

# The Digital Equity Toolkit for Rural Communities in CA

**Leadership Challenge 2021**



CALIFORNIA  
LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION

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## Introduction

For many people, access to computers and the internet is not consistent, easy, or affordable. Society has become so dependent on technology that those who don't have reliable internet or technology can suffer socioeconomic consequences. Some of the groups affected by a lack of access include those who are considered low-income and those in rural areas. During the COVID-19 pandemic, access to these resources have been even more reduced due to the closure of access points such as libraries.

In rural areas, the issue of affordability is also compounded by a literal absence of the internet. Since most internet access is dependent upon cell towers, areas where there is a weak or absent signal can not get reliable internet<sup>1</sup>. A lack of physical infrastructure also makes it difficult to bring the internet to these communities. Bridging this "digital divide," as it is commonly known, is necessary because if people are to be given equal opportunities in a world that revolves around smartphones, tablets, and high-speed broadband, steps must be taken to make those accessible to everyone. One such example of this is when job applications are only accessible online; those without internet access or the skills to navigate are inherently left out. This is not to say everyone should receive a brand new laptop and we should call such a program "equity." Rather, the issues are far more nuanced than just access to technology. Digital equity addresses the needs of individual community members and bridges the gap in their internet and technological accessibility. For example, the same quality of internet should be made accessible on a sliding scale of affordability, turned into a public utility, or even made free.

Addressing the digital divide can benefit society in several ways. One of these ways is by providing a step up for marginalized communities which are often more adversely impacted by a lack of internet access. Those who suffer because of institutional racism and white supremacy are already at a disadvantage and adding a technological insufficiency on top of that makes their situation all the more challenging. Those in rural communities, which are also often low-income areas<sup>2</sup>, suffer in similar ways. In communities where technology and internet access are scarce or unreliable, institutions like libraries and schools become bastions of free and equitable access. This causes an undue burden on these institutions and makes them culpable when patrons cannot get access. By working with other local, state, and federal institutions, libraries can help to bridge the digital divide and improve the lives of their community members.

This toolkit will serve as a guide for public libraries and other educational institutions to help them bridge the digital divide in rural California communities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, California has 11 counties considered mostly or completely rural [see Appendix A]. According to the Rural County Representatives of California, there are 37 rural counties<sup>3</sup>. For the sake of inclusivity, users of this toolkit should define if they fit the definition of rural. The authors of the toolkit acknowledge that there are major issues with infrastructure, funding, and policy-related matters; however, the intent of the toolkit is to consider purposeful and manageable changes public libraries can make to support

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<sup>1</sup> Schnier, J. (2014). internet in Rural Communities. *Papers in Canadian Economic Development*, 14, 74-89. <https://pced.uwaterloo.ca/index.php/pced/article/viewFile/54/53>

<sup>2</sup> Martin, M. (2018). Rural and Lower-Income Counties Lag in internet Subscription. *U.S. Census Bureau*. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2018/12/rural-and-lower-income-counties-lag-nation-internet-subscription.html>

<sup>3</sup> RCRC. (2020). Counties. *Rural County Representatives of California*. <https://www.rcrcnet.org/counties>

broadband access for rural communities.

## Establishing Objectives, Goals, and Timelines

Rural communities throughout the United States have been continually left behind when it comes to internet access. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the issue without offering solutions on how to close the digital divide. Rural communities have seen the effects of COVID-19 from the perspective of being without internet access and/or not having a computer. Students and low-income communities have been impacted by similar access gaps, experiencing how much a lack of reliable internet connection can halt their studies.

### Digital Inclusion Goals

Provide service to patrons who cannot access computers/internet services

- Provide a space where patrons can access resources
- Provide a starting point for other libraries, schools, and institutions

### Objectives: How to Determine Your Own Objectives

- SWOT Analysis
  - Create a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis to help your institution determine what you are lacking, where your strengths are, what opportunities are available, and what may be a threat or a setback when determining how to provide access to patrons.
- SMART Goals
  - Create SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) Goals to help you determine what it is that you want to accomplish, what is attainable, and what is the time frame in which you want to accomplish these goals.

