



COVID-19 RESPONSE

# EMERGENCY BROADBAND AND INTERNET RESOURCES

Keep connected to classrooms with help from internet providers.

During the current global health crisis, it is critical for all Oklahomans to have access to adequate and affordable internet services. Schools throughout the state will transition to online course work to complete the academic year. Health care facilities will rely heavily on their telehealth programs to help ease the burden of patient care. An unprecedented percentage of Oklahoma citizens in the workforce will depend on the ability to telework for the foreseeable future.

In order to address these issues, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai has requested telecommunications and internet service providers throughout the country sign the **Keep Americans Connected Pledge**. By signing this pledge, providers agree to:

- a) not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;
- b) waive any late fees incurred as a result of the coronavirus pandemic; and
- c) open Wi-Fi hotspots to any American in need. To learn more about the pledge and the companies that have signed the pledge, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/keep-americans-connected>.

Oklahoma State Broadband Coordinator Sonja Wall is working directly with Oklahoma Broadband and Internet Service Providers to address needs throughout the state. Additional resources have been compiled to aid residents and businesses in Oklahoma. The resources are listed below and will be updated as more details become

available. Those in need of broadband and internet service assistance can reach Sonja at:

Sonja Wall  
Director of OneNet and OCAN Services  
Oklahoma State Broadband Coordinator  
Office: 405.225.9345  
Email: [swall@osrhe.edu](mailto:swall@osrhe.edu)  
[swall@onenet.net](mailto:swall@onenet.net)

**EDUCATION RESOURCES**

- <https://www.everyoneon.org/lowcost-offers>
- <https://www.everyoneon.org/>
- <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/free-low-cost-internet-plans/>

## CONTACT

- ▶ **Brian Whitacre**  
Professor and Extension Economist  
[brian.whitacre@okstate.edu](mailto:brian.whitacre@okstate.edu)  
405-744-9825
- ▶ **Sonja Wall**  
Director of OneNet and OCAN Services  
[swall@osrhe.edu](mailto:swall@osrhe.edu)  
405-225-9345

## COX

Program: **Connect2Compete**

Details:

- \$9.95 per month (plus taxes)
- 10 Mbps
- No term commitment
- No deposit
- No installation fee
- In-home Wi-Fi modem included

To find out if Cox is in your area, go to:

<https://www.everyoneon.org/find-offers>

To Qualify:

- COVID-19 Response: New customers will receive their first month of service free. Offer available through 5/12/20. Remote customer service support at no charge between now and 5/12/20.
- At least one student in grades K-12 lives in the applying household.
- At least one person in applying household must participate in one of these government assistance programs: the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), SNAP, TANF or public housing.
- Applicant must have not subscribed to Cox High Speed internet service in the last 90 days, have outstanding Cox bills or unreturned equipment.

## ATT

Program: **Access**

Details:

- Up to \$10 per month (plus taxes)
- 10 Mbps
- No term commitment
- No deposit
- No installation fee
- In-home Wi-Fi modem included

To find out if Access from AT&T is in your area, go to:

<https://www.everyoneon.org/find-offers>.

To Qualify:

- **COVID-19 Response: No termination regardless of ability to pay, waive late payment fees due to inability to pay, and keep public Wi-Fi hotspots open for those who need them.**
- Offering two months of free service to new Access customers who order by April 30, 2020. \$5 per month or \$10 per month thereafter, depending on your speed.
- Eligibility based on income and to households participating in National School Lunch Program/Head Start, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps) or that receive Supplemental Security Income (CA residents only).
- Applicant must be without outstanding debt for AT&T fixed internet service within the last six months or outstanding debt incurred under this program.

AT&T is giving free wireless data to school districts to provide to students as they adjust to learning from home. Through May 22, 2020 qualified schools (K-12, colleges and universities) nationwide activating new lines for school-issued tablets, 4GLTE-enabled laptops and hotspot devices will get unlimited wireless data service for free for 60 days to offer their students.

Additional offerings include:

- Video Conferencing Help: New customers in K-12 education, as well as healthcare and non-profit social services, can get AT&T Office@Hand Premium free for up to 60 days. This provides fully integrated phone, fax, messaging capabilities and HD video conferencing for up to 100 users.
- Home Internet: Expanded low-cost option for home internet service, the Access from AT&T program to households participating in the National School Lunch Program and Head Start are eligible. Also offering new Access from AT&T customers two months of free service.
- Distance Learning: AT&T is launching a \$10 million Distance Learning and Family Connections Fund. The fund launched with a \$1M contribution to Khan Academy to help them improve and expand online learning resources to meet the growing demand from parents, teachers and students.
- AT&T is providing 60 days of free access and unlimited usage of Caribu, a video-calling application that allows family members to read, draw and play games with one another while at different locations.
- For more information on our education offers, visit: <https://about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html#communities>.

