



# E-Rate Program Expanded, Plus Cisco Knowledge Hub

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*On July 18th, 2024 the Federal Communications Commission approved a landmark decision by expanding the E-rate program to include off-premises use of Wi-Fi hotspots and wireless Internet services. This means that eligible schools and libraries can now receive support to provide Wi-Fi hotspots and wireless services to students, school staff, and library patrons outside of their premises. This program will have a three-year budget mechanism to ensure fair distribution of Wi-Fi hotspots and services.*

## What is E-rate?

E-Rate is a program established in 1997 that offers discounts to help schools and libraries access affordable telecommunications and internet services. It has evolved over time to prioritize bringing high-speed broadband to educational institutions.

E-rate has become a critical part of advancing technology in our nation's schools. That's why our team of Cisco education and E-rate experts have established our [Cisco E-rate Knowledge Hub](#), full of resources to help you on your E-rate journey.

## Importance of E-Rate for students and consumers

Many students, teachers, and library users across the nation currently lack equitable access to educational resources due to digital and educational disparities. With the conclusion of the Affordable Connectivity Program, which connected 23 million households to high-speed internet, affected households may now rely on schools or libraries for vital connectivity.

## Safety Measures

The program ensures that supported Wi-Fi services are used for educational purposes, not funded through other means, and properly documented for auditing purposes. It also mandates compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, requiring schools and libraries to implement filters to shield minors from harmful online content and educate them on safe Internet practices.

Overall, this decision represents a significant step towards closing the digital divide and addressing the homework gap that many students face today.

## Newly updated E-rate resources for your school and library

Our team of Cisco education and E-rate experts have just released our newly updated overviews of E-rate and the Children's Internet Protection Act. I encourage you to check them out today:

- Quick read: [Libraries and the Children's Internet Protection Act](#)
- Quick read: [K12 Schools and the Children's Internet Protection Act](#)