### Timeline

In order to see where your gaps are and where the community needs access to internet services, you may follow this suggested timeline:

- Week 1
  - Create a survey for your community
  - Compile Census information
  - Contact local government
- Week 2
  - Look at the infrastructure in your area and region
  - Distribute survey through various means
    - Work with local government to get the survey out to the community
    - Use social media, local newspapers, radio stations, television, and ads if possible
    - Set a deadline for 2 to 4 weeks to ensure ample response
- Week 3

- Research funding sources, such as federal/state grants
- Reach out to businesses in the area offering broadband access
  - Talk to them about accessibility and the possibility of reducing bill amount
  - This is where having local policymakers on your side can be useful
- Week 4
  - Start analyzing survey data
  - Look for gap areas and identify needs
  - Reach out to state government about creating infrastructure to help bring broadband access to your area
  - Collaborate with community organizations
- Week 5 and beyond
  - Create a plan to implement broadband
  - Create programs to reduce bill amount and/or share information about existing programs
  - Assemble a coalition and develop a shared vision

## Strategies for Success: How to Combat the Problem

Strategies in combating digital inequity may vary from stakeholder to stakeholder. Based on the literature and content analyzed across different sources, we share two case studies and profiles that cover practical strategies..

For rural communities, "the challenge in bringing reliable broadband to rural areas is buildout costs. When small populations are spread across large geographic areas, hundreds of miles of network infrastructure must be built, often through remote and rugged terrain. Infrastructure installation is expensive, and telecommunications giants are unwilling to invest in sparsely populated areas with limited opportunity for profit."<sup>4</sup> There have been considerations such as private-public partnerships, rebuilding infrastructure, and obtaining government support and funding to ensure broadband access in rural communities. In this section, we highlight internal and external strategies that have been employed by libraries (school, academic, and public) that support broadband access for their respective communities.

### Strategies

There are many resources, policies, guidelines and services that can be adapted to create successful strategies in addressing digital inequity. When we think of internal strategies, we examine internal practices, guidelines, and resources that are all from public libraries, particularly during COVID-19. There are also strategies that can mitigate digital inequity particularly during COVID-19.

#### **Public Library Strategies:**

- **Technology Lending Services**
- **Fine Elimination**
- **Mobile Libraries and Parking Lot WiFi**
- **Public Services Support**

There is a wealth of information regarding the digital divide issue and how public libraries are addressing it. Focusing on strategies, public libraries need to provide hotspots, laptops, and tablet devices to the general public. However, a lack of resources may prohibit public libraries from doing so. If resources are limited, library staff might consider prioritizing students, teachers, and job seekers. If possible, fees should be eliminated from technology loaning services.

In addition, if public libraries have a parking lot, they may consider leaving their WiFi on so patrons can drive into the lot to access the internet 24 hours a day, regardless of library hours. In addition, some public libraries may use a book mobile to provide hotspot services to underserved communities. This kind of approach can be costly but an efficient way to support an otherwise underserved community. The challenges of these services is the marketing aspect. How do you ensure patrons are aware of such

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<sup>4</sup> Solitro, M. (2021, March/April). Rural communities launch publicly owned fiber networks. *Broadband Communities*. [https://www.bbcmag.com/community-broadband/rural-communities-launch-publicly-owned-fiber-networks?utm\\_source=sendgrid&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Newsletters](https://www.bbcmag.com/community-broadband/rural-communities-launch-publicly-owned-fiber-networks?utm_source=sendgrid&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletters)

services? In addition, there needs to be a clear map of libraries in the system that are open and providing technology loans; maps should be available both online and on paper.

Public libraries must continue maintaining staffing positions for technology support on the phone, in-person, and online. These questions from the general public may focus on troubleshooting technology support. Hiring staff is important, and recruiting staff who can speak multiple languages reflecting the community is highly critical. By being able to provide services in other languages, library staff can assist patrons who speak languages other than English.

## Case Studies: Libraries in Rural California Respond to the Digital Divide

Case studies from two different rural libraries in California demonstrated the call to action when the pandemic adversely affected digital access in these communities. They responded to the team's brief survey regarding their services. These libraries, referred to here as Library A and Library B, both acted within their means to meet the needs of their rural communities. Although their approaches may have differed, both libraries immediately moved toward providing hotspots for checkout to patrons, one on short-term and one on long-term bases. Other libraries also followed suit by purchasing and providing mobile hotspots to patrons, showing just one way in which libraries were able to help bridge the digital divide. It may be useful to see what nearby libraries are doing to support digital inclusion, as they may be able to provide ideas and resources previously unavailable.

