

HELP FOR AFFORDABLE BROADBAND IS COMING!

Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Federal Program for PA Consumers

What is the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program?

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently established the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) program. The EBB uses \$3.2 billion in federal funding Congress approved in December 2020. The EBB gives qualifying households money to buy internet service or equipment to use the internet if they are eligible. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the important role that affordable broadband plays in education, employment, health and other purposes as people are now relying on broadband access to the internet more than ever.

How Much is the Average EBB Support?

The program will provide eligible households with discounts of up to \$50 a month for broadband service. Eligible households can also get a one-time discount of up to \$100 on equipment to use the internet. Equipment includes a computer or tablet if they contribute \$10-\$50 toward the price for the equipment. The benefit is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household. This EBB is in addition to, not in place of, the current Lifeline Program that provides \$9.25 a month to support affordable broadband service.

Who is Eligible for the EBB?

The program is open to [Lifeline](#) subscribers and households that currently participate in an existing low-income or pandemic relief program offered by a broadband provider. This includes consumers whose income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines or who receive Medicaid, SNAP, SSI, Federal Housing or Veterans benefits. The EBB also is available to households if they receive free or reduced-price school lunch or school breakfast, federal Pell grants, or experienced a substantial loss of income since Feb. 29, 2020..

When Will the EBB Begin?

While the program has been authorized by the [FCC](#), the start date has not yet been established. The FCC has adopted rules for the program and is identifying eligible providers who will deliver this benefit.

How Can Consumers Apply for the EBB?

At the current time, the program is not yet in operation, although the FCC is required to make it available within 60 days of Feb. 26, 2021. In the meantime, consumers may wish to contact their current wireless, telephone or cable provider to ask if they are planning to participate in this program. For more information about broadband availability, visit the [FCC's website](#).

The FCC also posted a new [consumer FAQ](#) on the EBB. The FAQ provides answers to common questions on benefit eligibility, how the discount will be applied to broadband services costs and program length.



Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

1-800-692-7380

For people with speech or hearing loss, dial 7-1-1 (Telecommunications Relay Service)

www.puc.pa.gov