

Affordable Connectivity Program:

Tribal lands residents can get free internet service with enhanced benefit



The federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) helps low- and moderate-income households get and stay connected by providing a monthly benefit that reduces the out-of-pocket cost of internet service. Eligible residents of qualifying Tribal lands can receive an even bigger monthly benefit, making it possible to get high-speed internet service at no charge.

ACP basics

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that discounts monthly internet service for eligible households.

The program provides a monthly benefit of up to \$75 for residents of Tribal lands (up to \$30 for non-Tribal lands residents). The money is paid directly by the program to the service provider, resulting in a lower internet service bill for you.

Eligible households (both on and off Tribal lands) also can receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer or tablet (not a cell or smartphone) from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10

but less than \$50 toward the purchase price. You can do an online search for companies that offer ACP service at <https://cnm.universalservice.org>. If you also want to take advantage of the device discount, check the “Discounted Device” box before clicking “Search.”

The cost, if any, of needed equipment, such as a modem and/or router, depends on the service provider and plan, though many plans include a modem, and sometimes a router, at no charge. Likewise, the cost of a computer or tablet purchased through the program depends on the device and the seller.

Households qualify for the ACP based on either their income or their participation in at least one of the many qualifying government

assistance programs (<https://acpbenefit.org/do-i-qualify/>).

Only one monthly service discount and one device discount is allowed per household, though the program recognizes that more than one household may live at the same address (<https://acpbenefit.org/do-i-qualify/what-is-a-household/>).

Tribal lands ACP

The program provides an enhanced monthly benefit of up to \$75 for residents of Tribal lands—significantly more than the \$30 provided to non-Tribal lands households.

Anyone living on eligible Tribal lands can receive the enhanced Tribal benefit—you do not need to be a Tribe member. If you're not sure if your address is on Tribal lands, you can ask your internet service provider, or learn more about what locations qualify by visiting the Enhanced Tribal Benefit webpage (<https://acpbenefit.org/do-i-qualify/enhanced-tribal-benefit/>).

Your household can receive the enhanced benefit if it is located on qualifying Tribal lands, **and**

1. Your household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (<https://acpbenefit.org/do-i-qualify/>), **or**

2. Any member of your household:

■ Participates in the Lifeline program (<https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>) (see next section); **or**

■ Participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Medicaid; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Supplemental Security Income; Federal Public Housing Assistance; Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit; or Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, including at U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Community Eligibility Provision schools; **or**

■ Received a federal Pell Grant in the current award year; **or**

■ Participates in one of several Tribal assistance programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance; Head Start (only households meeting



the income qualifying standard); Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF); or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations; **or**

■ Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income broadband internet service program.

The ACP and Lifeline

The federal Lifeline program provides a discount of up to \$34.25 for residents of Tribal lands (up to \$9.25 for non-Tribal lands households) on phone, internet or bundled services for eligible low-income households in every state. The program also provides up to \$100 toward first-time service connection charges—available only to residents of Tribal lands.

You can get the Lifeline Tribal benefit if you live on Tribal lands and your income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or if you (or someone in your household) participate in one of the qualifying federal or tribal assistance programs (<https://www.lifelinesupport.org/do-i-qualify/>). Follow the instructions at <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/> to apply for Lifeline.

If you qualify for both programs (and Lifeline enrollees automatically qualify for the ACP), you can apply your ACP benefit and your Life-

line benefit to the same or separate services. Or, you can choose to use your Lifeline benefit with one company and the ACP benefit with a different company—for example, a mobile phone with your Lifeline discount and home internet with the Affordable Connectivity Program discount.

How to apply

While Lifeline enrollees automatically qualify for the ACP, you must opt in before you can receive your monthly ACP benefit. Talk to your Lifeline service provider about ACP-eligible services it may offer. Or, if you don't already have an internet service provider, or if it does not participate in the ACP, contact another internet company participating in the program (<https://acpbenefit.org/companies-near-me/>).

If you receive service through an internet company's low-cost (low-income) broadband program, you may not need to apply again for the ACP benefit. Talk to your provider to find out what steps, if any, you need to take to get your benefit and apply it to the internet service plan of your choice.

Otherwise, there are three ways to apply for the ACP: online (<https://getinternet.gov/apply?awsI=button-from-enhanced-tribal-benefit&id=acp&ln=RW5nbGlzaA%3D%3D>), by mail (<https://acpbenefit.org/wp-content/uploads/ACP-Application-Form-English.pdf>), or through a participating internet service provider (<https://acpbenefit.org/companies-near-me/>).

Learn more at the ACP "How to Apply" webpage (<https://acpbenefit.org/how-to-apply/>).

Be sure to indicate on your application that you live on Tribal lands. Visit the "Show You Qualify" webpage (<https://acpbenefit.org/how-to-apply/show-you-qualify/>) to find out which types of documentation are accepted to prove your identity and eligibility.

Once you're approved, tell the internet service provider you've chosen that you want the discount.

If you qualify for the ACP but your household is not on qualifying Tribal lands, you can still receive the non-Tribal discount of up to \$30 per month on internet service and the one-time \$100 device discount.

For more information or assistance:

■ **Enhanced Tribal Benefit webpage** (<https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/do-i-qualify/enhanced-tribal-benefit/>)

■ **Affordable Connectivity Program homepage** (<https://acpbenefit.org/>)

■ **ACP FAQ page** (<https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program-consumer-faq>)

■ **ACP Support Center** (877-384-2575)

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www.consumer-action.org

Through education and advocacy, Consumer Action fights for strong consumer rights and policies that promote fairness and financial prosperity for underrepresented consumers nationwide.

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Rev. 1/24

About this guide

This guide was created by Consumer Action with funding from AT&T, and updated with funding from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).