

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

CITY, STATE - DATE

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<Local Leader> Announces Bold New Initiative to Bring Affordable Broadband to XX,XXX of <City's> Unconnected Households

Public, Non-profit and Community Leaders Unite to Raise Awareness of Affordable Connectivity Program and Close the Digital Divide in <City>

CITY, STATE - DATE – Today, <Local Leader Name>, in partnership with <insert names of initiative partners> announced a bold new initiative to close the digital divide in <City Name>. The new initiative aims to build awareness about the \$14 billion Affordable Connectivity Program, a new long-term federal benefit that will help to lower the cost of broadband service and help low-income families to afford internet service.

The Affordable Connectivity Program provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for qualifying households on qualifying Tribal lands. The benefit also provides up to a \$100 per household discount toward a one-time purchase of a computer, laptop, or tablet if the household contributes more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase through a participating broadband provider.

“The pandemic has made it clear that without high-speed internet access at home, <City>’s residents can’t complete school assignments, work remotely, find a job, start a business, access healthcare or communicate in the 21st century,” said <Local Leader Name>. “We are committed to closing the broadband affordability gap in <City> so that every resident has equal access to the opportunities of the digital age.”

A key component of the plan will be the creation of a unique public-private partnership that will work to close the broadband affordability gap. A [recent report](#) from the national non-

profit, EducationSuperHighway, highlighted that approximately 28 million of the 123 million households in the United States do not have high-speed broadband. 18 million of these households, home to 47 million people, are offline because they cannot afford an available internet connection.

This broadband affordability gap is concentrated in <City's> underserved communities and disproportionately impacts people of color. Previous efforts to provide the resources households need to connect have fallen short. As of June 2022, only 23% of Americans eligible for federal broadband affordability programs have enrolled due to awareness, trust, and enrollment barriers.

<Insert quotes from partner organizations here>.

The new initiative will focus on ensuring <City> residents are aware they might be eligible for the benefit and engaging trusted community partners to support outreach. A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 200% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#);
- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or [Lifeline](#);
- Is 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 (CEP);
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income program; or
- Participates in one of several Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal Head Start (only households meeting the relevant income qualifying standard), Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Eligible households can enroll in the Affordable Connectivity Program at affordableconnectivity.gov, submitting a mail-in application, or contacting their preferred [participating broadband provider](#) and selecting a plan.

ENDS