

Internet for All in Washington: DRAFT Digital Equity Plan

Washington state has developed a statewide Digital Equity Plan to map out how to bring internet connectivity and the skills needed to benefit from it to all Washingtonians. This document provides an overview of the Digital Equity Plan, so that you can share with us your ideas on how best to achieve digital equity for your communities. **Share your voice with us!** With your valued feedback, Washington will strive to create sustainable and impactful digital inclusion programs and services to realize the best, most equitable way to reduce digital inequalities.






Vision

Everyone in Washington has affordable broadband internet technology as well as the tools and skills needed to participate in our digital society before 2028.

Goals

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| <p>1 Eliminating Barriers Provide Washington residents with infrastructure, devices, and tools, to maintain reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband service.</p> | <p>2 Empowering Residents Provide Washington residents with the digital knowledge, skills, and support to ensure everyone benefits from digital inclusion.</p> | <p>3 Ensuring Sustainability Establish and build partnerships needed to deliver and sustain broadband service and support programs for learning and engaging in civil society.</p> |
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Community needs related to broadband and digital inclusion

-  Need more reliable affordable options.
-  Need infrastructure to access broadband in unserved or underserved areas.
-  Need more resources for community anchor institutions—such as schools, libraries, healthcare providers, public safety entities, institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations—to provide digital skill training and devices.
-  Need to link digital equity with overall equitable access to services like public transit, affordable housing, and healthcare.
-  Need accessible digital information and services for all regardless of ability, income, or neighborhood.



What are some internet connectivity, digital technology, and skill related needs that you have seen in your community?

Strategies for Washington State to Reduce Digital Inequalities

1: Expand broadband availability and increase affordability.

Ensuring that high-speed internet infrastructure is available across Washington state is the first step in bridging the digital divide. A critical next step is to create opportunities for these services to be affordable so that households and business can benefit from access to internet.

2: Implement innovative approaches to expand options for device availability and affordability.

Barriers like cost and a lack of access to digital device lending programs or public computer labs can result in lower digital literacy rates. The state of Washington is prioritizing access and affordability of digital devices for Washington residents to help reduce barriers to accessing devices.

3: Consolidate practices that promote online accessibility and inclusivity.

Partnering with trusted messengers and organizations who are already doing work in communities to share information about digital assistance and online accessibility is important to bring together good practices.

4: Provide services that promote digital literacy.

The state and partners in the Digital Navigator Program are already providing many services related to digital literacy programs, but there is an opportunity to expand beyond these initiatives to encourage more organizations to promote digital skills through their work.

5: Promote practices and leverage tools to ensure online privacy and security.

Promoting online privacy and safety practices is essential to encourage underrepresented communities to engage in our digital society, especially as more critical services shift online including telehealth, banking, online purchasing, and connecting with friends and family.

Do you have any ideas on how to achieve the vision, goals, or strategies? Please share!

You can visit the Internet for All in Washington website (<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/washington-statewide-broadband-act/internet-for-all-wa/>) to join the conversation and submit your comments through the public comment form. You can also scan the QR code at the bottom of the page. Another option is to send an email to internetforall@commerce.wa.gov or attend one of the open houses Sep. 25th to 27th:

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| <p>9/25/2023 Southridge Sports Center in Kennewick from 5 to 7PM</p> | <p>9/26/2023 Burlington Public Library from 5 to 7PM</p> | <p>9/27/2023 Seattle Central Library from 4 to 6PM</p> |
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When will this plan be completed?