### **Case Study A: A Rural Library**

**Question 1: Since the pandemic happened, what did you do to support patrons who had limited technology access?**

Librarian: Our library purchased 100 hotspots and we have them loan long-term to families in the rural areas.

**Question 2: What did NOT work well and what would you do differently?**

Librarian: We offer curbside services and virtual storytimes during the pandemic. However, patrons in rural areas heavily rely on library WiFi to get connected. Without library opening, they could not participate in the virtual storytimes, they are unable to request books online. Our rural staff has to call people for them to pick up their books.

**Question 3: How is your library marketing digital/technology services to your communities, particularly those who do not have access to the internet?**

Librarian: We market our digital resources - Overdrive, Libby, Flipster, virtual storytime, Zoom book discussion, gardening etc., through websites, social media, email blast, and posters outside the library facilities. For rural areas, staff also post flyers to the community center, post office, share with the local schools, and the Friends of the Libraries.

**Question 4: Any suggestions or resources for your library when looking at digital inequity?**

Librarian: Need to get WiFi connection to rural areas. It is ridiculous that there are so many high tech companies in California while there is no internet connection to so many rural areas.

## **Case Study B: A Rural Library**

**Question 1: Since the pandemic happened, what did you do to support patrons who had limited technology access?**

Librarian: Allow them more time on the computers while keeping with CDC capacity standards, opened computers with 6ft distance, allow for Chromebook to borrow (very new in practice), purchasing a large quantity of WiFi hotspots for loan, increasing that number as well to ensure shorter hold wait times.

**Question 2: What did NOT work well and what would you do differently?**

Librarian: Not being set up to support mobile printing. We should have looked into it earlier.

**Question 3: How is your library marketing digital/technology services to your communities, particularly those who do not have access to the internet?**

Librarian: We sent press releases to all local media. We spoke about our services to local community groups and other departments in our county. We made brochures for all locations to be put in pick up bags or on outside tables.

**Question 4: Any suggestions or resources for your library when looking at digital inequity?**

Librarian: Companies that offer CIPA-compliant devices for wireless connection that can be checked out to patrons. They are hard to find.

## **Best Practices for Technology Services on Digital Equity**

Many of these strategies are not necessarily new, but they do remind us how crucial it is to rethink our resources and policies, particularly during this time. Here are some best practices for technology services that we recommend:

- **Expand the reach of WiFi to reach outside the perimeter of the library** - Public libraries have been creating WiFi gardens throughout the city, including at the libraries. For example, [Mill Valley Public Library provides WiFi through their Peter Dreyfus Garden](#). Some libraries leave the WiFi on when they are closed for WiFi access in the parking lot. [San Mateo County Public Libraries](#) and [Orange County Public Libraries](#) offered WiFi in select libraries' parking lots. In addition, libraries broadened access to electronic resources. A rural library described that "they also gave access to HS students to their online resources using their school IDs."
- **Offer bookmobile or mobile libraries to reach rural communities** - Libraries such as Virginia's Williamsburg Regional Library and Ohio's Cuyahoga County Public Library [created bookmobiles to provide WiFi access to rural communities](#).
- **Purchase and lend out internet hotspot devices and laptops to patrons** - During COVID-19, many libraries, particularly rural ones, have purchased hotspot devices and laptops to loan out to patrons. To purchase these devices, libraries had to keep track of devices being loaned out and how to reallocate resources to buy more hotspots. [The Public Library Association](#) created a resource for hotspot lending for rural libraries. A rural library shared with us that they "increased the number of Chromebook and hotspot devices for circulation; and created the



Chromebook/hotspot bundle for those who need both (this guaranteed they would get both at the same time).”

- **Establish a lending policy for any lendable tech that clearly identifies lost/damage fees, loan period, eligibility, and Terms & Conditions [see Appendix C]** - It's important to have a technology lending policy that is supportive of patrons' needs during this time. This may include waiving fines for technology loans but being clear that due dates should still be observed. When lending technologies, we need to consider how fines can create an extra barrier to patrons.
- **Going fine free for technology loan:** across North America, many library systems are going "fine free," ceasing or limiting their use of overdue materials fines to reduce access barriers. Check out the Urban Libraries Council's [Fine Free Map](#) to see which libraries have waived their fines and how you may want to consider this practice too.

