

Comcast Extends Internet Essentials, Its High-Speed Internet Adoption Program, To Low-Income Senior Citizens In Boston
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BOSTON, Nov. 10, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Comcast today announced plans to conduct a pilot program for low-income senior citizens in Boston as part of [Internet Essentials](#), the nation's largest and most comprehensive high-speed internet adoption program for low-income Americans. Now in its sixth year, Internet Essentials has connected [750,000 families](#), or 3 million Americans, nationally, including nearly 80,000 residents in Massachusetts.

The company also announced a \$100,000 grant to Boston's [Tech Goes Home](#), which strives to ensure that people are equipped with the tools, training, and access to support 21st century skills development. The funds will be used to provide digital literacy training for senior citizens. In addition, Comcast donated 110 laptops to seniors at the South Boston Neighborhood House and high school students throughout the city of Boston.

"Closing the digital divide for low-income parents and children across the country and in the City of Boston has never been more important to Comcast. Seniors, too, need internet access at home to break down barriers of isolation and connect them to their friends, family, and caregivers," said David L. Cohen, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer of Comcast Corporation. "We are thrilled to announce a pilot program to attack the senior digital divide in Boston. In partnership with Tech Goes Home, we're also providing funding to deliver vital digital skills training to help seniors learn how to use computers and navigate the internet. We're grateful to Mayor Walsh and his team for working with us on this innovative program."

"I am pleased to be working with Comcast to bring affordable internet access to our Boston seniors," said Mayor Martin J. Walsh. "Seniors are the fastest-growing segment of our population, and we are committed to making Boston an age-friendly city. Our low-income seniors need both training and access to internet services, and I thank Comcast and our partners for their work to create equitable internet access for our City's seniors."

According to Pew Research Center, just 47 percent, or less than half, of seniors (aged 65 and older) have high-speed internet at home. When it comes to income level, only 25 percent of seniors with household incomes below \$30,000 have home broadband, compared to 82 percent of seniors with household incomes at or above \$75,000.

The Internet Essentials pilot program for low-income senior citizens will be developed in partnership with local nonprofits, including Tech Goes Home. In addition to Internet Essentials, which includes low-cost internet service for \$9.95/month, the option to purchase a subsidized computer for less than \$150, and access to digital literacy training in print, online, and in person, eligible senior citizens in Boston can also sign up for a 10 percent discount on Basic Cable TV or Digital Starter Cable TV.

Boston marks the fifth region where Comcast offers an Internet Essentials pilot program for low-income senior citizens, following Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, San Francisco County, and Seattle.

Comcast has increased eligibility for Internet Essentials nine times in five years. Most recently, in July, Comcast expanded the program to households receiving HUD-housing assistance, which includes HUD's Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Multifamily programs.

In Massachusetts, there are more than 165,000 HUD-assisted homes that stand to benefit from this expansion. In total, there are up to 2 million HUD-assisted homes in Comcast's service area across the country, which, according to HUD, account for approximately 40 percent of all its households. The expansion means even more individuals, including seniors, veterans, and adults without children, are now eligible to apply to the program.

In August 2016, Comcast released a comprehensive Internet Essentials Five Year Progress Report, which includes significant new milestones highlighting the program's impact on the lives of its customers since its launch in 2011. These include having:

- Invested more than \$300 million in cash and in-kind support to fund digital literacy initiatives nationally, reaching nearly 4.4 million people through our national and local nonprofit community partners.
- Dedicated more than \$1.8 million in grants to create Internet Essentials Learning Zones, where networks of nonprofit partners are working together to enhance public Internet access and increase family-focused digital literacy training in Atlanta, Baltimore Chicago, Denver, Fresno, and Seattle, among others.
- Broadcast 8.5 million public service announcements, valued at nearly \$110 million.
- Provided more than 54,000 subsidized computers at less than \$150 each.
- Distributed nearly 53 million pieces of Internet Essentials program material for free.
- Welcomed more than 6.4 million visitors to the Internet Essentials English and Spanish websites, and its Online Learning Center.
- Fielded more than 4.4 million phone calls to our Internet Essentials call center.
- Offered Internet Essentials to more than 55,000 schools in more than 5,000 school districts in 39 states and the District of Columbia.
- Partnered with over 9,000 community-based organizations, government agencies, and federal, state, and local elected officials to spread the word.

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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