

Free internet and fee waivers during the new coronavirus pandemic

Update 3/17/20: In light of the COVID-19 (commonly known as “coronavirus”) pandemic and subsequent social distancing, some internet companies are offering free home internet for low-income folks. These offers won’t necessarily stick around for more than a couple months, but they’re here to help those who can’t otherwise afford home internet.

Xfinity (Comcast) is offering new customers their Internet Essentials plan for free for the next two months.

Spectrum is offering households with students (K–12 and college) free broadband internet for 60 days with any plan up to 100 Mbps. For this free service, call **1-844-488-8395** to sign up.

Optimum is also offering K–12 and college students free internet for 60 days. This offer is for new customers only. Call **866-200-9522** to set up service.

Suddenlink is also offering free internet for students (K–12 and college) for 60 days. You must also be a new customer to get in on this deal. Call **888-633-0030** to sign up today.

Cox is offering its Starter package (50 Mbps for \$19.99 per month) with no annual contract. For low-income folks who qualify, Cox is offering its Connect2Compete program free for one month.

Meanwhile, almost all nationwide internet companies (including the providers above, AT&T, and Verizon) won’t charge any additional fees (late fees, data overages, etc.) for the next 60 days.

Your income bracket doesn’t have to limit your internet access. If your home needs a boost to cross the digital divide, take advantage of low-income internet options in your area.

Low-income internet for seniors, students, and families

Affordable internet services are available through two primary options:

- First, there are a variety of internet provider initiatives with discounted monthly rates that low-income families can usually access if their kids qualify for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Find out how to apply through an Internet Service Provider.
- The second option is a government assistance program called Lifeline, which offers \$9.25 per month off either internet or phone services to low-income households. Contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to enroll in Lifeline through it.

Internet provider free and low-income initiatives vs. Lifeline assistance