



News from Livingston County, NY

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FCC Offers Emergency Broadband Benefit *\$50 Monthly Internet Discounts*

Geneseo, NY, May 17, 2021 — The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently unveiled a new Emergency Broadband Benefit program to help households struggling to pay for internet service amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the FCC, “This new benefit will connect eligible households to jobs, critical healthcare services, virtual classrooms and so much more.”

The program offers “up to \$3.2 billion worth of consumer discounts on broadband services and equipment like computers and tablets” and will be available “until the \$3.2 billion in federal funding runs out or six months after the Department of Health and Human Services declares an end to the pandemic,” states the FCC.

Eligible households can receive up to \$50 per month to help cover their broadband service. Households on qualifying Tribal lands may be eligible for a \$75 per month discount. The program also provides eligible households with a one-time discount of up to \$100 to buy a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers.

To qualify for the discount, a household member must meet one of the following criteria, as outlined by the FCC.

1. Have an income that is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Medicaid, or Lifeline;
2. Has been approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) Community Eligibility Provision in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year;

3. Has received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
4. Has experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
5. Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

Those eligible for the Emergency Broadband Benefit program can apply by contacting their provider directly, or apply online or by mail.

Households can contact their internet provider directly to check whether it is part of the Emergency Broadband Benefit program and learn more about the application process. According to the FCC, there are 825 broadband providers participating in the program.

Interested applicants can also apply online at [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.getemergencybroadband.org), where they can also find participating providers near them.

Others can call 1-833-511-0311 to request a paper application and submit it by mail. The application must be submitted with documentation showing proof of eligibility to the Emergency Broadband Support Center, P.O. Box 7081, London, KY 40742.

"After receiving an eligibility determination, households can contact their preferred service provider to select an Emergency Broadband Benefit eligible service plan," states the FCC.

See the [FCC website](#) for more information.

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