



Libraries Bring \$1.6 million in Chromebooks and WIFI Hotspots to Californians

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[Sacramento, Calif] Nearly 5,000 WIFI hotspots and laptops will be provided to community libraries around the state using \$1.6 million in emergency COVID-19 recovery funds, the California State Library announced today.

The laptops will help connect communities by allowing users to video chat, access banking services and health portals, and apply for unemployment benefits and other civic services as well as anything else a web browser can do. The hotspots provide access to a 4G LTE network that isn't throttled and has unlimited data. The devices will be distributed with a priority on California's least resourced communities.

"As Gov. Newsom says in his [Broadband for All executive order](#), libraries play an important role in addressing digital inequity -- an inequity brought more sharply into focus by the pandemic," said Greg Lucas, California State Librarian. "These devices help but more concerted and collaborative work is needed to make meaningful progress on this critical issue."

This effort is just one of the ways the State Library is working to help connect Californians to the same high speed broadband network as the state's public universities, colleges and schools. Since 2014, more than 900 of California's 1,128 libraries have been linked with the network. As the remaining libraries are connected, the State Library is working with those libraries already connected to boost their bandwidth. Funding for this initiative comes from the federal Library Services and Technology Act, which requires libraries comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act to receive devices.

Information on how to sign up for this program will be available soon from the State Library's partner in this effort, the Southern California Library Cooperative.

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About the State Library: Founded in 1850, the California State Library has an extensive collection of documents from and about the state's rich history, ranging from books, maps, miners' diaries, newspapers, and periodicals to photographs, paintings and posters. The State Library also holds federal and state publications, is home to the Bernard E. Witkin State Law Library and the Braille and Talking Book Library, and serves as the lead state agency for library-related services throughout California. [State Library website](#)