



PRESS RELEASE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC) EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT PROGRAM

For Immediate Release: June 22, 2021

For Additional Information: Steven Sandy, Assistant County Administrator (540) 483-3030

Rocky Mount, Virginia – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recently announced the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program. This program will allow eligible low-income families to receive:

- Up to a \$50/month discount on your broadband service and associated equipment rentals
- Up to a \$75/month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer (with a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50)

In order to qualify families must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- An income that is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, or Lifeline.
- Be approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Have 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;
- Meet the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

Eligible households can apply by:

1. Contacting their preferred participating broadband provider directly to learn about their application process.
2. Visiting <https://www.GetEmergencyBroadband.org> to apply online and to find participating providers.
3. Calling 833-511-0311 for a mail-in application.

After receiving an eligibility determination, households can contact their preferred service provider to select an Emergency Broadband Benefit eligible service plan. Local providers that are participating in this program include: Blue Ridge Internet Service (Brisenet), Shentel, Verizon and Century Link.

The program will end when the fund runs out of money, or six months after the Department of Health and Human Services declares an end to the COVID-19 health emergency, whichever is sooner.

More information about the program, including how to apply, can be found at <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>.



Franklin County

A Natural Setting for Opportunity

For more information on the County's Broadband Initiative go to the Broadband Authority page on the Franklin County website at <https://www.franklincountyva.gov/546/Broadband-Authority>.

#