — who meet the same eligibility requirements that U.S. citizens do. How do you become eligible? By participating in at least one government aid program such as food stamps, housing assistance, etc., or having a low income. (We'll go over each of those programs in great detail later).

But, you may ask, isn't it illegal for undocumented immigrants to receive these types of financial aid from the federal or state government?

In theory, the answer is yes, it's illegal, if the letter of the underlying laws were enforced. But in reality, the answer is that the federal and state governments are looking the other way and providing millions of undocumented immigrants with these benefits. And once you are receiving those benefits, you can receive another one — your free cell phone — without breaking any rules whatsoever. And best of all, it's completely legal.

Please understand that we are not encouraging undocumented immigrants to sign up for any government financial aid programs for which they are not eligible. We're simply stating the obvious — that however they did so, millions of undocumented immigrants are already receiving government assistance in one form or another, and therefore, they are eligible for a free government cell phone without breaking any rules of the Lifeline Assistance program.

The rules governing the free government cell program do vary somewhat from state to state, and some states add their own interesting twists to the eligibility requirements, but the differences in those rules are almost insignificant.

California is relatively new to the free government cell phone program and it currently has only two major providers. However, because California is home to far more undocumented immigrants than any other state, we are going to use its eligibility rules to demonstrate how simple it is to qualify for a free government cell phone.

If you live in another state, we urge you to visit the informative state-by-state eligibility page at [FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net](http://FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net). That way, you'll better understand your rights and the services to which you are entitled.

Here, for example, are the California requirements to which we just referred (as spelled out on the [California page](#) at [FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net](http://FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net)):

## How to Qualify

There are two ways to qualify in California, and they are only a bit different than other states.

**Method 1 Program-Based** — You can qualify for a free government cell phone if you or another person in your household is enrolled in any one of the following public assistance programs:

- Medicaid/Medi-Cal
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- Food Stamps or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)
- Healthy Families Category A
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  1. California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)
  2. Stanislaus County Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (StanWORKs)
  3. Welfare-to-Work (WTW)
  4. Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN)
- Tribal TANF
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Head Start Income Eligible (Tribal Only)

**Method 2 Income-Based** — You may also qualify if your total annual household gross income is at or less than the annual income limits for your household size.

Let's now take a closer look at each of those programs to see just how easy it is for an undocumented immigrant to qualify for a free government cell phone.

## CHAPTER 3:

### Qualify via Medicare/Medi-Cal

Theoretically (a word you'll see often in *The Undocumented Immigrant's Guide to Free Government Cell Phones*), Medicare and Medical are taxpayer-funded programs from which undocumented aliens are prohibited from receiving benefits.

In reality, the doors are wide open to undocumented immigrants and there are ways for them to sign up for the program, which then makes them eligible for free government cell phones.

A recent headline in The Daily Caller website said, "More than \$91.6 million in Medicare payments went to services for illegal aliens in recent years."



According to a new report from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of the Inspector General said 2,575 undocumented immigrants received benefits \$91.6 million in services between 2009 and 2011.

But the scope of benefits given to undocumented immigrants goes far beyond that.

Another report from the United States Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services says that 29,100 beneficiaries were "illegal" while the investigation was being conducted.

This would seem to be a clear indication that it's quite possible for undocumented immigrants to receive benefits for which they are technically ineligible.

The Inspector General looked into “whether CMS had adequate controls to prevent and detect improper payments for Medicare services rendered to unlawfully present individuals.”

The conclusion? [According](#) to The Daily Caller, “In many cases, however, CMS did not have information that a potential beneficiary was in the country illegally until after payment and did not have systems in place to recoup the \$91.6 million.”

It seems clear that the federal government is incapable of policing the Medicare program, and as a result undocumented immigrants can and do, in fact, sign up for and receive Medicare.

Bottom line: Undocumented or not, if you can get Medicare you will be entitled to receive a free government cell phone.