# BEST PRACTICES FOR TECHNOLOGY SERVICES ON DIGITAL EQUITY

**ACHIEVING DIGITAL EQUITY CAN COME FROM THESE LIBRARY SERVICES!**

## 03

**Purchase and lend out Internet hotspot devices and laptops to patrons**

## 01

**Expand the reach of WiFi to reach outside the perimeter of the library**

## 04

**Establish a lending policy for lendable tech that identifies lost/damage fees, loan period, eligibility, and Terms & Conditions**

## 02

**Offer bookmobile or mobile libraries to reach rural communities**

## 05

**Waive fines for technology loans if possible**

## Information for Community Partners

In March 2020, schools and workplaces shutdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, sending many non-essential individuals to work or study from home. For some, this was an easy transition, but it wasn't for many, especially for families in low-income households in rural communities. For these families, getting connected to the internet was harder, placing them at a big disadvantage. Thus, organizations and community groups made a bigger effort to get people connected to the internet with the appropriate equipment.

Organizations like public libraries, school districts, community centers, and private corporations are all great starting points if anyone ever needs help getting connected.

Partners	Descriptions
Public Libraries	<p>If you are not a public library, consider partnering with public libraries for support. There are <a href="#">school-public library</a> resources. Public libraries are community anchors that can provide broadband resources as outlined by the <a href="#">Public Library Association</a>.</p> <p>Shortly after the shutdown, many public libraries started lending hotspots and/or Chromebooks if they hadn't already. Libraries who already had this service in place felt the need to increase the number of devices to meet the high demand. If you're looking for equipment for short time use, contact your local library as lending and replacement policies may differ.</p>
School Districts	<p>Partnering with school districts can help you reach community members who may not already visit the library. School sites could also be helpful when distributing information and services/tools to help community members get connected.</p> <p>School districts began lending students the necessary equipment to fully connect online. Some students were using cellular connectivity before they were given the appropriate devices. Unfortunately, this type of connectivity is not always high-quality or</p>

	reliable, so it was vital that school districts and libraries provided necessary equipment.
Community Centers	Partnering with community or recreation centers can help close the digital divide since many already have a strong connection with low-income individuals who would benefit from learning from ways the library can help them connect to the internet. These centers also serve as a safe space for individuals to ask questions and seek help in learning how to use a digital device or simply ask for more information on where to find affordable internet connectivity. Community centers can also be great locations to offer free WiFi service or boost an existing signal.
Private Corporations	Large corporations are pledging to donate devices to those in need and want to help close the digital divide. “T-Mobile and Amazon will be donating 13,000 and 10,000 tablets, respectively. Apple has given the equivalent of 9,000 iPads and is offering schools special pricing for iPads with cellular. Verizon is partnering with California to provide 250,000 students with unlimited internet service at a discount” <sup>5</sup> .

Bridging the digital divide is not the responsibility of just one institution; we all need to work together to get everyone connected. The template below is included as a guide to help you build community partnerships. Under Additional Resources, you can also find a list of other organizations that are working towards the same goal.

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<sup>5</sup> Schaffhauser, D. (2020, May 1). *CA state agencies, companies and philanthropists step up to close the digital divide*. *THE Journal*. <https://thejournal.com/articles/2020/05/05/ca-state-agencies-companies-and-philanthropists-step-up-to-close-digital-divide.aspx>.

# Building Community Partnership (Template)

## HAVE A PLAN OF ACTION

- What are the goals for your organization?
- What resources do you need to obtain these goals?

## IDENTIFY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- What organizations have similar interests
- Which organizations have best suited to help your organization succeed?
- How will these organizations benefit from the partnership?

## DESIGNATE A SPOKESPERSON FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION TO COMMUNICATE WITH POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Prepare to before the pitch meeting
- Know important facts about your potential partner

## CREATE A CONTACT LIST FOR EACH POTENTIAL PARTNER

- Leaders
- Decision-makers
- Presidents/CEOs

## DEFINE THE COMMON GOALS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY PARTNER AND YOUR ORGANIZATION

- What is the collaborative plan of action?

