

AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

Adoption Toolkit for School Districts

RESOURCE: AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DISTRICT NOTES

How to use this resource: These are some commonly asked questions regarding the Affordable Connectivity Program. Provide these to district and school based staff so that they may support families with questions or concerns they may have.

Recommendations and best practices:

- Reference the [ACP Enrollment overview](#) and [Full Enrollment Guide](#) for more information.
- For additional support and information see:
 - FCC's Consumer FAQ
<https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program-consumer-faq>
 - USAC's FAQ: <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/learn/faqs/>

AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM TALKING POINTS & FAQs

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For people who are paid under the table and may not have clear wage documentation, is there an option for a self-declaration of their income?

What if the dependent graduates or the household moves to another district?

If a household has more than one child/dependent enrolled in a CEP district or that is receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals, which child/dependent should the household provide information for on the application?

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What if the internet account is not in the caller's name (they use another household's internet, or it's in a roommate or partner's name)?

What about highly mobile or homeless families?

What if I call a family member who speaks a language that our call team can't support?

What if I connect with someone who is struggling with technology literacy issues?

What if I contact a household member who does not have an email to use during enrollment?

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What about households currently enrolled in the Emergency Broadband Benefit? Will the household automatically be enrolled in an expensive plan or contract now that has ended?

ACP OVERVIEW QUESTIONS

Question	Answer
What is the Affordable Connectivity Program?	The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) helps families connect to the Internet from home by providing a monthly benefit to help pay for an internet service plan. The ACP is a long-term \$14 billion program of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The ACP began December 31, 2021, replacing the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) (a temporary program tied to the pandemic).
What does the benefit provide?	A discount of up to \$30 a month for broadband service (\$75 for households on Tribal lands), as well as a one-time discount of \$100, with a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50, toward the purchase of a connected device (laptop, desktop or tablet) through a participating provider.
Can a household receive more than one discount?	The Affordable Connectivity Program is limited to one monthly service discount and a one-time connected device discount per eligible household.
How long does the program last?	The ACP will continue until funds run out (currently there are enough funds to support the program for an estimated five years, and that is before any additional funding is added). The ACP is therefore considered a long-term benefit.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS FAQ

Question	Answer
How does a household enroll?	<p>There are three options to enroll:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Online at ACPBenefit.org (National Verifier)2. Mail in an application (English or Spanish) and return it along with proof of eligibility to: ACP Support Center, P.O. Box 7081, London, KY 40742<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For more information, see the ACP Application Instructions• It is recommended to include a Household Worksheet with the application (English or Spanish). See the Household Worksheet Instructions for directions.• Print a cover sheet so that USAC can match documents with the application.3. Contact a participating broadband provider directly to learn about their application process. For a full list of participating providers see: acpbenefit.org/companies-near-me/. <p><i>(Note only certain providers have been approved by the FCC to use an alternate application process and to enroll households directly, so most will need to apply via the National Verifier).</i></p>

QUALIFICATION & ELIGIBILITY FAQ

Question	Answer
<p>How does a household qualify?</p>	<p>A member of a household only has to meet one of the criteria, such as income at 200% of the federal poverty level, participation in a government assistance program, such as Medicaid or SNAP, or through a dependent who is on free and reduced lunch or who attends a school that participates in the Community Eligibility Provision. For more information see ACP Eligibility Qualifications</p>
<p>What is the full list of ACP qualifications?</p>	<p>Participation in Lifeline</p> <p>Income Eligibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200% of the federal poverty guidelines <p>Participation in government assistance programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) • Medicaid • Supplemental Security Income (SSI) • Federal Public Housing Assistance • Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit • Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) <p>Participation in Free and Reduced Price School Meal program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)</p> <p>Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current year</p> <p>Tribal specific programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance • Head Start (only households meeting the income qualifying standard) • Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families • Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
<p>What is the breakdown of a household income at 200% of the federal poverty level?</p>	<p>200% of the federal poverty level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family of 1: \$25,760 • Family of 2: \$34,840 • Family of 3: \$43,920 • Family of 4: \$53,000 • Family of 5: \$62,080