The state of California is even more lax in the enforcement of its Medi-Cal program. In fact, enforcement isn't even part of the equation because “immigration status does not matter for Medi-Cal.”

The Health Consumer Alliance, an organization that helps Californians get the healthcare they need, [says](#):

### **What if I am an undocumented immigrant?**

You may still be eligible for restricted Medi-Cal. Restricted Medi-Cal will cover emergency situations, health care for pregnant women, kidney dialysis, nursing home care and treatment for breast and cervical cancer.

You may be eligible for Medi-Cal if:

- You are low-income
- You are a child, parent, person with a disability or elderly, and
- You live in California and plan to stay.

**Immigration status does not matter for restricted Medi-Cal** (emphasis ours).

Since “immigration status does not matter for restricted Medi-Cal,” undocumented immigrants can sign up for and receive benefits. And once they get those benefits, they’re also eligible for the free government cell phone program.

## CHAPTER 4:

### Qualify via the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

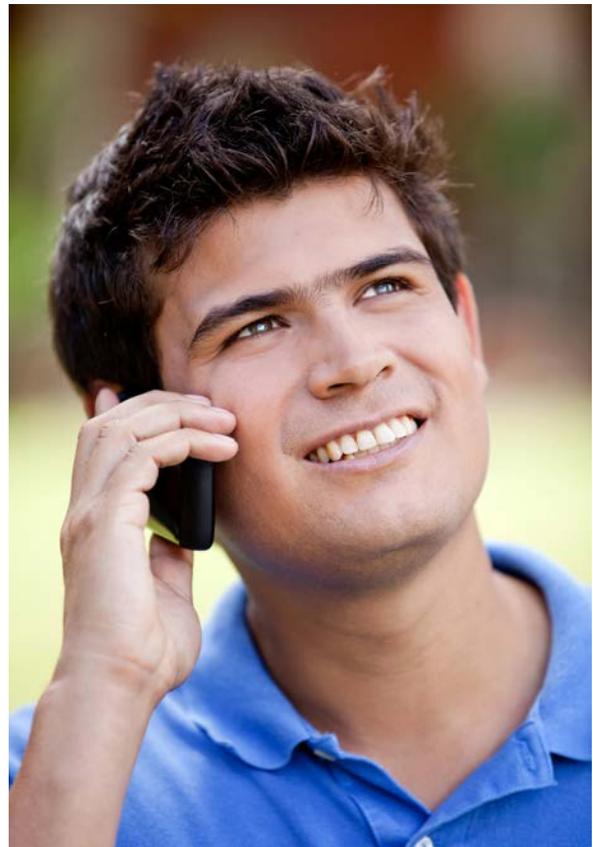
Rapidly rising energy prices are devastating American families. LIHEAP, a federally-funded program introduced in 1974, was designed to help needy Americans meet their home heating and/or cooling needs.

LIHEAP stands for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Theoretically (there's that word again), that assistance is restricted to American citizens and legal immigrants. The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the Department of Health and Human Services is very clear about this. In fact, the [agency's website](#) specifies who is not eligible:

#### **Undocumented immigrants**

Individuals who entered as temporary residents and overstayed their visas, or are engaged in activities forbidden by their visa, or who entered without a visa.



But let's discuss a crack in the wall of those restrictions: What if a home qualifies for LIHEAP aid, but one resident of the home is undocumented.

The LIHEAP benefit won't be denied, but it will be reduced by the percentage of residents in a home who are undocumented. For example, if two parents are undocumented, but their two children are legal, the LIHEAP benefit would be cut in half (two legal residents out of four total residents). Another example: If three adults share a home and one of them is undocumented, the benefit would be reduced by one-third.

In reality, however, the Health & Human Services people will probably never ask a recipient to prove that everyone in their home is a legal resident.

Once again, if you can prove you receive LIHEAP benefits, you can get a free government cell phone.

But the LIHEAP program is so wide open that you shouldn't concern yourself with mere eligibility technicalities or percentages of residents who may be eligible.

