

Digital Navigators Emergency Broadband Benefit

welcome

we're pleased you've joined us today



California State Library







Federal Communications Commission



Office of Digital Innovation

Today's Agenda

-  Opening, CSL
-  Program Overview, FCC
-  Applicant Experience Research, ODI
-  Q&A Time
Use the chat throughout the presentation to queue up questions for the Q&A portion

Meet Your Presenters



Laura Sasaki

California State Library

Broadband Program
Manager
State E-rate Coordinator



Renee Coles

Federal Communications
Commission

Consumer Education and
Outreach Specialist



Justin Lai

California Office of Digital
Innovation

UX Researcher



Helping Households Connect During the Pandemic

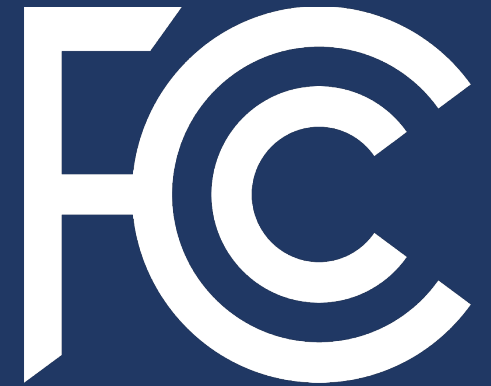
Emergency Broadband Benefit

What is the Benefit?

Who Is Eligible?

How Can Households Apply?

FCC Partner Toolkit





What Is the Benefit?



The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Program that provides a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households. Eligible households can receive:

- Up to \$50/month discount for broadband service and associated equipment rentals;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on Tribal lands, and;
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.



Who Qualifies for the Benefit?



A Household is Eligible If Any Member

- Received a Pell Grant in the current award year;
- Is approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced school lunch program or school breakfast program in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income, due to a job loss or furlough since 2/29/20 and the household had a total income in 2020 below \$99,000 (single filers) or \$198,000 (joint filers); or
- Meets the eligibility of a participating providers' existing COVID-19 or low-income program.





Who Qualifies for the Benefit?



Households That Qualify for Lifeline Also Qualify

What is Lifeline?

Lifeline is a federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and internet. Eligible customers will get up to \$9.25 (up to \$34.25 on Tribal lands) toward their bill. Visit www.LifelineSupport.org for more information about the Lifeline Program.

How Do I Qualify for Lifeline?

Household income is less than 135% of the Federal poverty guidelines
or

A member of the household participates in one of these programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
- Tribal programs (and you live on qualifying Tribal lands)



What Is a Household?

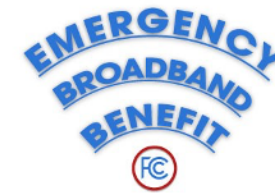


A household is a group of people who live together and share money (even if they are not related to each other.) If you live together and share money, you are one household. If you either don't live together or you don't share money, you are two or more households.

- A household can qualify because of eligible dependent children that meet the eligibility criteria.
- You may have to answer questions about your household when you apply for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program.
- A household worksheet will be available to assist in determining household eligibility.



Multi-Unit Dwellings



Eligible households within multi-unit dwellings such as apartment buildings, nursing homes, and group homes can also take advantage of the benefit.

- Households within multi-unit dwellings, where the landlord or the property manager is the internet account holder, may be able to apply the benefit to that broadband service if they otherwise qualify.
- If the household has a bill or other liability for their broadband access that someone else, such as the property owner, is helping to pay, the household could switch temporarily to using EBB support to pay for broadband service instead of relying on that third party's support.





Additional Details



The Emergency Broadband Benefit opened its enrollment on May 12, 2021.



The Emergency Broadband Benefit is a temporary program developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will end once the program funds are exhausted, or six months after the Department of Health and Human Services declares an end to the pandemic, whichever comes first.



