Income-Qualified Internet Programs

FACT SHEET   **January 2023**

Families in Illinois may be eligible for affordable internet programs offered by AT&T, Xfinity, Spectrum, RCN, Lifeline and the City of Chicago. These programs are designed to help lower income families stay connected with access to affordable internet services and connected devices.

You may also qualify for the **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)**, a federal government program that provides a benefit on home internet service for eligible households. The ACP program can decrease your bill by $30 to $75 per month. Many of the lower income offers mentioned below are designed to work in tandem with the ACP program, but participation in ACP is not required to access these offers. Read CUB's **Affordable Connectivity Program Factsheet** for more information.

AT&T's Access program

AT&T's Access program offers high-speed internet wherever the company provides internet service in Illinois for $5 to $10 per month. The program also includes Wi-Fi service for a participant's devices—such as a laptop or smartphone—inside the home, and gives participants access to Wi-Fi hotspots outside the home.

The $30 plan covers unlimited monthly data. Eligible households whose maximum speed available at their home is 10 Mbps or less and who do not need unlimited monthly data may qualify for a lower priced offer. A Wi-Fi gateway/modem and installation are included at no charge.

Qualifications

For households to qualify, they must be located in an area served by AT&T, and at least one resident of the home must be enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the National School Lunch Program. You cannot have outstanding debt with AT&T connected to internet service or the Access program. It is free to apply.

To qualify, your household income must be at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (consult the chart to the right.)

How Do I Apply?

AT&T Access:
www.att.com/access or call 1-855-220-5211

Spectrum Internet Assist:
www.SpectrumInternetAssist.com or call 1-844-525-1574

Xfinity Internet Essentials:
www.internetessentials.com/ or call 1-855-846-8376

RCN Internet First:
www.internetfirst.com or call 1-800-746-4726

Lifeline:
www.lifelinesupport.org/ or call 1-800-234-9473

Chicago Connected:
www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/chicago-connected/ or call 1-773-417-1060

Number of People in Household	Maximum Income
1	$27,180
2	$36,620
3	$46,060
4	$55,500
5	$64,940
6	$74,380
7	$83,820
8	$93,260
For each additional person, add:	$9,440

Spectrum Internet Assist

Spectrum Internet Assist provides eligible applicants with an affordable internet option. The company says price varies by location. A CUB review found prices ranging from $0 to 25 per month. Call Spectrum to confirm pricing. The program includes:

- High-speed internet at 30 megabits/second (wireless speeds may vary by location)
- A free internet modem
- No data caps or contracts
- Optional in-home WiFi service with a router for an additional $5 per month and no activation fee

Qualifications

To qualify, the household must be in an area served by Spectrum. One member of the household must be a recipient of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP, Medicare/Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (for age 65 and older). You have to apply for this program every year and some addresses are preapproved for this program. Call Spectrum for more information.

Xfinity's Internet Essentials

The Internet Essentials program provides eligible households with Internet service for $9.95 per month.

Program participants will receive:

- Internet service at a speed of 25 mbps (up to 100 mbps for additional $20 per month)
- In-home WiFi at no additional cost
- Option to purchase a low-cost computer
- Access to free, online Internet literacy training

Qualifications

To qualify, your household must be in an area served by Xfinity. New Xfinity Internet customers who have had Xfinity service in the past 90 days or households who owe money to Xfinity may still qualify if approved by December 31, 2023.

Your household must also be eligible for or receive public assistance from one of the programs **listed here**.

RCN's Internet First

RCN's Internet First program offers internet for $9.95 per month for eligible households. The program includes:

- Internet service at a speed up to 25 mbps
- First two months are free
- No contracts and no credit check
- No installation fees

Qualifications

To qualify, consumers must live in an area serviced by RCN, Grande or Wave and have not subscribed to RCN services within a 60 day period immediately prior to applying for the program.

One member of your household must also participate in one of **these public assistance programs**.

Lifeline

Lifeline is a federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and internet. Eligible customers will get up to $9.25 toward their bill. You can use Lifeline for either phone or Internet service, but not both.

Qualifications

You may qualify for Lifeline if you or or someone in your household or your dependent participates in one of **these federal assistance programs** or if your income is 135% or less than the **Federal Poverty Guidelines**.

City of Chicago's Chicago Connected

Chicago Connected is a free, high-speed internet service for students of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in their households.

Eligible households will receive internet service speeds of 50 mbps.

In situations where wired internet is not possible, the family will be given a hotspot for accessing the Internet. The family should contact their school and inform them of the situation.

The program is funded through November 2024. After enrollment, households will be able to continue service as long as they have eligible students enrolled at a CPS school. The service is provided by RCN and Comcast.

Qualifications

Any student that qualifies for free and reduced meals is automatically eligible for Chicago Connected, as long as the family does not already have a higher-level package from their internet service provider. Parents of CPS students can check their eligibility **through this online portal**. You will need your child's student ID number.