Get this:

In 2007, Richard Blumenthal (now United States Senator Richard Blumenthal) was the Attorney General for the State of Connecticut. He [wrote a letter](#) to Mr. Michael Starkowski of the Department of Social Services "in response to questions raised by the Auditors of Public Accounts related to a whistle-blower complaint" regarding LIHEAP benefits.

"According to federal law, non-qualified or illegal non-citizens are not entitled to energy assistance benefits," Blumenthal said. "Paradoxically, however, federal law prohibits states from requiring Community Action Agencies to verify or require proof of citizenship or alienage status of individuals (sic) that apply for federal assistance. In effect, Congress has created a 'do not ask, do not tell,' energy assistance program. While the CAAs cannot falsify information for applicants, or knowingly accept false information, there is no duty under federal law that they verify applicants' citizenship or immigration status when providing federal benefits."

Translation: No one will ask if you're an undocumented immigrant. No one will care if you're an undocumented immigrant.

Bottom line: You *can* get LIHEAP benefits and that means you can also get a free government cell phone.

## CHAPTER 5:

### Qualify via federal public housing assistance or Section 8

What is Section 8? It's a federal program that helps low income Americans pay their rent.

According to Wikipedia.com, "Section 8 of the Housing Act of 1937, often simply known as Section 8, as repeatedly amended, authorizes the payment of rental housing assistance to private landlords on behalf of approximately 3.1 million low-income households. It operates through several programs, the largest of which, the Housing Choice Voucher program, pays a large portion of the rents and utilities of about 2.1 million households."



Does that mean that undocumented immigrants are ineligible? Not quite, despite this authoritative-sounding [message](#) from the Congressional Research Service:

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) explicitly states that aliens, unless they are qualified aliens, are not eligible for "federal public benefits," a term defined in the law to include public and assisted housing. Under the statute, unauthorized (illegal) aliens do not meet the definition of qualified aliens, and as a result, they are ineligible for "federal public benefits." However, PRWORA did not make those who had been receiving housing benefits before the date of enactment (August 22, 1996) ineligible for housing benefits.

In other words, if an undocumented immigrant has lived in the United States long enough (and “long enough” is defined as since August 22, 1996), they are eligible for federal benefits. No ifs, no ands, no buts.

In fact, it appears that many, many undocumented immigrants are receiving Section 8 housing assistance. Some unconfirmed reports claim that nearly 60% of all occupants of HUD properties in the United States are undocumented immigrants. Politifact.com says that claim is untrue, but it’s clear that the program is porous and that many supposedly unqualified residents do receive benefits.



According to [USA Today](#),

Untold thousands of illegal immigrants live in public housing at a time when hundreds of thousands of citizens and legal residents are stuck waiting years for a spot... The federal government, which funds the lion’s share of the nation’s public housing, requires only that illegal immigrants share a home with at least one family member who is in the country legally and pay their share of the rent.

In fact, there are those who believe the federal government is actually encouraging undocumented immigrants to apply for Section 8 housing assistance.

[NewsWithViews.com](#) says:

In a case that legal experts say defies logic and common sense, in order to ensure that low-income minorities get taxpayer-subsidized housing, Obama’s [Department of Justice](#) (DOJ) has

launched a nationwide discrimination probe that, ironically, is focusing on an area where the overwhelming number of public housing residents are Latino and black.

The investigations are being conducted by the DOJ's bloated civil rights division, which is headed by renowned illegal immigration advocate Thomas Perez, who once served as president of a taxpayer-funded group ([Casa de Maryland](#)) dedicated to helping illegal aliens, according to a public-interest law firm.

Is this true? Well, there are some very public undocumented immigrants who live in Section 8 housing:

Reuters, the prestigious international news organization, recently ran a [story](#) headlined "Obama's Illegal Immigrant, Section-8 Aunt Gets Special Privileges (sic)."