The program is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). They also administer the Lifeline program. USAC hosts the application portal and the [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.getemergencybroadband.org) consumer website. There is also a toll free number for questions open 7 days a week from 9am – 9pm est. 833-511-0311



Consumer Protections



- Participating providers must give households notice about the last date or billing cycle that the full benefit will apply to their bill and the date or billing cycle that a partial benefit will apply to their bill, in addition to information about the cost of broadband service after the program ends.
- Households will need to opt-in or request to continue broadband services with their provider. If they don't opt-in or select a new service plan with the provider, their broadband service will end once the program ends. Even if they had service with the same provider before enrolling in the Emergency Broadband Benefit, they will need to opt-in to continue broadband services after the program ends.



Participating Providers



The program is open to all broadband providers, not just those currently offering Lifeline services.

- Fixed broadband services are provided to your home, or a single location. These include cable, fiber optic, DSL, satellite, and fixed wireless services.
- Mobile broadband services are device-based and available throughout the service provider's cellular coverage area, similar to cell phone services.

Check with the broadband providers in your area to learn about their plans for program participation and eligible service offerings. You can find a list of participating providers by state and territory linked on www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit.

Not all providers plan to offer connected devices through the program.



How Do I Enroll?



There are three ways to apply for the Emergency Broadband Benefit

Option 1: Contact a participating broadband provider directly to learn about their application process.

Option 2: Go to GetEmergencyBroadband.org to apply online and to find participating providers near you.

Option 3: Send a mail-in application, along with proof of eligibility to:

Emergency Broadband
Support Center
P.O. Box 7081
London, KY 40742





Enroll Via a Provider



- Contact a service provider. Find a list of participating service providers by state at: www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit.
- The service provider assists the consumer (**in-person**) with applying through the National Verifier Service provider portal; or
- The service provider helps the consumer apply using their FCC approved alternate verification process.



Apply Directly Online



Visit

Visit [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.getemergencybroadband.org)



Submit

Click "How to Apply" and complete the electronic application.



Contact

After receiving an eligibility determination from the National Verifier, the consumer can contact a service provider to enroll in the EBB program.



Apply by Mail



- Download and print a paper application from [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.getemergencybroadband.org).
(Participating providers may also supply consumers with paper applications)
- Mail the completed application to:
Emergency Broadband Support Center
P.O. Box 7081
London, KY 40742
- To help with application processing include supporting documents to prove eligibility and the household worksheet.



Show You Qualify



- When applying for the Emergency Broadband Benefit using USAC's online application, they will attempt to confirm your information automatically.
- Online and mail-in applicants may be asked to provide information or documentation to verify identity, address, or eligibility.
- To confirm your eligibility, additional documentation can be mailed or submitted electronically. Examples of acceptable documents that can be used to validate information can be found at: getemergencybroadband.org/how-to-apply/show-you-qualify/



What Is the Outreach Toolkit?



The outreach toolkit is a collection of social media, printables, and other tools to assist communities, partners, grassroots organizers, and navigators in raising awareness around the Emergency Broadband Benefit.

These tools are for public access, downloadable, and free to use. They can also be co-branded and/or adjusted to your voice.



FCC Outreach Toolkit



Social

Logos
Social Media Images
Draft Social Media Posts
Newsletter Insert
Draft Press Release

Printables

Fact Sheet
Flyer
9"x 5" Info Card
1/4 Page Handout
Poster/Infographic

Videos and PSAs

ASL Video
Overview Video
How to Apply Video
Audio PSAs
PowerPoint Slide Deck



Social Media Support



Logos

Social Media Images

Draft social Media Posts

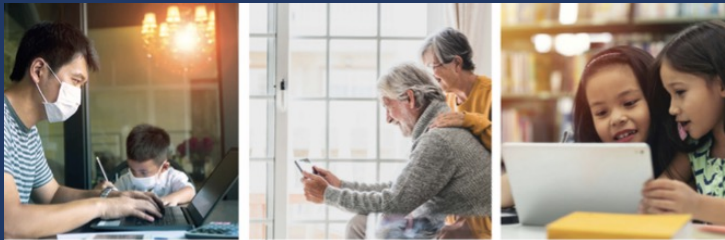
Newsletter Inserts

Draft Press Release





Printables



EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT

WHAT IS IT?

