

Media Contact:

Paloma Perez

Paloma.Perez@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**FCC ANNOUNCES EMERGENCY CONNECTIVITY FUND
APPLICATION WINDOW WILL OPEN ON JUNE 29**

***Schools and Libraries Will Have 45 Days to Apply for Support to Aid Students Who
Fall into the Homework Gap***

WASHINGTON, June 15, 2021—Today, FCC Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel announced schools and libraries can begin to file applications on June 29 for the newly established \$7.17 billion Emergency Connectivity Fund. Schools and libraries can apply for financial support to purchase laptops and tablets, Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers, and broadband connections for off-campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons. During this 45-day application filing window, which will run from June 29 to August 13, eligible schools and libraries can submit requests for funding to purchase eligible equipment and services for the 2021-22 school year.

“For too long, the Homework Gap has been a troubling and persistent digital equity problem in the United States,” said Rosenworcel. “With classes themselves moving online and the pandemic requiring us to stay home, we went from having millions of children who couldn’t do online homework assignments to having millions of children who couldn’t do schoolwork at all. In other words, the Homework Gap became a full-fledged learning and education gap.”

“It’s important that we address this issue now, and the Emergency Connectivity Fund gives us the opportunity to do that. As we exit this pandemic, we know that education has been changed. Like so much else in our lives, it has been digitized. That’s why I’m proud that starting in two weeks, schools and libraries across the country will have a terrific opportunity to get broadband service and devices into the hands of students, staff, and library patrons who lack them to connect these learners at home,” said Rosenworcel.

The American Rescue Plan of 2021 established the Emergency Connectivity Fund. The Universal Service Administrative Company will serve as the program’s administrator with FCC oversight. The Fund leverages the processes and structures used in the E-Rate program for the benefit of schools and libraries already familiar with the E-Rate program. You can find more information about the program at www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org or www.fcc.gov/emergency-connectivity-fund and instructions on how to apply at www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org/application-process.

Recent estimates suggest there may be as many as 17 million children struggling without the broadband access they need for remote learning. Since her early tenure at the Commission, the Acting Chairwoman has made closing the Homework Gap a priority.

###

Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / Twitter: @FCC / www.fcc.gov

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).