*(Click image to play video of the Auntie Zeituni interview)*

"President Barack Obama's Kenyan aunt, who was ordered deported five years ago, can stay in the United States legally until next year when she makes a new asylum bid, an immigration judge ruled on Wednesday."

Zeituni Onyango, known to President Obama as “Auntie Zeituni” has lived in public housing since 2001 despite the fact that an immigration judge rejected her plea for political asylum and ordered her out of the country way back in 2004.

Our point is not to say that you can break the law if you’re related to President Obama. Far from it. Auntie Zeituni was already living in Section 8 housing in 2001 when he was an obscure state politician in Illinois.

Our point is simply to show that it’s quite possible for undocumented immigrants like Auntie Zeituni to receive Section 8 housing assistance.

If she can do it, you can do it. And that means you can also qualify for a free government cell phone.

## CHAPTER 6:

### **Qualify via food stamps or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

Ahhhh, food stamps. It's another one of those federal programs that is easily exploited by undocumented immigrants. And as soon as you qualify for food stamps, you qualify for a free government cell phone.

Despite government regulations that restrict the food stamp program to American citizens and legal residents, it's pretty simple for undocumented immigrants to sign up for the program.

A USDA Food and Nutrition Service spokesperson told The Daily Caller that illegal immigrants are ineligible for food stamps:

“Non-citizens who are unlawfully present, are not, nor have they ever been, eligible to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits,” the spokesperson wrote in an e-mail when presented with the Mexican Embassy flyer.

Don't believe it. If you're an undocumented immigrant, you can get food stamps and that makes you eligible for a free government cell phone.

If you find that hard to believe, consider these recent news items:

The Daily Caller again [reports](#):

The Department of Agriculture, via the Mexican government, assures potentially ineligible immigrants that they can still apply for food stamps on behalf of their eligible children without giving information about their immigration status, according to documents released Thursday by Judicial Watch.

A USDA Spanish language flyer provided to the Mexican Embassy, according to Judicial Watch, reads that if potentially ineligible immigrants want to obtain benefits for their children they “need not divulge information regarding your immigration status in seeking this benefit for your children.”

In other words, no matter what the regulations may be, the American government actually wants undocumented immigrants to know that they can legally sign up for food stamps for their kids. Of course, that’s contrary to the law, but who pays attention to the law?

Here's the flyer that's being distributed:

Obtained by Judicial Watch

*For Review  
update of  
2008  
doc.*

**Phillips, Pam - FNS**

---

**From:** Yáñez Azueta, Mara Gabriela [maray@sre.gob.mx]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 05, 2009 5:05 PM  
**To:** Phillips, Pam; Gold, Sara; Tonda Salcedo, Josana  
**Cc:** Lara Armienta, Juan Carlos; Díaz de León, Francisco Javier  
**Subject:** SNAP - Information in Spanish  
**Attachments:** Cupones para Alimentos - Material Informativo - Update.doc

*e m buca,*

Following up on our meeting today, please find attached the information material on SNAP that we discussed.

Best regards,  
Mara

---

Obtained by Judicial Watch

## Cupones para Alimentos (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

**¿Qué es el Programa de Cupones para Alimentos?**  
 El Programa de Cupones para Alimentos ayuda a personas de escasos ingresos, o sin ingresos, a comprar alimentos nutritivos. Los beneficios de cupones para alimentos no son dinero en efectivo. Se distribuyen en forma de una tarjeta plástica "EBT" que usted puede usar como tarjeta bancaria para comprar sus alimentos. Estos beneficios son aceptados en la mayoría de las tiendas de alimentos y viveres, así como en algunos comedores.

**¿Puedo obtener los beneficios de cupones para alimentos?**  
 Para obtener los beneficios de cupones para alimentos usted debe cumplir con ciertos requisitos, concretamente sus ingresos deben de estar dentro de los límites de un rango determinado.

