

Typhoon attacks with federal law enforcement agencies, who in turn were able to guide other carriers in taking steps to remove threat actors from their networks and harden them against future exploits. Petitioners acknowledge that “Salt Typhoon and the related Volt Typhoon are nation-state, adversary-affiliated [advanced persistent threats] with unlimited resources against which private sector companies alone cannot defend themselves,” and note that, since the attacks, some carriers have participated in regular briefings with the Commission and federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies to share information and promote a coordinated national response strategy. In addition, some carriers have taken additional steps to harden their networks in recent months, including implementing accelerated patching cycles, updating access controls, reviewing remote access configurations, improving threat hunting efforts, disabling unnecessary outbound connections to limit lateral network movement, and strengthening contractual obligations with third-party vendors.

Petitioners note that providers make these security improvements to their networks voluntarily and remain dedicated to bolstering security through their partnerships with the federal government. As part of these efforts, they have made commitments that include leading providers establishing and actively participating in the Communications Cybersecurity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (“C2 ISAC”), “the next-generation Information Sharing and Analysis Center model designed to facilitate real-time threat intelligence sharing among members.” Providers have also established new intra-sector sharing and collaboration mechanisms, including a new forum for collaboration among Chief Information Security Officers from U.S. and Canadian providers, which they commit to expanding to other “like-minded countries” this autumn. These commitments demonstrate that the federal government’s collaborative approach to cybersecurity continues to be effective and that the inflexible and vague approach of the Declaratory Ruling is unnecessary.

Furthermore, the Commission is leveraging the full range of the Commission’s regulatory, investigatory, and enforcement authorities to protect Americans and American companies from foreign adversaries, particularly the threats posed by the PRC and CCP, consistent with the whole-of-government approach. We are

proceeding in separate dockets under clear and established statutory authorities to strengthen technology and telecommunications supply chains, to mitigate America’s vulnerabilities to cyberattacks, espionage, and surveillance by foreign adversaries, and to ensure U.S. leadership in critical technologies. To highlight only some of those initiatives, we have adopted rules that require all applicants for submarine cable landing licenses to certify that they have created and will implement and update cybersecurity and physical security risk management plans; adopted rules to ensure that foreign adversary controlled-test labs are not participating in the FCC’s equipment authorization program; and are proposing to extend our equipment security rules to a larger class of foreign adversary-controlled devices. In each instance, we promoted requirements for which we have clear legal authority that target specific adversaries and threats while developing and considering a record that allows us to weigh the costs and benefits of further regulation.

Had the Commission sought and considered public comment before adopting the Declaratory Ruling, it is possible that the agency would have understood that its proposed approach was overly broad, vague, and counterproductive. Its approach to cybersecurity failed to consider multiple aspects of the current and evolving cybersecurity landscape, including relevant best practices identified by CSRIC, technical standards, and industry security standards. The Declaratory Ruling represented a drastic departure from data security standards, yet the Declaratory Ruling does not discuss this departure at all. The Declaratory Ruling also failed to consider less burdensome approaches, including collaboration between the federal government and industry, engaging with stakeholders who have experience and expertise in securing the nation’s communications networks, or working to harmonize the Commission’s cybersecurity expectations with existing best practices. In sum, the Declaratory Ruling was an ill-advised, rushed effort to take a controversial action without being grounded in a proper notice-and-comment process.

#### *F. The NPRM Is Unnecessary*

We also hereby rescind the NPRM that was adopted simultaneously with the Declaratory Ruling. The Commission adopted the NPRM on January 15, 2025, and released its text on its website on January 16, 2025, but has not published it (or a summary) in the **Federal Register** as would be required under the

Administrative Procedure Act. Therefore, the period for public comments never commenced, and there is no record for the Commission to address here. Rather than promote a one-size-fits-all approach of a single rulemaking to govern all Commission licensees, we intend to continue to take the targeted approach to promoting effective cybersecurity protections discussed above. The NPRM in this proceeding is therefore unnecessary and will not be pursued.