The Emergency Broadband Benefit is a temporary FCC program to help households struggling to afford internet service during the pandemic.

The benefit provides:

- Up to \$50/month discount for broadband service;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A household is eligible if one member of the household:

- Has an income that is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guide lines or participates in certain government assistance programs;
- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch or breakfast program;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

THREE WAYS TO APPLY

1

Contact your preferred participating provider directly to learn about their application process.

2

Go to [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.getemergencybroadband.org) to submit an application and to find participating providers near you.

3

Complete a mail-in application and send it along with proof of eligibility to:

Emergency Broadband Support Center
P.O. Box 7081
London, KY 40742

LEARN MORE



Call 833-511-0311, or



Visit fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT



What is it?

A temporary FCC program to help households struggling to afford internet service during the pandemic.

The benefit provides:

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

Who is eligible?

A household is eligible if one member of the household:

- Has an income that is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or participates in certain government assistance programs;
- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch or breakfast program;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.



How do I apply?

There are three ways to apply for the Emergency Broadband Benefit.

1

Contact your Preferred Participating Provider Directly

Ask your provider if they participate in the EBB, or use our online tool to find a participating company near you.



2

Online
Use the online application at [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.getemergencybroadband.org)



3

By Mail

Print an application in English or Spanish. Complete the application and send with proof of eligibility to:

Emergency Broadband Support Center
P.O. Box 7081
London, KY 40742

For additional information, Call 833-511-0311, or visit fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit

Fact Sheet

Flyers

Poster

9" x 5" Info Card

1/4 Page Handout

Infographic



Videos and PSAs



ASL Video

Overview Video

How to Apply Video

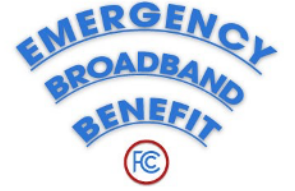
Radio PSAs

PowerPoint Slide Deck





Toolkit Accessibility



Translated Languages

Arabic
Amharic
Burmese
Chinese (Traditional)
French
Haitian Creole
Korean
Portuguese
Russian
Somali
Spanish
Tagalog
Vietnamese

Translated Material

Fact Sheet
9" x 5" Info Cards
1/4 Page Handout

Alternate Formats

To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to: FCC504@fcc.gov.



Questions?



The FCC's EBB Consumer Hub:
www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit

Toll free number for questions:
833-511-0311

To apply: GetEmergencyBroadband.org



California Office of Digital Innovation

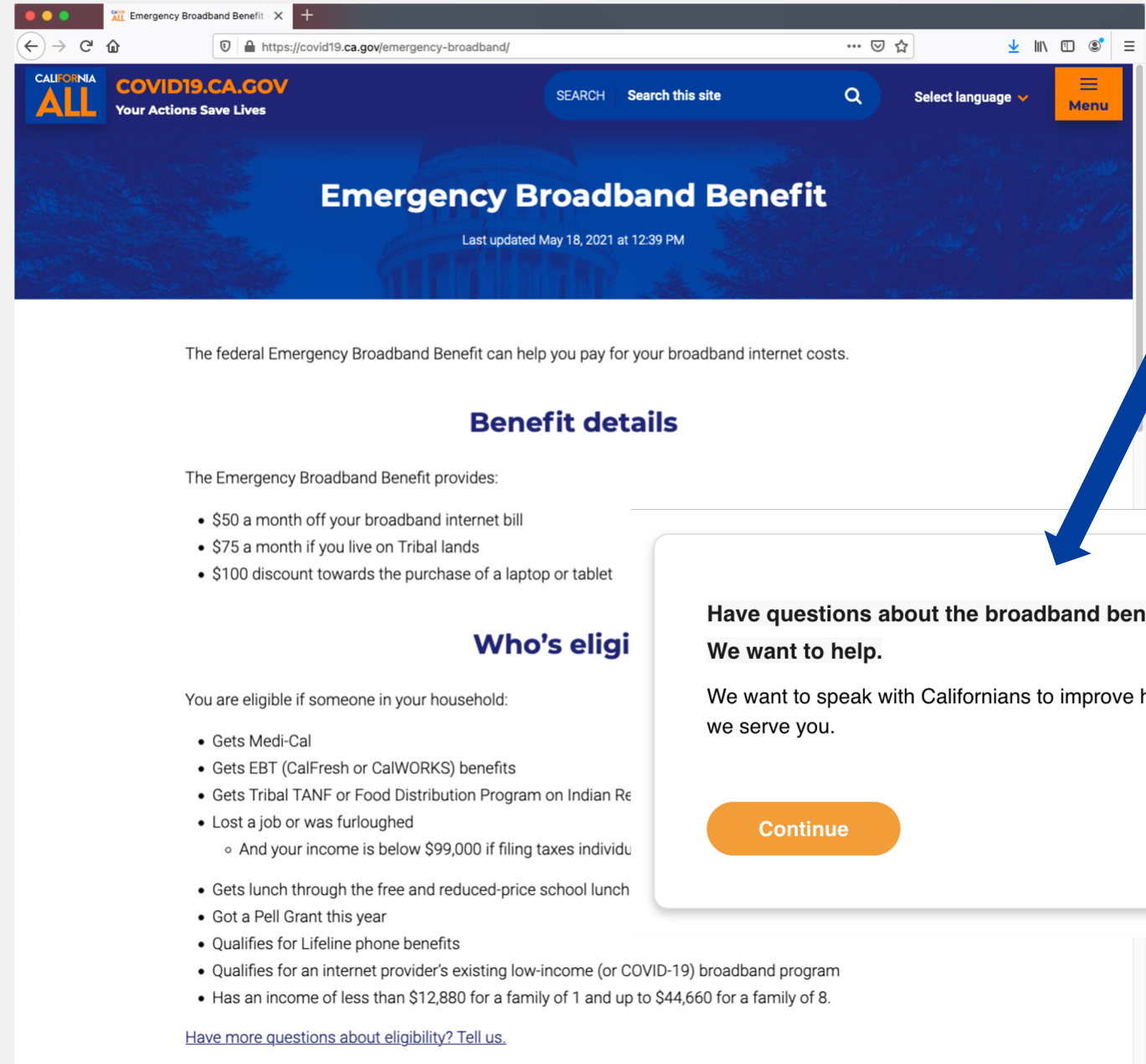
Emergency Broadband Benefit Applicant Experience Research

Justin Lai

June 4, 2021

An Emergency Broadband Benefit.

The Public Utilities Commission and ODI partnered to create a page on the covid19.ca.gov website to get feedback from Californians about their experience with the Emergency Broadband Benefit program.



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the 'Emergency Broadband Benefit' page on <https://covid19.ca.gov/emergency-broadband/>. The page features the 'CALIFORNIA ALL' logo and the text 'COVID19.CA.GOV Your Actions Save Lives'. A search bar and a language selection dropdown are in the top right. The main heading is 'Emergency Broadband Benefit' with a timestamp 'Last updated May 18, 2021 at 12:39 PM'. The content explains that the federal benefit can help pay for broadband internet costs. It includes a 'Benefit details' section listing three types of assistance: \$50/month off a bill, \$75/month for Tribal lands, and a \$100 discount on laptop/tablet purchases. A 'Who's eligi' section lists various eligibility criteria, including Medi-Cal, EBT, Tribal TANF, income levels, school lunch, Pell Grants, Lifeline, and existing broadband programs. A link at the bottom says 'Have more questions about eligibility? Tell us.' An orange 'Continue' button is visible in the bottom right. A blue arrow points to a feedback modal that appears over the bottom right of the page. The modal has a close button (X) in the top right corner and contains the text: 'Have questions about the broadband benefit? We want to help. We want to speak with Californians to improve how we serve you.' Below this text is an orange 'Continue' button.

