



# Income-Qualified Internet Programs

FACT SHEET

October 2025

Families in Illinois may be eligible for affordable internet programs offered by AT&T, Xfinity, Spectrum, Astound (formerly 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.

## AT&T's Access program

AT&T's Access program offers a \$30 per month unlimited data plan, based on the maximum speed available at your address, up to 100 Megabits per second (Mbps). (This plan is not available to AT&T Fiber or AT&T Internet Air customers. They could save \$20 per month on fiber speeds 300Mbps-1GIG.)

For all access plans, there is no annual contract or deposit required, and a Wi-Fi gateway/modem and installation are included at no charge.

**Note:** Access from AT&T is available to eligible AT&T Internet and AT&T Fiber customers who participate in qualifying assistance programs or with a household income below 200% of federal poverty guidelines.

## Qualifications

For households to qualify, they must be located in an area served by AT&T and cannot have outstanding debt with the company. At least one resident of the home must be enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the National School Lunch Program, or the household must have a total income below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines (consult the chart).

## Spectrum Internet Assist

Spectrum Internet Assist provides eligible applicants (new customers only) with lower-cost internet. The company says price varies by location. A past CUB review found prices ranging up to \$25 per month. Call Spectrum to confirm pricing. The program includes:

- High-speed internet at 50 Mbps (wireless speeds may vary by location).
- A free internet modem and Security Suite.

## How Do I Apply?

### AT&T Access:

[www.att.com/access](http://www.att.com/access) or call 1-855-220-5211

### Astound Internet First:

[www.internetfirst.com](http://www.internetfirst.com) or call 1-833-730-0644

### Spectrum Internet Assist:

[www.SpectrumInternetAssist.com](http://www.SpectrumInternetAssist.com) or call 1-844-525-1574

### Xfinity Internet Essentials:

[www.internetessentials.com/](http://www.internetessentials.com/) or call 1-855-846-8376

### Lifeline:

[www.lifelinesupport.org/](http://www.lifelinesupport.org/) or call 1-800-234-9473

### Chicago Connected:

[www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/chicago-connected/](http://www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/chicago-connected/)

Number of People in Household	Maximum Income
1	\$31,300
2	\$42,300
3	\$53,300
4	\$64,300
5	\$75,300
6	\$86,300
7	\$97,300
8	\$108,300
For each additional person, add:	\$11,000

- No data caps or contracts.
- Optional speed increase up to 100 Mbps with in-home WiFi service and router for an extra \$5 per month and no activation fee.

### Qualifications

The household must be in an area served by Spectrum. This program is for new customers (no Spectrum services within past 30 days). One member of the household must be a recipient of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP or Supplemental Security Income (for ages 65 and older only). You must apply for this program every year and some addresses are preapproved.

### Xfinity's Internet Essentials

The is program provides eligible households:

- Internet service at a speed of up to 75 Mbps for \$14.95 a month or up to 100 Mbps for \$29.95 a month.
- Free WiFi hotspots at no additional cost.
- Option to purchase a low-cost computer.
- Free, online Internet literacy training.

### Qualifications

You must live where Xfinity Internet service is available, and qualify for programs such as the National School Lunch Program, housing assistance, Medicaid or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). ([See a full list here.](#)) Also, participants must not have had Xfinity Internet within the last 90 days (unless you were enrolled in the federal Affordability Connectivity Program with Xfinity), and you must not have outstanding debt to Comcast that is less than one year old.

### Astound's (formerly RCN) Internet First

For \$19.95 a month this program offers eligible homes:

- Internet service at a speed up to 150 Mbps.
- Free service for the first three months.
- No contracts and no credit check.
- No installation fees.

**Note:** You must reapply annually, and your monthly rate is subject to a yearly increase of up to \$10 per month.

### Qualifications

To qualify, consumers must live in an area serviced by Astound and have not subscribed to Astound services within a 60-day period immediately prior to applying for the program. One member of your household must also participate in an assistance

program like the National School Lunch Program, housing assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, SSI or one of [these programs](#). Active military, veterans, seniors 62 or older, and students under a federal assisted aid program may also qualify.

### 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 your income is 135% or less than the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#), or if you, someone in your household or your dependent participates in one of [these programs](#): Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA), Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit.

### 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 June 30, 2025. 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 Astound 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 an internet service provider. Parents of CPS students can check their eligibility [through this online portal](#). You will need your child's student ID number.