The FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) is a $7.17 billion program that will help eligible schools and libraries provide the tools and services their communities need for remote learning during the COVID-19 emergency period. The Emergency Connectivity Fund will help provide relief to millions of students, school staff, and library patrons and will help close the Homework Gap for students who currently lack necessary Internet access or the devices they need to connect to classrooms.

Here are some important things to know about the Emergency Connectivity Fund:

What Is the Emergency Connectivity Fund?

- The Emergency Connectivity Fund is a $7.17 billion program to help schools and libraries support remote learning. The program will provide funding to schools and libraries for the reasonable costs of eligible equipment and services for off campus use by students, teachers, and library patrons who lack connected devices such as WiFi hotspots, laptop or tablet computers and/or lack broadband access during the pandemic.
- The Emergency Connectivity Fund was created by the American Rescue Plan Act.

Who Is Eligible to Receive Funds Through Emergency Connectivity Fund Program?

- Schools, libraries, and consortia of eligible schools and libraries (e.g., regional or statewide groups of schools or libraries that apply together) that are eligible for support under the FCC's E-Rate program, are eligible to request and receive support through the Emergency Connectivity Fund program. Tens of thousands of schools and libraries across the country receive support for their on-campus broadband connectivity needs through the E-Rate program.
- Tribal libraries eligible for support under the Library Services and Technology Act are also eligible for support under the program.
- Schools and libraries eligible for program support do not need to be current E-Rate participants. Eligible entities that have not applied for E-Rate support should be prepared to demonstrate eligibility as a school or library under the program rules during USAC's application review.

What Equipment and Services Are Covered by the Emergency Connectivity Fund?

- The following types of equipment purchased for off-campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons who would otherwise lack sufficient connectivity to engage in remote learning are eligible for support:
    - Laptop and tablet computers
    - Wi-Fi hotspots
    - Modems (including air cards)
    - Routers
    - Devices that combine a modem and router.

- Schools and libraries can also receive funding for commercially available broadband Internet access service that provides a fixed or mobile broadband connection for off-campus use by students, school staff, or library patrons who would otherwise lack access to connectivity sufficient to engage in remote learning.

In limited circumstances where a school or library can demonstrate that there are no available service options sufficient to support remote learning for its students, school staff, or library patrons, the ECF Program may support the construction of new networks and the equipment needed to receive datacasting services.

What Are the Reasonable Support Amounts for Eligible Equipment and Services?

- The program will reimburse eligible schools and libraries a maximum of $400 for each laptop or tablet, and a maximum of $250 for Wi-Fi hotpots.
  - Schools and libraries may buy more expensive laptops, tablets, or Wi-Fi-hotspots, but they can only be reimbursed up to $400/$250.
- For other eligible equipment and services, USAC will review costs to ensure they are reasonable.

Can a Student Receive Emergency Connectivity Fund Support and Receive Emergency Broadband Benefit Support at the Same Time?

- No, the ECF will not reimburse for equipment and/or services that are paid for by another federal pandemic relief program.
  - But a student could receive broadband access service through the Emergency Broadband Benefit and a connected device through the Emergency Connectivity Fund.

How Can Schools or Libraries Apply?

- The ECF application filing window will open on June 29, 2021 and close on August 13, 2021. During the application filing window, eligible schools, libraries, and consortia of eligible schools and libraries, can submit requests for funding to purchase eligible equipment and services between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.
- The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is the administrator of the ECF Program and will review applications.
- Interested schools and libraries can find more information and apply at www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org.

How Can You Stay Informed?

- Sign up to stay informed about the Emergency Connectivity Fund and receive invitations for future training sessions.