



Emergency Broadband Benefit

ABOUT THE BENEFIT PROGRAM

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to necessitate distance learning, telework, and reliance on telehealth, broadband connectivity is essential. Congress created the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (“EBBP”) to address affordability, one of the main barriers to internet adoption. This program is run by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin is an outreach partner and is able to provide information. *The PSC does not administer or oversee the program.* **The Emergency Broadband Benefit offers a monthly discount to low income household to offset the cost of broadband Internet subscriptions. The EBBP is a monthly discount of up to \$50 per month, which increase to \$75 per month on tribal lands.** Eligible households may also get discounts on a laptop, desktop, or tablet computer if their provider is participating in the device benefit. The broadband provider will receive the money directly for providing service to an eligible household. Participation by internet service providers is voluntary.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Households are eligible if ONE member of the household:

- Qualifies for the FCC’s Lifeline program; including people who participate in Medicaid, FoodShare or SNAP, SSI, Federal public housing assistance, Veteran and survivors pension benefit or have a household income at or below 135% of federal poverty guideline.
- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program or did so in the 2019-20 school year; or attends a Community Eligibility Provision School.
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 due to layoff or furlough
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider’s low-income or COVID-19 program, or
- If the household is on Tribal lands, at least one member of the household participates in certain Tribal-specific federal assistance programs. They are the Bureau of Indian Affairs general assistance; Tribally administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Head Start if they meet its income qualifying standard; or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Benefits are limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

HOW DO CONSUMERS APPLY FOR THE BENEFIT? WWW.GETEMERGENCYBROADBAND.ORG

If a household is already a Lifeline participant, they will not need to apply for the Emergency Broadband Benefit but they must opt-in. People who are not currently participating in Lifeline must apply for the EBBP through the EBB National Verifier on the website <http://www.getemergencybroadband.org> or via a paper application sent in the mail or directly with the provider. Applicants must provide a full name, date of birth, address, and one of the following identification documents: Social Security Number, Tribal identification



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number, government-issued ID, passport, driver's license, or Taxpayer Identification Number. Upon online completion, an applicant can immediately find out whether they qualify for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program. If the national Verifier cannot automatically confirm eligibility, applicants may need to upload additional documents. A broadband provider, family member or other individual may also help with the application process. **The application and enrollment period will begin on May 12.**

HOW DO CONSUMERS ENROLL IN INTERNET SERVICE?

Once a household has qualified for the benefit, they still need to 1) enroll with a participating internet service provider 2) sign up for an allowable internet service and 3) supply their benefit information to the internet service provider to ensure the discount is applied to their bill. Consumer may be able to work with their current ISP or may be newly enrolling in service. The Universal Service Administrative Co. hosts a Companies Near Me Tool for consumer seeking internet service providers accepting the benefit.

<https://getemergencybroadband.org/companies-near-me/>

HOW LONG WILL THE BENEFIT LAST?

The program will close six months after the federal pandemic emergency ends or when the money is depleted whichever occurs first. At least 30 days before the termination of EBBP discounts Internet service providers must give explicit notice that program is coming to an end. Once the program expires, customer must affirmatively opt-in to continuing service before being charged the full non-discounted rate.

WHICH PROVIDERS ARE ACCEPTING BENEFIT? WHAT SERVICE MAY A CONSUMER GET?

The most up to date information about participating providers is maintained by the FCC at the following website: <https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-broadband-benefit-providers#Wisconsin>

In Wisconsin, AT&T, TDS, Frontier, CenturyLink, Charter and many more are participating, including many mobile cellular carriers and providers that distribute hotspots.

The service must have been available in the retail market on December 1, 2020. Any speed of internet service is allowed. Internet service bundled with voice service is allowed, internet service bundled with video (TV) service is not allowed. Per gigabyte data plans are excluded.

OTHER INFORMATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

- Being behind in payment of existing service will not disqualify a household from receiving discounts
- Households receiving the Lifeline benefit can opt-in and receive discounts through the EBB Program in addition to the Lifeline benefit this can be used for the same or a different service.
- No waiting period to access the benefit
- The discount is the consumer's and is portable between available plans

NEED MORE ASSISTANCE CALL THE PSC PHONE AND INTERNET HELPLINE 608-267-3595



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