

## National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program

The FCC's National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP), also known as iCanConnect, provides equipment needed to make telecommunications, advanced communications, and the Internet accessible to low-income individuals who have both significant vision loss and significant hearing loss. The program serves eligible residents of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In addition to equipment, assessments of specific accessibility needs, equipment installation, training, and other technical support are also available.

### Who is eligible to receive equipment?

Low-income individuals who are deaf-blind are eligible to receive equipment. Applicants must provide verification of their status as low-income and deaf-blind.

Deaf-blind eligibility requirements – an individual must have a combination of vision loss and hearing loss, as described next, that cause extreme difficulty in attaining independence in daily life activities, achieving psychosocial adjustment, or obtaining a vocation.

Vision loss – at least one of the following conditions:

- Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with corrective lenses;
- A field defect such that the peripheral diameter of the visual field is no greater than 20 degrees; or
- A progressive visual loss with a prognosis leading to one or both of these vision loss conditions.

Hearing loss – at least one of the following conditions:

- A chronic hearing impairment so severe that most speech cannot be understood with optimum amplification; or
- A progressive hearing loss having a prognosis leading to this hearing loss condition.
- Income eligibility requirements – not more than 400% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines – are outlined in the following chart:

| 2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines       |   |                 |                 |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Number of persons in family/household | 400% for everywhere, except Alaska and Hawaii | 400% for Alaska | 400% for Hawaii |
| 1                                     | \$48,560                                      | \$60,720        | \$55,840        |
| 2                                     | \$65,840                                      | \$82,320        | \$75,720        |
| 3                                     | \$83,120                                      | \$103,920       | \$95,600        |
| 4                                     | \$100,400                                     | \$125,520       | \$115,480       |
| 5                                     | \$117,680                                     | \$147,120       | \$135,360       |
| 6                                     | \$134,960                                     | \$168,720       | \$155,240       |

|                                 |           |           |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 7                               | \$152,240 | \$190,320 | \$175,120 |
| 8                               | \$169,520 | \$211,920 | \$195,000 |
| For each additional person, add | \$17,280  | \$21,600  | \$19,880  |

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>)

### What type of equipment is available?

The equipment distributed through the program is designed to make the following services accessible:

- Voice communication through wireline and wireless telephones
- Internet-based voice communication
- E-mail, text messaging, and instant messaging
- Interoperable video conferencing services
- Internet access, including information services

The equipment may be mainstream or specialized hardware, software or applications and must meet the needs of the deaf-blind individual to achieve access. Equipment warranties, maintenance and repairs may also be provided.

### How do I find the certified program that serves my state?

To find the NDBEDP certified program in your state, go to [www.icanconnect.org/states](http://www.icanconnect.org/states), or call the FCC:

- Voice: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)
- TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322)
- Videophone: 1-844-432-2275

### Filing a Complaint

You may contact the FCC's Disability Rights Office or file a complaint when you believe an NDBEDP certified program has not followed the FCC's rules.

A complaint must include the following: your name and contact information; the name of the NDBEDP certified program; a description of the problem or issue; how you want the problem or issue resolved; and your preferred format or method of response, such as by letter, fax, telephone, TTY, or email.

You may send your complaint to the Disability Rights Office by any reasonable means, such as by letter, fax, telephone, TTY, or email. You may also contact the Disability Rights Office if you need assistance filing a complaint.

Disability Rights Office  
 Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
 Federal Communications Commission  
 445 12th Street, SW  
 Washington, DC 20554

Email: [dro@fcc.gov](mailto:dro@fcc.gov)  
 Phone: 202-418-2517  
 TTY: 888-835-5322



Videophone: 844-432-2275  
Fax: 202-418-0037

The Disability Rights Office will forward your complaint to the NDBEDP certified program for a response. The Disability Rights Office will review the response and may communicate with you and the NDBEDP certified program. The Disability Rights Office will inform you and the NDBEDP certified program of its disposition of your complaint.

If you are not satisfied with the Disability Rights Office's disposition of your complaint, you may file a formal complaint with the FCC in accordance with the FCC's formal complaint filing procedures.

### **Alternate formats**

To request this article in an alternate format - braille, large print, Word or text document or audio - write or call us at the address or phone number at the bottom of the page, or send an email to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov).

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