



# News Release

*Lifeline, Inc.*

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## **Lifeline Officially Launches Services in Geauga County May 29, 2020**

**PAINESVILLE, Ohio**—Lifeline, Inc. was designated as Geauga County's interim Community Action Agency beginning January 1, 2020 by the Ohio Development Services Agency, following the closure of the Geauga Community Action Agency December 31, 2019. Lifeline has served as Lake County's Community Action Agency since the early 1980s and delivers nearly 20 different programs aimed at eliminating poverty and assisting those living in poverty in achieving self-sufficiency.

"We're very excited to finally be up and running in Geauga County," said Lifeline Executive Director Carrie Dotson. "We have provided quality services in Lake County since 1973 and have built some incredible partnerships and collaborations over the years to really meet the needs of our residents here in Lake County. We really look forward to doing the same in Geauga County as we learn more about the residents and needs there."

The launch hasn't been without challenges and delays, said Dotson.

"We spent January and February preparing to open our Geauga office, securing space, putting staffing in place, getting MOUs signed with partners, and other business necessities," said Dotson. "We were just preparing to launch when the COVID-19 virus and the closures happened, so that set us back a couple of months."

Today, however, the Geauga office is open and ready to serve Geauga residents. The initial program being offered is the JumpStart Car Repair program. Through JumpStart, eligible Geauga County residents may receive up to \$1,000 in car repairs at an approved ASE partnering business. The JumpStart program helps residents with repairs to make their vehicle "road worthy" so that they can continue to access employment or educational opportunities, child care, food, medical or social services.

Applicants for the JumpStart program must be 18 years of age or older, own the vehicle that requires repairs, document proof of insurance, and meet income eligibility guidelines for the household. Following the intake appointment, all vehicles will need to be evaluated by an ASE partnering business and receive approval from Lifeline prior to scheduling the repairs. Interested applicants can contact Lifeline's Geauga County office at 440-251-2781 for more information.

In addition to the launch of the JumpStart Car Repair program, Lifeline is also preparing to welcome six new Board members who will represent various sectors of the Geauga County community.

"Community Action Agencies have always been locally controlled and designed to reflect their communities and meet local needs," said Dotson. "We're excited that we've hired Geauga County residents to staff our Geauga office in Newbury and that in the next two months we're bringing on six new Board members who can really advocate for the needs of the residents in Geauga County. We're looking forward to building meaningful relationships as we grow in Geauga County."

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers was founded in 1973 with the mission of helping Lake County residents by providing them assistance and life skills programming that is designed to increase self-sufficiency. In 1980 Lifeline became a participating agency of the United Way of Lake County, UWLC, and

in 1987 was designated a Community Action Agency by the Ohio Development Services Agency, ODSA. In 2008, Lifeline was designated as a mental health agency by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. In 2020, Lifeline received interim designation as Geauga County's Community Action Agency.

Today Lifeline continues with the same mission of helping low-income residents break the cycle of poverty and make the transition from agency-dependency to self-sufficiency. Lifeline's current programming includes services in the healthcare, housing & energy assistance, information & referral services and consumer education & job training areas. Our motto is 'helping people, changing lives.' Lifeline is currently funded by the UWLC and by grants through the ODSA, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the Lake County ADAMHS Board, the Lake County Senior Services Levy, Lake County Department of Job & Family Services, the City of Mentor, the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Lake Health, the Western Reserve Junior Service League and through private donors.