Digital Equity in Connecticut

BASIC NEEDS PROGRAMS

Basic Needs Programs Can Help Bridge the Digital Divide

Many guests at basic needs programs lack access to digital devices, connectivity, and literacy. This digital divide creates barriers to opportunities such as education, healthcare, economic mobility, and connection to supportive programming. Basic needs programs can help bridge the digital divide in the following ways.

1

Access to Devices and Broadband
Basic needs programs can provide guests with to access broadband Internet and devices during programming so residents can search for community programs, sign-up for benefits, and apply for jobs.

2

Offer Training to Increase Digital Literacy
Basic needs programs can offer on-site classes and workshops that strengthen digital literacy skills such:
- Using devices like a computer, tablet or mobile phone for simple, personal, and work tasks
- Finding and using information on the Internet
- Understanding how to be safe and responsible online
- Communicating socially and professionally using email, messaging and social media
- Shopping, banking, accessing services or applying for a job online

3

Offer Technical Support
Basic needs programs can have staff or volunteers available to offer individualized technical support to guests who have questions about using devices, Internet, or digital literacy topics.

4

Connect to Community Programs
Basic needs programs can share information about important community programs that increase digital equity, make devices and broadband available, and increase digital literacy skills such as:
- Internet Essentials, Connect2Compete, Frontier Lifeline Program
- Lifeline
- Affordable Connectivity Program
- American Job Centers
- Public Libraries

"The digital divide refers to the gap or differences in access between the general population and subgroups."