#### **IV. Ordering Clause**

Accordingly, *it is ordered* that, pursuant to sections 1.106 and 1.108 of the Commission’s rules, 47 CFR 1.106, 1.108, and section 405(a) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 405(a), this Order on Reconsideration *is adopted*. The Declaratory Ruling and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 25–9, 40 FCC Rcd 876 (Jan. 15, 2025), is *rescinded* and *withdrawn*.

Federal Communications Commission.

**Marlene Dortch,**  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2025–22830 Filed 12–12–25; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6712–01–P**

## **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**[DA 25–1009; FR ID 322148]**

### **Notice Debarment; Federal Lifeline Program**

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Enforcement Bureau (the “Bureau”) permanently debars Q Link from the federal Lifeline program (Lifeline Program) and all federal universal service support mechanisms.

**DATES:** Debarment commences on the date Q Link receives the debarment letter or December 15, 2025, whichever date comes first.

**ADDRESSES:** Federal Communications Commission, Enforcement Bureau, Investigations and Hearings Division, 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Christopher Sova, Federal Communications Commission, Enforcement Bureau, Investigations and Hearings Division, 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554. Christopher Sova may be contacted by phone at (202) 418–1868 or by email at [Christopher.Sova@fcc.gov](mailto:Christopher.Sova@fcc.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Bureau debars Q Link from the federal

Lifeline Program and all federal universal service support mechanisms pursuant to 47 CFR 54.8. Attached is the debarment letter, DA 25–1009, which was mailed to Q Link and released on

December 15, 2025. The complete text of the notice of debarment is available on the FCC's website at <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-25-1009A1.pdf>.

Federal Communications Commission.

**Christopher Sova,**

Chief, Investigations and Hearings Division,  
Enforcement Bureau.



## Federal Communications Commission

Enforcement Bureau

Investigations and Hearings Division

45 L Street, NE

Washington, DC 20554

December 5, 2025

DA 25–1009

SENT VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN  
RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Issa Asad Owner, Quadrant

Holdings Group LLC (for Q Link  
Wireless, LLC) 499 E Sheridan St., Ste  
400 Dania, FL 33004 [issa@quadrantholdings.com](mailto:issa@quadrantholdings.com)

Samuel L. Feder, Esq. Jenner & Block  
LLP 1099 New York Avenue NW  
Suite 900 Washington, DC 20001  
[SFeder@jenner.com](mailto:SFeder@jenner.com)

Re: Notice of Debarment, File No. EB–  
IHD–24–00037461

Dear Messrs. Asad and Feder:

The Enforcement Bureau (Bureau) of the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC) hereby notifies Q Link Wireless, LLC (Q Link or Company) that, pursuant to Section 54.8 of the Commission's rules, Q Link is prohibited from participating in activities associated with or related to the federal Lifeline program (Lifeline program) and any other program funded by federal universal service support mechanisms commencing on either the date of Q Link's receipt of this Notice of Debarment or of its publication in the **Federal Register**, whichever comes first (Debarment Date).<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, as a condition of the administrative settlement between the FCC and Mr. Asad, Q Link Wireless LLC (Q Link) and Q Link's parent company, Quadrant Holdings Group, LLC, (Quadrant) which was entered into on January 17, 2025 (Administrative Settlement),<sup>2</sup> Mr. Asad

and Q Link ceased participating in any program administered by the FCC (in addition to the universal service programs) and agreed to debarment from participation in all such programs in the future.<sup>3</sup>

On November 8, 2024, the Bureau sent Q Link a notice of suspension and initiation of debarment proceeding (*Notice of Suspension*) that was published in the **Federal Register** on December 12, 2024.<sup>4</sup> The *Notice of Suspension* suspended Q Link from participating in or receiving any benefit associated with the Lifeline program as well as any other program funded by federal universal service support mechanisms.<sup>5</sup> It also described the basis for initiating the debarment proceeding against Q Link, the applicable debarment procedures, and the effect of debarment.<sup>6</sup>

As discussed in the *Notice of Suspension*, on October 15, 2024, Q Link, in connection with fraudulent claims against the Lifeline program, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to commit offenses against the United States, specifically, a violation of 18 U.S.C. 1343 (wire fraud), a violation of 18 U.S.C. 641 (theft of government funds), and defrauding the United States, all in violation of 18 U.S.C. 371.<sup>7</sup> Between 2013 and 2019, Q

Quadrant Holdings Group LLC (Jan. 17, 2025) (on file in EB–IHD–24–00037461) (Administrative Settlement).