Para ver si podría calificar para recibir cupones para alimentos, <http://www.snap-step1.usda.gov/fns/>. Encontrará un cuestionario que al responderlo usted sabrá si cumple con los criterios de elegibilidad para beneficiarse de los cupones alimenticios y de cuánto sería la posible asistencia alimenticia.

**No soy ciudadano de EE.UU. ¿Puedo obtener los beneficios de cupones para alimentos? ¿Pueden mis hijos?**

- Puede obtener cupones para alimentos si es inmigrante legal. La mayoría de los inmigrantes legales deben esperar cinco años para obtener cupones para alimentos. No hay espera si usted

According to Judicial Watch, the USDA's website says, "USDA and the government of Mexico have entered into a partnership to help educate eligible Mexican nationals living in the United States about

available nutrition assistance. Mexico will help disseminate this information through its embassy and network of approximately 50 consular offices.”

Judicial Watch reinforced the fact that undocumented immigrants are eligible by releasing a this informative timeline:

- March 30, 2012 — The USDA seeks approval of the Mexican Embassy in drafting a letter addressed to consulates throughout the United States designed to encourage Mexican embassy staffers to enroll in a webinar to learn how to promote increased enrollment among “the needy families that the consulates serve.”
- August 1, 2011 — The USDA FNS initiates contact with the Mexican Embassy in New York to implement programs already underway in DC and Philadelphia for maximizing participation among Mexican citizens. The Mexican Embassy responds that the Consul General is eager to strengthen his ties to the USDA, with specific interest in promoting the food stamp program.
- February 25, 2011 — The USDA and the Mexican Consulate exchange ideas about getting the First Ladies of Mexico and United States to visit a school for purposes of creating a photo opportunity that would promote free school lunches for low-income students in a predominantly Hispanic school.
- March 3, 2010 — A flyer advertises a webinar to teach Hispanic-focused nonprofits how to get reimbursed by the USDA for serving free lunch over the summer. The course, funded by American taxpayers, is advertised as being “free for all participants.”
- February 9, 2010 — USDA informs the Mexican Embassy that, based on an agreement reached between the State Department and the Immigration & Naturalization Service (now ICE), the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) food voucher program does not violate immigration laws prohibiting immigrants from becoming a “public charge.”

Want more proof that undocumented immigrants are eligible for food stamps. How about [this story](#) from Breitbart.com?

Sen. John Thune (R-SD) and Rep. Marlin Stutzman (R-IN) are working on a bill that would cut such programs.

“Since President Obama came into office, SNAP participation has increased at 10 times the rate of job creation, the annual spending on SNAP has doubled, and one in seven Americans now participates in SNAP,” Thune said. “This explosive growth in both the SNAP enrollment and federal cost of the program is alarming and requires lawmakers to take cost-effective legislative control measures.”

The logic is inescapable. If undocumented immigrants weren't receiving benefits from the program, there would be nothing to reform.

But Judicial Watch has [more proof](#) that undocumented immigrants have nothing to worry about when applying for food stamps. Testimony from a former certification case manager emphasizes that the doors are wide open for undocumented immigrants.

The retired assistant case manager, Craig McNees, was in charge of vetting food-stamp applicants in north Florida and Indiana in the '80s and says the program was infested with fraud and corruption that was perpetually ignored by management. “Illegals would come in by the vanload and we were told to give them their stuff,” McNees said. “Management knew very well they were illegal. It was so rampant that some employees would tell their illegal relatives to come get food stamps.”

We believe that the easiest way to get a free government cell phone may very well be to apply for food stamps first.

## CHAPTER 7:

### Qualify via the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)

No one can say that the American government isn't generous with the taxpayers' money. Of course, the government says benefits are not available to undocumented immigrants, but as you've seen in our first four Chapters, that's demonstrably false.

For example, a program known as WIC (Women, Infants and Children) was designed to help needy American children under five, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers for up to a year after birth. But when benefits are doled out, the "American" part of the definition is almost always ignored.

That means it's easy for undocumented immigrants to get WIC benefits, and that immediately entitles them to receive free government cell phones.