Emergency Broadband Benefit

The federal Emergency Broadband Benefit can help you pay for your broadband internet costs.

Benefit details

The Emergency Broadband Benefit provides:

- \$50 a month off your broadband internet bill
- \$75 a month if you live on Tribal lands
- \$100 discount towards the purchase of a laptop or tablet

Who's eligi

You are eligible if someone in your household:

- Gets Medi-Cal
- Gets EBT (CalFresh or CalWORKS) benefits
- Gets Tribal TANF or Food Distribution Program on Indian Re
- Lost a job or was furloughed
 - And your income is below \$99,000 if filing taxes individu
- Gets lunch through the free and reduced-price school lunch
- Got a Pell Grant this year
- Qualifies for Lifeline phone benefits
- Qualifies for an internet provider's existing low-income (or COVID-19) broadband program
- Has an income of less than \$12,880 for a family of 1 and up to \$44,660 for a family of 8.

[Have more questions about eligibility? Tell us.](#)

Have questions about the broadband benefit?
We want to help.
We want to speak with Californians to improve how we serve you.

Continue

Learn from Californians about their experiences with EBB

Drive Traffic to the Page

Google Ads appear when people search for key affordable broadband terms.

Ad · <https://ca.gov/>

Emergency Broadband Benefit - State of California - CA.gov

There is new public help for you to afford broadband internet. Click here to learn more. Get Local Info And Alerts. See Newsroom.

Ad · covid19.ca.gov

\$50 Broadband Discount | Emergency Broadband Benefit | Sta...

There is new public help for you to afford broadband internet. Click here to learn more.

Connect with Applicants

Once people have been on the website, we ask if they have any additional questions and offer to call.

Have questions about the broadband benefit? We want to help.

We want to speak with Californians to improve how we serve you.

Continue

No thanks

Understand their Needs

Interview applicants about their experience using the site and signing up for EBB.

Universal Service Administrative Co.

Menu

Stay Connected | Companies Near Me

Companies Near Me

Not all broadband providers offer the Emergency Broadband Benefit.

To find an EBB Program provider in your area, use the Companies Near Me tool. You can search using your zip code or your city and state. If you would like to see the full list of options, click on "see the list of companies in your



We researched a diverse group of people over the last two weeks

30

interviews

with individuals/families who submitted their contact info on the website

19

locations

across northern and southern California from Corning to Modesto to San Diego

2-90

minute calls

with respondents asking about their experiences and answering their questions



People we talked to had similar hurdles and questions

Unfamiliar terms

“Wifi” and “Internet” were more familiar than “broadband” or “ISP.”

Unsure where to start

Did not know where to start (finding a provider, filling out application, going to existing provider’s website, etc.)

Subscribing to a plan

Confused about how to contact a provider after being approved through the federal website.

Device Availability

Many people searching for a provider who can offer a device, but not always clear who it (and most are not).



Little and big challenges trip people up

Digital Literacy

Often uncomfortable completing the application without help.

Middle Name

Error if applicant adds only a middle initial instead of middle name.

Passwords

Difficulty creating a password that meets requirements.

Password requirements are hard to see for applicants on a tablet.

California

Receive error: “Must be in a National Verifier state.”

Mistakenly start Lifeline application.



You can help by surfacing questions applicants aren’t asking

Who is eligible?	Document eligibility	Eligible plans	Program end date
Applicants may have multiple paths to eligibility.	What information applicants need when they are applying	Finding the plan that makes sense for them, especially if they have to change their current plan	Focused on how to apply and do not assume or think that the program has a potentially short lifespan



Questions?

Justin.Lai@digital.ca.gov



California Office of Digital Innovation

<https://digital.ca.gov>

@californiaODI

Questions?



Use the chat to ask your questions



Resources



<https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-broadband-benefit-outreach-toolkit>

<https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>



<https://getemergencybroadband.org/>



<https://covid19.ca.gov/emergency-broadband/>



<https://digitalequitybaltimore.org/ebb-resources/>



<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/emergency-broadband-benefit/>