<sup>3</sup> See *United States v. Q Link Wireless LLC*, Criminal Docket No. 1:24–cr–20363–RAR, Issa Asad's Sentencing Memo, at 1 (S.D. Fla., filed Jul. 17, 2025) (referencing Asad and Q Link's agreement in the Administrative Settlement to cease being federal telecommunication providers).

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Christopher J. Sova, Chief, Investigations and Hearings Division, FCC Enforcement Bureau, to Issa Asad, Chief Executive Officer, Q Link Wireless LLC, Notice of Suspension and Initiation of Debarment Proceeding, 89 FR 100487 (Dec. 12, 2024).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> Any further reference in this letter to "conviction" refers to Q Link's guilty plea agreement and factual proffer in *United States v. Q Link Wireless LLC*, Criminal Docket No. 1:24–cr–

Link received \$618,736,494 from the Lifeline program.<sup>8</sup> At least 21 percent of Q Link's payments during this period were due to its fraudulent scheme.<sup>9</sup> Pursuant to Section 54.8(c) of the Commission's rules, Q Link's conviction of criminal conduct in connection with the Lifeline program is the basis for this debarment.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, on January 17, 2025, Q Link entered into the Administrative Settlement, paragraph 15 of which provides as follows:

Q Link and Mr. Asad warrant that consistent with the Suspension Notices and the Commission's suspension rules (47 CFR 54.8), Q Link and Mr. Asad have ceased participation in any program administered by the FCC, and the Companies agree that Q Link and Mr. Asad will not participate in any such programs administered by the Commission in the future. Consistent with this representation, Q Link and Mr. Asad agree not to contest their suspensions and proposed debarments under the Suspension Notices and agree to waive all rights under the Commission's Rules to challenge the suspensions and proposed debarments. The Companies also warrant that upon execution of this Agreement, Quadrant, and all other related companies, affiliates or subsidiaries, and any other company in which Mr. Asad has a controlling ownership interest will have ceased participating in any program administered by the FCC (including the receipt of any benefit associated with any such programs) and will not participate in such any programs administered by the FCC in the future.<sup>11</sup>

20363–RAR, Plea Agreement (S.D. Fla., filed Oct. 15, 2024). See also *Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization*, WC Docket No. 11–42, CC Docket No. 96–45, WC Docket No. 03–109, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 27 FCC Rcd 6656 (2012).

<sup>8</sup> *United States v. Q Link Wireless LLC*, Criminal Docket No. 1:24–cr–20363–RAR, Factual Proffer, at 6 (S.D. Fla., filed Oct. 15, 2024).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> 47 CFR 54.8(c).

<sup>11</sup> Administrative Settlement at 13–14, para 15.

<sup>1</sup> 47 CFR 54.8 (e), (g); 47 CFR 0.111 (delegating to the Bureau authority to resolve universal service suspension and debarment proceedings). In 2007, the Commission extended the debarment rules to apply to all federal universal service support mechanisms, including the Lifeline program. See *Comprehensive Review of the Universal Service Fund Management, Administration, & Oversight*, Report and Order, 22 FCC Rcd 16372, 16410–12 (2007) (*Program Management Order*) (renumbering Section 54.521 of the universal service debarment rules as Section 54.8 and amending subsections (a)(1), (a)(5), (c), (d), (e)(2)(i), (e)(3), (e)(4), and (g)).

<sup>2</sup> Settlement Agreement, Federal Communications Commission, Q Link Wireless LLC, Issa Asad, and

In accordance with the Commission's debarment rules, Q Link was required to file with the Commission any opposition to the suspension or its scope, or to the proposed debarment or its scope, no later than 30 calendar days from either the date of Q Link's receipt of the *Notice of Suspension* or of its publication in the **Federal Register**, whichever date occurred first.<sup>12</sup> The Commission received no opposition from Q Link, and in fact Q Link agreed in the Administrative Settlement not to contest the suspension or debarment.<sup>13</sup>