Of course, government agencies will insist that undocumented immigrants are NOT eligible for WIC benefits, but the real world tells another story.

Wicwoes.com, a website dedicated to this program, [reveals the truth](#) about how easy it is for undocumented immigrants to receive WIC benefits:

Often in my reading and research on WIC, I run into comments people make about illegal immigrants coming in and taking advantage of all our government programs (including WIC). Other times I read people saying that it's not true, and that illegal immigrants are not allowed to access these programs. Because of the confusion I thought I'd clarify this issue here.

**WIC is available to anyone living in America** (whether legally or illegally) as long as they are within the income guidelines and fall into a category that WIC serves (as a child under 5, pregnant woman, breastfeeding woman for the 1st year after birth, etc.).

But not all government assistance programs are available to all immigrants. For example, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, a cash benefit that can be spent on whatever, including cigarettes) is not available to illegal immigrants. In fact, even legal immigrants may not get it for the first 5 years they are legally in America. **(EDITOR’S NOTE: AS WE DEMONSTRATE IN CHAPTER 6, EVEN TANF CAN EASILY BE EXPLOITED FOR BENEFITS AND A FREE GOVERNMENT CELL PHONE.)**

But WIC is available to illegal immigrants. **Why the government gives money for food to illegal residents is beyond me.** It’s just another example of how messed up our federal budget is.

Is it true? Or was the comment above written by a malcontent who intentionally distorts the ease with which the program can be exploited?

Well, consider the following YouTube.com video (titled “Illegal Aliens Collecting WIC Vouchers in Georgia”) and the comments attached by the person who posted it:



The information accompanying the video says:

Once again we see how the welfare system is a complete failure, doing nothing to prevent fraud — and even encouraging it, in this case, and bilking taxpayers for billions every year.

This despite Progressive politicians' claims that we can't cut a single penny, or families will 'starve'. Here in DeKalb County, GA, illegal aliens in luxury SUVs can walk into the WIC ('Women Infants and Children') office with expired or even FOREIGN IDs and walk out with thousands of dollars in WIC vouchers — and even sell them for cash down the block. Yet let a Republican propose to cut a single penny from WIC and the Liberal Media Complex will label them 'anti-family.' It is a disgrace that illegal aliens are milking the welfare system while so many American citizens go without. These WIC officials belong in prison for this outrage, and the House GOP should immediately introduce national legislation to mandate citizenship checks for welfare recipients.



But don't take the word of some anonymous blogger. Listen to the highly-respected Urban League, which in September 2010 released a study titled "Effects of Immigration On WIC and NSLP Caseloads." The introduction of that report [spelled out](#) very clearly that undocumented immigrants ARE eligible for WIC benefits:

"The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) have no eligibility restrictions based on the legal status of immigrants. This study reveals an increase in the number and share of immigrants and their children in WIC and NSLP between the mid-1990s and 2006; however, their share of participants is generally comparable to their shares of the eligible populations. Findings suggest that immigrants face fewer barriers to access in WIC and NSLP than they do for TANF, SNAP and other benefits subject to immigration-related eligibility restrictions."

Take the Urban League's word for it: If someone says that you are not eligible for WIC benefits because you are an undocumented immigrant, don't believe it.

Undocumented immigrants are eligible for WIC benefits and as soon as they begin receiving those benefits they are automatically eligible for a free government cell phone.

## CHAPTER 8:

### **Qualify via the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program**

In the previous Chapter, we quoted an Urban League study that said, “Findings suggest that immigrants face fewer barriers to access in WIC and NSLP than they do for TANF, SNAP and other benefits subject to immigration-related eligibility restrictions.”

While we agree with their conclusions about WIC, real world evidence indicates that they are wrong about TANF. The simple fact is, it’s easy for undocumented immigrants to qualify for TANF benefits.

Before we demonstrate the reality, let’s take a look those supposedly tough TANF regulations.



