

U.S. Rep. Kind: Highlights New Program Aimed at Making Broadband Services More Affordable for Wisconsin Families, Open for Enrollment Starting Today

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Washington, DC - Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** announced that the Emergency Broadband Benefit, a new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program, is now open for enrollment. The temporary benefit will help to lower the cost of broadband service for eligible households during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$3.2 billion Emergency Broadband Benefit program provides a discount of up to a \$50 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.

“Enrollment is now open for the Emergency Broadband Benefit, a temporary program which provides discounts for broadband services and devices to Wisconsin families struggling to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “The internet is a necessity, and now more than ever, having a broadband connection is essential for families to gain access to jobs, health care services, virtual classrooms, and more. I encourage all interested Wisconsinites to check if they qualify for this vital program and apply.”

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 135% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid or the FCC's [Lifeline](#) program;
- 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, in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income through job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

Emergency Broadband Benefit enrollment opens today, May 12, 2021. Eligible households can enroll through a [participating broadband provider](#) or directly with the [Universal Service Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#) using an online or mail-in application. Additional information about the Emergency Broadband Benefit is available at www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit, or by calling 833-511-0311 between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. any day of the week.

Rep. Kind has been a member of the House Rural Broadband Task Force since it was created in 2019, and has continuously supported legislation to expand broadband access for all Wisconsinites.