



PRESS RELEASE

Comcast
One Comcast Center
Philadelphia, PA 19103
www.comcastcorporation.com

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development –
Julián Castro, Secretary
Office of Public Affairs,
Washington, DC 20410

COMCAST AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATE TO CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR UP TO 2 MILLION HUD-ASSISTED HOUSEHOLDS IN MAJOR INTERNET ESSENTIALS PROGRAM EXPANSION

Internet Essentials to Reach More Than 40 Percent of All HUD-Assisted Households Nationwide

PHILADELPHIA (July 15, 2016) — Today, Comcast and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) [ConnectHome](#) initiative took an historic step to close the digital divide in America. Now, public housing and HUD-assisted residents living in Comcast's service area are eligible to apply for [Internet Essentials](#), the company's high-speed internet adoption program for low-income families. Including homes covered by Comcast's pilot public housing expansion announced in March, an estimated total of up to 2 million HUD-assisted homes, including Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Multifamily programs, will now have access to low-cost internet service.

"ConnectHome is opening doors of opportunity for our next generation of Americans," said HUD Secretary, Julián Castro. "Today's announcement has the potential to transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of kids across the nation by giving them the tools to reach their full potential. We're grateful to Comcast for joining the ConnectHome initiative, which has extended its reach to more than 1.5 million children in one short year."

"This announcement reaffirms Comcast's determination to make a meaningful impact to close the digital divide for low-income families in this country," said David L. Cohen, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer of Comcast. "This is the single largest expansion of the Internet Essentials program in its history, and we're thrilled to be working with HUD to help connect even more families, including seniors, veterans, and adults without children, to the transformative power of having internet service at home."

The top ten states and cities with the largest numbers of HUD-assisted households in Comcast’s service area include*:

Top 10 States		Top 10 Cities	
California	191,000	Chicago, IL	91,000
Illinois	175,000	Philadelphia, PA	35,000
Massachusetts	167,000	Miami, FL	31,000
Pennsylvania	164,000	Baltimore, MD	31,000
Florida	136,000	Houston, TX	31,000
Michigan	110,000	Washington, DC	30,000
New Jersey	105,000	Detroit, MI	25,000
Maryland	88,000	Atlanta, GA	24,000
Georgia	84,000	San Francisco, CA	22,000
Tennessee	80,000	Pittsburgh, PA	20,000

**These numbers are for all HUD-assisted homes of which approximately 35 percent have school-aged children and are, therefore, already eligible to apply for Internet Essentials. These numbers also include households covered by Comcast’s public housing pilot announced in March.*

Between 2009 and 2014, broadband service providers spent over \$422 billion on capital investments, and three in four American households now use broadband at home. Despite this significant progress, one in four American households still don’t access the internet at home, particularly lower-income families with children. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, less than 43 percent of individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent lack home internet access, but under this opportunity adults and young learners can get connected from the comfort of their own homes and take advantage of resources to get a GED credential, apply for and complete college, and acquire the necessary digital literacy skills to thrive in a highly competitive, global workforce.

ConnectHome strives to ensure students can access the same level of high-speed Internet at home that they have in their classrooms. Today’s announcement furthers this vision, benefiting students of all ages.

This is the ninth time in five years Comcast has expanded eligibility for Internet Essentials. The policy change marks the first time, nationally, households without children eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program are officially able to apply for Internet Essentials. In 2011, the program was first offered to families with children eligible to receive a free school lunch from the National School Lunch Program. It was expanded, in 2012, to children eligible for the reduced price school lunch program. In 2013, Comcast expanded eligibility to include families with children in parochial, private, charter, and cyber schools, as well as students who are home schooled. Last year, Comcast extended the program two more times, on a pilot basis, to low-income seniors and low-income community college students. Earlier this year, another pilot program extended Internet Essentials to those living in public housing in Miami, Nashville, Philadelphia, and Seattle. Finally, Comcast has expanded the number of schools where every student in the school will be deemed eligible for the program so long as a certain percentage of the kids in that school are NSLP eligible – from 70 percent, to 50 percent, and now to 40 percent. As a result, Comcast estimates auto-enrollment now applies to about half of the 48,000 schools across its service area.

Internet Essentials Key Investments

From August 2011 through December 2015, Internet Essentials has connected more than 600,000 low-income families, benefitting more than 2.4 million Americans, to the internet at home. Also since 2011, Comcast has invested more than \$280 million in cash and in-kind support to help fund digital literacy training and education initiatives, reaching nearly 4.4 million people through national and local nonprofit community partners.

- Provided more than 47,000 subsidized computers at less than \$150 each.
- Distributed for free nearly 51 million Internet Essentials program materials.
- Broadcast more than 8.3 million public service announcements, valued at more than \$100 million.
- Welcomed 5 million visitors to the Internet Essentials websites in English and Spanish and its Online Learning Center.
- Fielded more than 3.9 million phone calls to our Internet Essentials call center.
- Made Internet Essentials available in nearly 48,000 schools in more than 5,000 school districts, in 39 states and the District of Columbia.
- Partnered with 9,000 community-based organizations, government agencies, and federal, state, and local elected officials to spread the word.

About ConnectHome

Building on the Obama Administration's goal to expand high speed broadband to all Americans, in July 2015, President Obama and HUD Secretary Julián Castro announced [ConnectHome](#), an initiative to extend affordable broadband access to families living in HUD-assisted housing. Through ConnectHome, internet service providers, non-profits and the private sector are offering broadband access, technical training, digital literacy programs, and devices for residents in assisted housing units in 28 pilot communities across the nation. ConnectHome creates a platform to help ensure that students have access to high-speed internet for studying and doing their homework at home, as well as in school.

About Internet Essentials

[Internet Essentials](#) from Comcast is the nation's largest and most comprehensive high-speed internet adoption program. It provides low-cost high-speed internet service for \$9.95 a month plus tax; the option to purchase an internet-ready computer for under \$150; and multiple options to access free digital literacy training in print, online and in-person. For more information, or to apply for the program, visit www.InternetEssentials.com or call 1-855-846-8376. Spanish speakers should call 1-855-765-6995.

About Comcast Corporation

Comcast Corporation (Nasdaq: CMCSA) is a global media and technology company with two primary businesses, Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal. Comcast Cable is one of the nation's largest video, high-speed internet and phone providers to residential customers under the XFINITY brand and also provides these services to businesses. NBCUniversal operates news, entertainment and sports cable networks, the NBC and Telemundo broadcast networks, television production operations, television station groups, Universal Pictures and Universal Parks and Resorts. Visit www.comcastcorporation.com for more information.

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Media Contacts:

Comcast Corporation

Charlie Douglas

charlie_douglas@comcast.com

Meredith Wertz

meredith_wertz@comcast.com

(215) 264-8020

(215) 970-8504

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Heather L. Fluit

heather.l.fluit@hud.gov

(202) 527-2060