The State of Montana’s Department of Public Health and Human Services [spells out](#) who’s eligible for TANF benefits and who isn’t (meaning undocumented immigrants):

#### **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (Basic Eligibility for TANF Cash Assistance)**

TANF cash assistance is a program providing temporary financial assistance to needy families. The receipt of TANF cash assistance is limited to 60 months in an adult’s lifetime. Temporary financial assistance may be provided to the following families and individuals:

- Minor Children;

- Specified relatives with whom the children are living;
- The minor children's blood-related/adoptive siblings with whom the children are living;
- Pregnant women in their last trimester who have no other eligible children; and
- Refugees with minor dependent children.

Temporary financial assistance will **not** (emphasis ours) be provided to the following:

- Ineligible or illegal aliens.

Don't fall for the harsh sounding regulations. In reality, you are eligible and thousands of other undocumented immigrants around the nation are already receiving TANF benefits.

Consider [this story](#) from SunshineStateNews.com in the state of Florida:

### **Anchor Babies, Aweigh! Illegal Aliens Cash in on TANF Welfare Benefits**

Illegal aliens are using their children to receive cash from a welfare program that Gov. Rick Scott is trying to tighten.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, the welfare program for families living in poverty, is accessible by illegal aliens on behalf of their U.S.-born children, ImmigrationReform.com reports.

On Sept. 8, the director in the Government Accountability Office that oversees TANF testified before Congress that the share of immigrant "child-only" families receiving TANF increased from 10.8 percent in 2000 to 19.1 percent in 2008. The number of "child-only" families was a whopping 50.5 percent of all TANF families in 2008, numbering 814,977.

That would mean that immigrant-status cases numbered about 155,660 families, according to ImmigrationReform.com.

Earlier this year, the Scott administration ordered that TANF applicants in Florida pass a drug test as a condition of receiving benefits. That order is being challenged in federal court by the ACLU.

Neither Scott spokesman Lane Wright nor Department of Children and Families spokesman Joe Follick were immediately available for comment on the illegal-alien issue.

Then consider [this story](#) from HometownStation.com and KHTS 1120 Radio in the state of California:

### **California taxpayers pay record amount in benefits to children of illegal aliens**

A 2006 report from KHTS 1120 radio says:

In Washington D.C. to meet with Congressional representatives and provide information regarding the impact illegal immigrants have on our County system, Los Angeles County Mayor Michael D. Antonovich reported that nearly 100,000 children of illegal



aliens collected nearly \$23 million in Aid to Families of Dependent Children funding in Los Angeles County in January 2006 — or nearly \$276 million annually. 98,703 children of 57,458 undocumented parents received aid in January 2006 — for a total of 156,161. If incorporated into a city, it would be the 6th largest city in Los Angeles County. “While legal immigration is a positive influence on our culture and economy, illegal immigration has had a devastating impact on Los Angeles County,” said Antonovich. “In public safety, healthcare and public social services, illegals cost County taxpayers nearly three quarters of a billion dollars a year.”

And here’s a January 17, 2011 [story](#) about CalWorks, which is part of TANF, from San Francisco’s Examiner newspaper:

Los Angeles Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich has just released data from the Department of Public Social Services which shows that in November 2010, \$53 million in welfare benefits

(\$22 million CalWORKs and \$31 million in Food Stamps) were given issued to illegal aliens for their U.S.-born children in Los Angeles County.

The record amount is an increase of almost \$3 million from November 2009, and represents 22 percent of all CalWORKs and Food Stamp issuances in L.A. County.

We've been unable to find any information about undocumented aliens receiving benefits from StanWorks, Welfare-to-Work or Greater Avenues for Independence, but that's not surprising because these are small, relatively unknown programs.

As we've repeatedly demonstrated and documented in the preceding pages of *The Undocumented Immigrant's Guide to Free Government Cell Phones*, all these government programs seem to make allowances for non-citizens.



