



STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
**Public Education Department**

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Ryan Stewart, Cabinet Secretary

**NEWS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*

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**April 30, 2021**

**Emergency Broadband Benefit Program to launch May 12**  
***Eligible New Mexicans can get discounts for services, devices***

SANTA FE -- Tens of thousands of eligible New Mexicans can enroll for federal assistance beginning May 12 to help pay for monthly broadband services and to receive a one-time discount to purchase a computer.

The Federal Communications Commission, which is administering the \$3.2 billion Emergency Broadband Benefit Program, announced the May 12 start date in a news release Thursday that urged state officials to use the interim to inform eligible households about the program.

The program provides discounts on the cost of high-speed internet for eligible households working with approved providers. Benefits include:

- Up to \$50 month discount for broadband services per household;
- Up to \$75 month discount for broadband services per household on tribal lands;
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop or tablet computer purchased through a participating provider.

A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least *one* of these criteria:

- Qualifies for the FCC's existing program, [Lifeline](#), to help make communications services more affordable for low-income consumers;

- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, or did so in the 2019-2020 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since Feb. 29, 2020, and the household had a total income in 2020 below \$99,000 for single filers and below \$198,000 for joint filers; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating providers' existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

The Public Education Department estimates that 75 percent of families of New Mexico students could be eligible based on their eligibility for other federal assistance, including the National School Lunch Program.

“This could amount to tens of millions of dollars to help New Mexico families pay for the connectivity and devices their students need to learn in a digital age,” Public Education Secretary Ryan Stewart said. “We want to make sure families know about and take advantage of this program, which, along with other initiatives, will go a long way toward closing the digital divide in New Mexico.”

Eligible households will enroll through participating broadband providers, who will be reimbursed for delivering qualifying broadband services or devices to eligible households. In New Mexico, the Department of Information Technology is signing up service providers to participate in the program. So far, 38 New Mexico providers have signed up for the program. That list is [available here](#). Nationally, more than 600 providers are committed to the program, the FCC reported last week.

The FCC began testing the program with participating broadband providers last week to prepare for Tuesday’s consumer launch to go as smoothly as possible.

More information about the EBB program, including an FAQ, [is available on the FCC website](#).

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