

Programs Addressing Cost Barriers to Internet Access and Devices:

The importance of internet to everyday life has been identified by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, which recognizes internet access as a basic service as well as the United Nations, which acknowledges internet as a human right.^{4,11} However, many do not have access to affordable, high-quality internet.

Several programs exist to help address cost barriers to digital technology (devices or Internet access). This resource describes some of these programs. Program eligibility criteria have been included in this document when available. Programs and eligibility are subject to change.

Internet Connectivity:

Connecting Families is a Government of Canada initiative that connects low-income families with lower-cost internet services of \$10/month.

To be eligible, a person must be receiving the maximum Canada Child Benefit. People who receive the maximum Canada Child benefit and who are selected for the Connecting Families program will have received a letter from the Government of Canada with a code that allows them to register.²

<https://www.connecting-families.ca/welcome>



Temiskaming Shores Public Library Board Mobile Wi-Fi Hotspot Lending Program:

The Mobile Wi-Fi hotspot lending program has 10 Mi-Fi devices available for loan to library card holders 18 years and older. These devices allow for internet access anywhere there is a cellular data network and can be borrowed for three weeks at a time.³

The data for this program is supplied by the library, and the program is free

For more information, call 705-647-4215.

This program is supported by the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund and the Temiskaming Foundation.



Device Access Programs:

Telus Mobility for Good is a program that connects people with free or subsidized smartphones, connectivity plans, and digital literacy and safety workshops.⁹



The following people may be eligible for this program:

- Indigenous women at risk of violence
- Older adults
- Youth leaving foster care

To apply for the Mobility for Good program, please use the following links:

Indigenous Women: As per the Telus website on this topic, “We plan to expand the program’s reach and impact across Canada. If you are an Indigenous-led organization supporting at risk Indigenous women and wish to partner with us, contact us at ConnectingforGood@telus.com.”⁹

Older Adults: ¹⁰ https://www.telus.com/en/social-impact/connecting-canada/seniors/application?INTCMP=tcom_social_mobilityforgood_cta_to_senior_application

Youth: ⁸ https://www.telus.com/en/social-impact/connecting-canada/youth/application?INTCMP=tcom_social_mobilityforgood_cta_to_youth_application#M4G

reBOOT Canada:

reBOOT Canada runs the reSTART program, which makes fixed up computers with licensed software available to people at a discount. For this program, there is a minimum \$172.57 fee to the user.⁶



To be eligible for this program, you must be currently registered with one of:

- Ontario Works
- Ontario Disability Support
- Old Age Security
- OSAP
- Veteran’s Assistance

OR

- You are a social services case worker acting on a client’s behalf

To apply for this program, please see the following link:

<https://www.rebootcanada.ca/programs/restart/>

RCTechOUTREACH:

The RCTechOUTREACH program provides ready to use, used desktop and laptop computers to people and families who qualify.⁷



To qualify for this program, you must meet both of the following:

- Must be a resident of Ontario
- Must meet current Low-Income Cut-off (LICO) standards ⁵
 - o For more information on LICO standards, please see <https://www.settler.ca/english/lico-2021-canada>

Proof of income must be presented prior to computer pick-up. Acceptable types of proof of income include proof of financial assistance from:

- Ontario Works (OW)
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Employment Insurance in the form of a benefit statement
- Current OSAP statement of funding
- Second Career agreement
- Refugee Payment from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRC)

To learn more about this program and apply for a supportive device, please see the following link: <http://www.rcto.ca/programs-rctech-outreach.asp>

Note: The following program is currently on hold but is still accepting applications.

Electronic Recycling Association:

The Electronic Recycling Association can supply budget laptops (at a cost of \$80 per unit) to students or low-income individuals. Additionally, if you are part of a family that has proof of low income, you can apply to the ERA to supply your family with up to 2 free laptops to connect your family. ¹



The Electronic Recycling Association accepts applications from the following organizations on behalf of individuals in need:

- Not-for-Profit Organizations
- Charitable Organization (Non-Profit # Required)
- Care Facilities (i.e., hospitals, seniors' homes)
- Educational Institutions

If you are interested in applying for a budget laptop or a free laptop, please see the following link: <https://www.electronicrecyclingassociation.ca/lending-a-lifeline-by-lending-laptops/>