Our conclusion: Just because we haven't been able to find information proving that undocumented immigrants are eligible doesn't mean you're not eligible.

## CHAPTER 9:

### **Qualify via several programs reserved for Native Americans**

California offers state assistance to Native Americans under three programs — Tribal TANF, Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, and Head Start Income Eligible (Tribal Only). Other states undoubtedly offer other assistance programs for members of Native American tribes.

There are a number of Native American tribes whose traditional lands extend across the border into Mexico. Members of those tribes you are allowed to freely cross back and forth across the border.

There are undoubtedly a number of undocumented immigrants who qualify for Tribal TANF, but qualifying for these benefits is problematic at best.



The problem is that the Native American tribes are very strict about determining who is eligible for membership in their tribes. For example, you can't just walk across the border into Texas and announce that you are a member of the Kickapoo tribe.

In other words, the regulations of Native American tribes are far stricter than the regulations of the American government.

We'd suggest that you not even attempt to claim tribal membership in order to get financial benefits and/or a free government cell phone.

You might be able to fool the American government, but you'll never fool the Kickapoos.

## CHAPTER 10:

### **Qualify by having a low income**

Congratulations. You've worked your way through nine Chapters of *The Undocumented Immigrant's Guide to Free Government Cell Phones*. And here in Chapter 10, we're happy to tell you that you can get a free government cell phone even if you don't qualify under any of the programs discussed in Chapter 1-9.

The simple fact is, you can qualify if your total annual household gross income is no more than 135% to 150% of the annual income limits for your household size based on current **Federal Poverty Guidelines**.

To make that clearer, you can qualify for a free government cell phone if you make up to 135% of the federal poverty guidelines, but in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, Rhode Island and Texas you can qualify if you make no more than 150% of the federal poverty guidelines.

If you don't have a calculator handy, here's a simple chart that explains what the income limits are for various sizes of families for the year 2013, at 135% (as it is in California).

<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Annual Income Limits (at 135% rate)</b>
1-2 members	\$25,100
3 members	\$29,300
4 members	\$35,400
For each additional member	\$6,100

*Effective from 06/01/13 to 05/31/14*

But please remember a couple quick rules: (1) Only one Lifeline account is allowed per household. (2) You must have a valid United States mailing address (Sorry, post office boxes are not acceptable because your cell phone must be mailed to a valid street address).

## CHAPTER 11:

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### Where to get your free government cell phone

In all, 44 states plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia participate in the free government cell phone program. In each of these states there are one or more cell phone providers who work with the U.S. government to distribute the free phones and airtime. Most states have several providers to choose from.

You should compare all the plans offered by the participating companies in your state, and then select the one that works best for you. With any provider, the application process is simple: you either place a toll-free phone call to the company, or complete a fill-in-the-blanks form on their website. If you are qualifying based upon income, you'll need to provide some proof of your income. Once you are approved, it will only be a matter of days or weeks until your free government cell phone arrives in your mailbox.

The best way to find out who is handling the free phone program in your state is to go to the authority on the program, [FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net](http://FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net). The website will explain the entire program in more detail, and then lead you to a [state selection page](#). Click on your state and you will be taken to a page that lists all the providers you can contact.

It's a very simple process, and again, nowhere in the process will you be asked your citizenship status.

## CHAPTER 12:

### **Conclusion and advice**

If you're an undocumented immigrant and you want a free government cell phone, or if you know an undocumented immigrant you wish to help, you've seen how many ways you can qualify.

We've outlined how simple it is throughout this book. Remember, while we used California as an example, the program is available in 44 states, plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico, and they all have very similar eligibility requirements.

Each state has one or more phone providers that supply the phones and free airtime. Find the vendor that makes the most sense to you — the one for which you most easily qualify — and sign up.

No matter what anyone says, you're eligible. So start getting the benefits you deserve today.

For detailed information on each state's program and free phone providers, visit the #1 authority on the free government cell phone program: [FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net](http://FreeGovernmentCellPhones.net).