

Des Plaines Pub Library
Eligible Services List Comment
July 24, 2020

This is a comment on WC Docket No. 13-184.

The Des Plaines Public Library serves local school districts 62, 59 and Maine Township District 207. As these districts qualify at a high free lunch/poverty rate, the library is entitled to a full 80% reimbursement of E-Rate claims. However, under the current Eligible Services List, we are unable to claim wireless hotspots that are used off-campus.

A result of the local poverty rate is that up to 20% of the population does not have broadband internet in their home. This affects thousands of students in our service area.

In the era of COVID-19, hundreds of families are opting for online learning or integrating homeschooling into their family routine. These families depend on the library for technology services. However, because Illinois is only in Phase Four and shows not indication of entering Phase Five, we cannot accommodate students wishing to use our computers, or study in the library using our wifi (which does not extend beyond the library building). Our purchasing budget is further constrained by COVID-19, in that we expect our property tax revenue to drop substantially due to job and property loss in 2020.

E-Rate reimbursement for the cost of hotspot devices and their plans would allow us to make many more wireless hotspots available to low-income students, and thus greatly increase our positive impact on local education.

I respectfully request that USAC include wireless hotspots used off-campus in the forthcoming Eligible Services List.

Thank you very much,

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