QUALIFICATION & ELIGIBILITY FAQ CONTINUED

Question	Answer
<p>What documents do households need to show eligibility when applying for the ACP?</p>	<p>The household may have to provide documents to demonstrate eligibility depending on the criterion they choose during the application process. Acceptable documents to show income include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior year’s state, federal, or Tribal tax return • Current income statement from your employer or a paycheck stub • A Social Security statement of benefits • Veterans Administration statement of benefits • Unemployment or Worker’s Compensation statement of benefits • Divorce decree, child support award, or a similar official document showing your income • A retirement/pension statement of benefits <p>Acceptable documents to show participation in a qualifying government program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit award letter • Approval letter • Statement of benefits • Benefit verification letter
<p>What documentation does a household need to show eligibility when applying on behalf of a dependent?</p>	<p>If the household is qualifying through a dependent, for instance, if the student participates in the free or reduced lunch or breakfast program, or if their school participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), the family will need to provide documentation showing the student’s enrollment in the qualifying year, such as a report card or an official school document that states the school name, student’s name, and school year. Districts may want to prepare a letter for families confirming their student’s enrollment. The family may also provide an eligibility letter for the free or reduced lunch or breakfast program.</p>

QUALIFICATION & ELIGIBILITY FAQ CONTINUED

Question	Answer
For people who are paid under the table and may not have clear wage documentation, is there an option for a self-declaration of their income?	It would depend on a case-by-case basis. The easiest would be to qualify under one of the other criteria. If, for instance, the participant is enrolled in one of the federal programs (i.e. SNAP or Medicaid), the recommendation would be to qualify using that. Another option would be to apply through someone else in the household who qualifies, such as a student who attends a CEP school.
What if the household moves to another district?	The household will need to reapply if the way they were eligible was through a dependent. If the dependent is still attending a CEP school or is eligible for the free and reduced meal program at another school, then they will need to reapply and show their child is receiving that benefit at the new school.
What if the dependent graduates?	The household will need to reapply if the way they were eligible was through a dependent. If the dependent is attending a post-secondary school (college or university) and receives a Pell Grant, then they may use their award letter to continue to receive the benefit.
If a household has more than one child/dependent enrolled in a CEP district or that is receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals, which child/dependent should the household provide information for on the application?	The household should apply using the information of their youngest school-aged child / dependent as this will ensure they are eligible through the free and reduced meal program or the CEP for the longest period of time.

IDENTIFICATION FAQ

Question	Answer
What documents do households need to show identity when applying for the ACP?	<p>Households may need to have some sort of documentation - the last four digits of a social security number is generally easiest and fastest but other forms of identity such as a driver's license are fine.</p> <p>If they decide to qualify through their student or dependent, the applicant will need to provide identification for their student/dependent, such as the last four digits of their Social Security number.</p> <p>Examples of documents are in the text box below. For more information, see here.</p>
Can an applicant use an international form of identification?	<p>Yes! We've found that this is fine. Specifically, applicants may use their consular ID or foreign passport number in the application.</p>

INTERNET PROVIDER FAQ

Question	Answer
<p>What are the ACP-eligible service plans with each internet company?</p>	<p>Eligible households are able to sign-up for any internet service provided by a participating Internet service provider, including those that they may already be participating in.</p>
<p>What are some of the consumer protections in the ACP?</p>	<p>Credit checks are prohibited as a condition of household participation in a service plan. Service providers are also prohibited from up or down-selling customers on any plans. They also cannot conduct a credit check or make them sign a contract.</p>
<p>What if the household has unpaid bills with the internet service provider?</p>	<p>Eligible households cannot be excluded based on prior debt with a participating provider. However, if families have non-payment for 90 days (from the bills' due date(s) after enrolling and participating in ACP), the family can be de-enrolled as long as the Internet service provider gives notice after 30 and 60 days. Re-enrollment with the same service provider after de-enrollment is up to the service provider.</p>
<p>Can the ACP be applied towards services other than Internet service?</p>	<p>No. It cannot be applied to phone or cable, data overage charges, or other non-Internet products or equipment.</p>
<p>Can the household change internet service providers?</p>	<p>Consumers can change to a different participating provider at any time. They are not locked into the company that they first enrolled with in the program. However, the device discount can only be used once per eligible household, even if the household changes providers.</p>
<p>Can the ACP benefit be applied to existing internet accounts?</p>	<p>Yes! Especially with the ACP and the fact that the consumer can choose whichever plan they wish. If they qualify for the ACP, they complete the online application, receive a code, and then contact the provider that they wish to apply their benefit to their current plan.</p>