For the above reasons, Q Link is debarred from involvement with the Lifeline program and any other program funded by federal universal service support mechanisms, as well as any other program administered by the FCC, as of the Debarment Date.<sup>14</sup> Q Link is excluded from participating in any activities associated with or related to the Lifeline program and any other program funded by federal universal service support mechanisms, as well as any other program administered by the FCC, including the receipt of funds or discounted services through the Lifeline program or any other program administered by the FCC, or consulting with, assisting, or advising applicants or service providers regarding any such programs.<sup>15</sup> After review of the record (including the terms of the Administrative Settlement) and due to the egregious nature of these fraudulent activities that led to Q Link's criminal conviction, the Commission has determined that this debarment will be permanent.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher J. Sova,  
Chief, Investigations and Hearings Division  
Enforcement Bureau.  
cc: Fred Theobald, Universal Service  
Administrative Company (via email)  
Matthew Menchel, Esq., Kobre & Kim LLP  
(via email)  
Michael Sherwin, Esq., Kobre & Kim LLP (via  
email)  
Evelyn Sheehan, Esq., Kobre & Kim LLP (via  
email)  
Michele Ellison, Deputy General Counsel,  
FCC  
Karen Onyeije, Deputy General Counsel, FCC  
[FR Doc. 2025–22832 Filed 12–12–25; 8:45 am]  
**BILLING CODE 6712–01–P**

## FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

[OMB No. 3064–0079; –0122; –0202]

### Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection Renewal; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), as part of its obligations under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the renewal of the existing information collections described below (OMB Control Nos. 3064–0079; –0122; and –0202).

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted on or before February 13, 2026.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested parties are invited to submit written comments to

the FDIC by any of the following methods:

- **Agency Website:** <https://www.fdic.gov/resources/regulations/federal-register-publications/>.
- **Email:** [comments@fdic.gov](mailto:comments@fdic.gov). Include the name and number of the collection in the subject line of the message.
- **Mail:** Robert Meiers, Regulatory Counsel, MB–3013, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 550 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20429.
- **Hand Delivery:** Comments may be hand-delivered to the guard station at the rear of the 17th Street NW building (located on F Street NW), on business days between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m.

All comments should refer to the relevant OMB control number. A copy of the comments may also be submitted to the OMB desk officer for the FDIC: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Robert Meiers, Regulatory Counsel, 703–562–6414, [romeiers@fdic.gov](mailto:romeiers@fdic.gov), MB–3013, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 550 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20429.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Proposal to renew the following currently approved collection of information:

1. **Title:** Application to Retire or Reduce Capital.

**OMB Number:** 3064–0079.

**Form Number:** N/A.

**Affected Public:** Insured State nonmember banks and State savings associations.

**Burden Estimate:**

### SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED ANNUAL BURDEN (OMB No. 3064–0079)

Information collection (IC) (obligation to respond)	Type of burden (frequency of response)	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Average time per response (HH:MM)	Annual burden (hours)
1. Application for Consent to Retire or Reduce Capital (Mandatory) .....	Reporting (On Occasion)	49	1.37	11:00	737
Total Annual Burden (Hours) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	737

Source: FDIC.

**General Description of Collection:** Insured State nonmember banks proposing to change their capital structure must submit an application containing information about the proposed change to obtain the FDIC's consent to reduce or retire capital. There is no change in the method or substance

of the collection. The decrease of 374 hours from 1,111 hours in 2023 to the current estimate of 737 hours is due to a decrease in the estimated number of respondents.

2. **Title:** Forms Relating to FDIC Outside Counsel, Legal Support and Expert Services Programs.

**OMB Number:** 3064–0122.

**Form Number:** See table below.

**Affected Public:** Entities providing legal and expert services to the FDIC.

**Burden Estimate:**

<sup>12</sup> 47 CFR 54.8 (e)(3)–(4). Any opposition had to be filed no later than January 13, 2025.

<sup>13</sup> See Administrative Settlement at 13–14, para 15.

<sup>14</sup> 47 CFR 54.8(g). Pursuant to the Administrative Settlement, as noted, Q Link voluntarily agreed to be debarred permanently from involvement in any program administered by the FCC. Administrative Settlement at 13–14, para 15.

<sup>15</sup> 47 CFR 54.8(a)(1), (d), (g).