GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES 100,000 FAMILIES HAVE JOINED FEDERAL BROADBAND AFFORDABILITY PROGRAM

Multi-Agency Effort to Enroll Eligible Low-Income Families a Major Success

Newly Participating New York Families Will Receive Nearly $36 Million in Federal Subsidies

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced more than 100,000 additional qualifying families have enrolled in the federal government’s Affordable Connectivity Program since New York launched a multi-agency broadband outreach initiative to spur enrollment. The federal program provides discounts of up to $30 a month toward internet service for eligible low-income families.

"The past two years have reminded us how crucial reliable and affordable broadband is, so we can stay connected to family, work, school and healthcare services," Governor Hochul said. "I am proud of the collaboration of our state agencies and our partnership with the federal government to bring broadband across the state, and am committed to continuing these efforts to connect all New Yorkers."

As a direct result of a multi-agency, multi-pronged outreach effort led by the New York State Department of Public Service (DPS), the state continues to increase the number of eligible enrollees daily. With over 715,000 households receiving the monthly subsidy as of March 14, 2022, New York leads among the four largest states with nearly 40 percent enrollment. The campaign, which launched in early January, started with less than 30 percent of eligible households enrolled. The eligible families that have just joined will receive approximately $36 million, bringing the total annual subsidies to more than $250 million.

DPS CEO Rory M. Christian said, "Outreach and consumer advocacy is a priority for the state, and I am pleased with the success of this outreach initiative that will help ensure that all income-eligible New Yorkers will have access to high-speed internet at a reasonable price."

DPS, in coordination with other public-facing state agencies and internet service providers, leads the statewide, all-of-government awareness and marketing campaign
under the Governor's ConnectALL initiative to increase enrollment among eligible New Yorkers.

New York State agencies involved in the broadband outreach initiative and their efforts include:

- **The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance** is directing social services agencies to share outreach materials with clients and contracted service providers, and is generating auto broadband subsidy autoreplies on all emails and publishing outreach on all social media outlets.
- **Housing and Community Renewal** is reaching out to nonprofit housing partners and property owners, and promoting on social media.
- **Office of Children and Family Services** is promoting the broadband subsidy through local departments of social services, childcare licensors, childcare providers, foster care, and voluntary agencies, and promoting on social media.
- **Department of Labor** is promoting the subsidy through its statewide outreach channels, property owners in its portfolio to provide program materials for both posting in common areas and distributing to their residents, a PSA video, and promoting on social media.
- **The Department of Motor Vehicles** is sending emails and continuing a social media advertising campaign, broadcasting a PSA video on TV monitors in state-operated DMV offices in NYC, Long Island, and the counties of Albany, Westchester, Rockland, and Onondaga, as well as mailing approximately five million informational inserts throughout the year when customers receive their driver license.
- **Empire State Development** is sharing information through the Regional Economic Development Councils and leveraging long-term partnerships with internet service providers to increase awareness and enrollment.

**Empire State Development Acting Commissioner and President and CEO-designate Hope Knight** said, "The COVID-19 pandemic has proven that high-speed internet connectivity no longer a luxury; it is a necessity. Broadband is essential for New Yorkers go to school, work remotely, find a job, start a business, access healthcare, and connect with loved ones. Improving affordability is a vital component of Governor Hochul's ConnectALL initiative, ensuring that we all have affordable and accessible broadband and laying the groundwork for New York to continue leading the digital economy."

In addition, internet service providers in New York, including Spectrum, Altice and Verizon, have continued their commitment to expanding the adoption of affordable internet service throughout the state to help close the digital divide and create a more equitable and inclusive digital world.

Governor Hochul's ConnectALL initiative, announced in January as part of her State of the State address, is a transformational $1 billion investment in New York's communities and digital infrastructure. It not only aims to ensure accessible and reliable high-speed,
broadband for all New Yorkers, but also that New York will lead the 21st-century connected economy. This effort involves government and community outreach and works with the State's largest broadband providers to reach eligible New Yorkers.

For too long, broadband has been out of reach for many New Yorkers because it is not affordable. In addition to reducing costs for consumers through capital investments, Governor Hochul's pioneering ConnectALL initiative aims to ensure that every eligible New Yorker participates in the Affordable Connectivity Program and is equipped with the information and support needed to enroll.

Broadband costs New Yorkers more than $60 a month on average. In addition to the $30 a month assistance, financially eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to $100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if the consumer contributes more than $10 and less than $50 toward the purchase price.

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