TROUBLESHOOTING ENROLLMENT ROADBLOCKS

Question	Answer
<p>If an applicant doesn't make it all the way through the application, can they pick-up where they left off later?</p>	<p>Yes. Once an account is created, the applicant can save the application and then log back into their account</p>
<p>What if an applicant receives a message that an account has already been created under that name / account or username?</p>	<p>The username may have already been used by another applicant and this does not necessarily mean that someone has applied in their name. Have the applicant try or create a different username.</p>
<p>What if the internet account is not in the caller's name (they use another household's internet, or it's in a roommate or partner's name)?</p>	<p>They can still apply! As long as only one person in the household is applying for the benefit, they can still apply. When they contact the Internet service provider, they may need to provide the account holder's information (such as date or birthdate) along with their verification code.</p>
<p>What about highly mobile or homeless families?</p>	<p>Families can choose to find a plan that supports mobile internet. By using the Companies Near Me Tool, families can search for providers listed as "ACP Mobile."</p>
<p>What if I call a family member who speaks a language that our call team can't support?</p>	<p>Try to gather their contact information and the language support they need, and ESH will follow up.</p>
<p>What if I connect with someone who is struggling with technology literacy issues?</p>	<p>Ask if there is a family member or someone else available that can help them walk through the process together.</p>
<p>What if I contact a household member who does not have an email to use during enrollment?</p>	<p>Ask if another family member has an email account that can be used. If this is not possible, ask for follow-up information, and we can both provide this how-to but also walk them through setting up an email account.</p>

FEES AND BENEFIT

Question	Answer
<p>Will the household be charged any fees?</p>	<p>Taxes and fees are part of the amount charged to a consumer so they are included in the ACP reimbursement, instead of consumers receiving small bills for taxes and fees alone. Therefore, the household should be sure to clarify if there will be any remaining portion they are responsible for, if the cost is hovering around the \$30 price point. If the family chooses an internet service plan that is more than \$30 per month, they will be responsible for the difference . For example, if the service plan is \$60 per month, the ACP will cover \$30, and the consumer would be responsible for the rest.</p>
<p>Will the family receive the money directly?</p>	<p>No - the benefit is not a direct-to-consumer benefit. It is a discount off the monthly service bill and/ or device. The internet service provider will seek reimbursement directly from the FCC program.</p>

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Question	Answer
<p>Who does a household contact for help?</p>	<p>If families have any questions or need assistance, they can contact the ACP Support Center of the Universal Service Administrative Co, who administers the ACP on behalf of the FCC via:</p> <p>Email: ACPSupport@usac.org</p> <p>Phone: (877) 384-2575, seven days a week, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET</p>
<p>Where can a household find more information?</p>	<p>Online at Visit https://acpbenefit.org/.</p>

EBB TO ACP TRANSITION

Question	Answer
<p>What about households currently enrolled in the Emergency Broadband Benefit? Will the household automatically be enrolled in an expensive plan or contract now that has ended?</p>	<p>EBB participants in good standing were automatically enrolled into the ACP benefit on 12/31/2021 which ensures eligible households continue to receive the discount without disruptions due to the eligibility of their service provider. There is a 60 day transition period in which the EBB-enrolled family will continue to receive the \$50 per month benefit (March 1, 2022). After that period, the benefit amount will be reduced to the \$30 amount. 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 the partial benefit will apply to their bill.</p> <p>EBB households who qualified due to substantial loss of income as a result of a job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020, or by meeting the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's COVID-19 program, will need to requalify for the Affordable Connectivity Program.</p>