## T-Mobile

The T-Mobile **ConnectHome Plan** is donating tablets and hotspots while supplies last, to public housing authorities, schools, libraries and nonprofits to help bridge the digital gap for K-12 students. Participating organizations must purchase internet plans.

- Two-year program. Plans must remain active for two years;
- Plans starting at just \$10 per month for 2GB of high-speed data on 4GLTE network;
- No cost filtering solution with four access levels to protect your students;
- No overage fees;
- On-site and no-cost implementation services from experienced wireless professionals;
- On-site and no-cost sales engineering support; and
- No-cost LTE signal boosters within the home for government liable users, if needed.

## **ADDITIONAL OKLAHOMA RESOURCES**

### **Grand Telephone**

Currently in the process of setting up public Wi-Fi hotspots in areas with large parking areas for use from vehicles.

### **Cross/MBO**

Customers who were transitioned into telework roles can expand their bandwidth capabilities at no additional charge. Customers simply need to provide the telework directive from their employer. Processes have been initiated to simplify service activations and allow consumers to get connected using online resources.

### **Panhandle Telephone**

Waives activation fees for installation of Broadband services and a promotional package for customers affected by the COVID-19 outbreak (loss of job, online school requirements, etc.) Package includes 30/5 mbps for \$3 for six months. Whole home Wi-Fi is free for six months.

Providing increased data limits on wireless plans and will offer credit on applicable overage charges. Waives all late fees and will not disconnect customers for non-payment.

### **Totah**

Totah has two locations of Wi-Fi access in Oklahoma for the Caney Valley School System and area residents of Ochelata. Caney Valley has Wi-Fi access at the football field and Ochelata has access at the baseball facility.

### **Hilliary Communications**

Working closely with local mayors and school superintendents to set up community Wi-Fi locations in towns and communities they serve. Eight counties in Oklahoma served and 57 locations identified that are being set up as community Wi-Fi spots. These locations will provide free internet daily between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Additional locations will be added if the need arises. In addition to the free Wi-Fi hotspots, customers also can upgrade their current speed at no charge until the pandemic passes.

Hilliary will publish the Wi-Fi location list on their website and Facebook pages. The local schools and towns will also publish locations on their websites and send notices to residents and students by automated calls or texts about available communications systems.

### **Suddenlink**

For households with K-12 and/or college students who may be displaced due to school closures and who do not currently have home internet access, Suddenlink is offering Altice Advantage Internet free for 60 days to any new customer household within their operating footprint.

After the first two free months expire, a customer may either cancel the service at no charge (which they can do at any time) or keep it as a regular paying Altice Advantage Internet customer for only \$14.99 per month.

Residents interested in internet connectivity due to school schedule disruptions may contact their customer service department at (888) 633-0030.

### **Sparklight**

A 15 Mbps internet plan for \$10 per month is available for the next 60 days to help low-income families and those most impacted from coronavirus challenges, such as seniors and college students. No documentation is required to sign up for this plan.

Open free Wi-Fi hotspots in Sparklight local office parking lots across its footprint for public use during the crisis to keep individuals and communities connected. The company will work to open additional Wi-Fi hotspots in other public areas in the coming days and weeks.

Beginning March 13, 2020, Sparklight made unlimited data available on all internet services for 30 days and committed to waiving late fees and deferring payments for 60 days for customers experiencing financial strain as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The company also stands ready to support critical infrastructure with speed upgrades and other requests to ensure ongoing and reliable service for local educators and health care professionals, including customers under federal rural healthcare and E-rate programs.

## **PUBLIC BROADBAND RESOURCES**

The [Federal Communications Commission](#) also has waived the “gift rules” for Rural Health Care and E-rate recipients (often schools/libraries/hospitals) through Sept. 30, 2020. This means public schools and libraries can allow outside users to access the wireless networks on their premises; it also means schools are allowed to provide mobile hotspots and other wireless broadband-enabled devices to students without broadband access at home. Individuals should get in touch with their local school or library personnel to see which sites are offering free wireless service.

## **KEEP AMERICANS CONNECTED**

The Keep Americans Connected Pledge issued by the FCC states the following:

Providers agree to:

- a) not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;

- b) waive any late fees incurred as a result of the coronavirus pandemic; and
- c) open Wi-Fi hotspots to any American in need.

The Oklahoma companies that have signed this pledge are listed below.

AtLink Services

ATT&T

Carnegie Telephone

Central Oklahoma Telephone Company

Cherokee Telephone

Cimarron Telephone

Consolidated Communications

Cox Communications

Cross Telephone

Dobson Technologies

Fidelity Communications

Grand Telephone

Hilliary Communications

Chickasaw Telephone Company

MBO Networks

OEC Fiber

Oklahoma Western Telephone Company

OklaTel

Panhandle Telephone Company

Pine Telephone

Pioneer Telephone Cooperative

Pottawatomie Telephone Company

RecTec/Bolt Fiber

Rise Broadband

Statewide Communications

Suddenlink

TDS

Terral Telephone

Total

Verizon

Vyve

Windstream