

Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19 and Technology Resources

Where can I get free or discounted tablets and devices?

- Work with your [Area Agency on Aging](#) to see if they can assist with providing tablets.
- Contact technology companies and cell phone providers to inquire if they are open to partnering and donating older models of devices to aging groups.
 - NCOA's Aging Mastery Program partnered with Verizon a few years ago to provide 200 tablets for older adults. The older adults were able to keep the tablets after the project ended.
 - New York City has partnered with T-Mobile to provide internet and tablets to 10,000 New York City Housing Authority older adults. View the article [here](#).
- Consider purchasing devices in bulk and inquire about the cost differences between new and refurbished options.
- Check around your community for any technology (i.e. iPad, tablet) lending libraries and ask if they have implemented cleaning protocols in response to COVID-19. Research whether participants can borrow a tablet for the duration of a program.
 - For a sample lending library agreement, [view a template](#) from South Dakota State University.
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- If the participant is residing with family members, see if they can borrow a device to access services, engage with others, or participate in a health promotion workshop.

What are some resources for older adults to get internet access?

- [8 sources of low cost internet for older adults](#)
- If older adults reside at an assisted living community, check to see if the building management company provides internet service.
- Negotiate a plan with local cable providers for individuals or group purchasing.
 - For example, through the partnership described above, Verizon provided internet access on the tablets distributed to older adults for the duration of the project.
- Federal Communications Commission shared [a list of companies](#) who have developed economical broadband programs to support consumers all throughout the US during the pandemic.

Can we use a portion of our funding to equip older adults with devices?

- The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has provided the following guidance:

“Under the authority of the Major Disaster Declaration, which all States are operating under currently, Older Americans Act monies are allowed to be bucketed into any Title to meet the needs of older adults. These needs may include programming at a congregate site, such as telephone reassurance, wellness checks, virtual evidence-based

health promotion/disease prevention programs. In addition, meals provided in a group setting that are eaten with another person (virtually), such as coordinating a buddy system or virtual congregate site via Zoom, FaceTime, GoToMeeting, etc. where people dine together can also be implemented using Older Americans Act dollars. Further, Older Americans Act dollars can be used to purchase tablets or laptops for seniors and provide access to Broadband, among other local needs of older adults. ACL's [Frequently Asked Questions: Title III-B and Title III-E](#) provides more detail on how this can be done. Contact your State Unit on Aging for additional information about use of Older Americans Act monies in your state."

What are some resources to help older adults learn the basic functions of their devices?

- [Senior Planet](#) is hosting free online classes for older adults on topics including introduction to social media, how to use zoom, and virtual social gatherings.
- [How to Become Tech Savvy Seniors in 10 Days](#)
- [AARP TEK workshops are free of charge to the public](#)
- [Instructions for Accessing Your Virtual Workshop through Zoom](#)
- Download the FREE App "**Easy Tablet Help for Seniors**" on all tablets distributed to older adults.
 - It is available at no cost in the Apple, Google Play, and Amazon App Stores. **Note:** There are no ads or in-app purchases. The interactive tutorial teaches:
 - **Basic functionalities:** Tapping a touchscreen, enlarging and shrinking a page, scrolling, location of buttons, how to navigate the keyboard.
 - **Internet safety, searching, and communicating:** Texting, video-calling (Zoom, FaceTime, Skype), getting a Gmail account or using an existing email account.
 - **More:** How to use YouTube, the camera, attaching a photo to an email, apps, etc.
 - **Demonstration:** www.generationsonline.org/gol4ipad