## SHARE DECISION-MAKING

- Communicate frequently
- Be transparent with your potential partner

## FOLLOW THROUGH ON COMMITMENTS SHARE THE CREDIT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY PARTNER

## Conclusion

Bridging the digital divide has consistently been a problem for California. Many agree that digital equity is an issue that has become a priority due to the pandemic. It affects low-income and rural communities all over California. Rural communities, in particular, are less likely to have access to high-speed internet more likely to have weaker signals. “Rural residents have fewer choices of internet service providers (or none at all), pay higher prices for lower quality service, and generally earn less money than urban dwellers”<sup>6</sup>. These issues need to be addressed to break the cycle of continued digital, economic, and educational inequality. Through technology loaning services, mobile libraries, increasing access to WiFi during non-operational hours, and boosting WiFi signals, libraries can help bridge the divide.

Digital inequity is also not a problem libraries can solve on their own but it is important to work together with community partners and stakeholders to address solutions playing to their different strengths. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, school districts statewide, and local organizations need to get involved. Libraries have capacity to serve their patrons but as these economic and social issues continue to grow and continue to limit access for our communities, it’s ever more important for libraries to connect with stakeholders and community anchors to support digital access. Forming community partnerships increases awareness, support for legislation, and monetary donations that can be used for purchasing laptops and mobile hotspots.

Without quality broadband access, low-income and rural households will fall further behind. So much of today’s society is tied to digital connectivity, including applying for jobs, post-secondary education, and housing. Students living and attending schools in rural areas face greater disadvantages. “For students who cannot get online at home, either because they lack access or because their families are socioeconomically disadvantaged and they cannot afford monthly charges to stay connected, learning starts and stops at the classroom door.”<sup>5</sup> This is a multifaceted problem that requires a multifaceted and collaborative solution.

This is the time for individuals and organizations to get involved. Find opportunities to engage with your local stakeholders, reconsider your services, policies and technologies when serving users, and continue to build trust with your communities during this difficult time. Through innovation and continued collaboration, California can make substantial progress towards ending digital inequity. This toolkit provides a snapshot of resources, strategies, and tools to consider when thinking about supporting digital equity in rural communities.

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<sup>6</sup> Sanders, C. K., & Scanlon, E. (2021). The digital divide is a human rights issue: Advancing social inclusion through social work advocacy. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-020-00147-9>

## Additional Resources

- [Digital Equity Bill of Rights](#) is a California Emerging Technology Fund list of 10 key elements of digital equity, with opportunity to sign in support.
- [Digital Equity](#) - Michelson 20MM works to build awareness and advocates for digital equity through legislation and philanthropy.
- [The Digital Equity Coalition \(DEC\)](#) is a group of elected officials, community members, and educators looking to help bridge the digital divide.
- [Digital Divide Support – Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation](#) is a non-profit that oversees the California Department of Education’s monetary donations.
- [Everyoneon.org](#) is a nonprofit that connects low-income families to affordable internet service and computers. Since 2012, EveryoneOn works with schools, public housing communities, and other organizations to help individuals get connected to the internet.
- [The California Emerging Technology Fund \(CETF\)](#) provides leadership statewide to close the digital divide. Their focus are rural and urban, underserved communities, and disabled populations that lack the broadband infrastructure and accessibility to technology.
- [National Digital Inclusion Alliance](#) is a national organization that partners with other organizations to bring awareness to the importance of digital equity. In addition, the National Digital Inclusion Alliance conducts research to inform the public and policy makers.
- [The San Jose Digital Inclusion Fund](#) is a grant opportunity for communities in San Jose, CA. Those applying must meet certain criteria and must be addressing the digital needs of San Jose residents.
- [School2Home](#) is a statewide program designed to help bridge the digital divide as well as the achievement gap in low-performing middle schools.

## Glossary

**Broadband** - internet access through a variety of wireless and wired networks such as WiFi and cable (Henderson, 2017).

**Digital Divide** – Unequal access between different groups who have, and do not have access to technologies based on demographic descriptors including age, education level, geographic location, language, race, and/or socioeconomic status (Gilbert, 2010; Hollins, 2015; Yu, 2006).

**Digital Equity** - The “condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services” (National Digital Inclusion Alliance, n.d.).

**Digital Exclusion** – Having no access to the internet due to the lack of access at home or the lack of infrastructure providing access to the internet.

**Digital Inclusion** - “Activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)” (National Digital Inclusion Alliance, n.d., para. 2). The factors that are part of digital inclusion include “affordable, robust broadband internet service; internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user; access to digital literacy training; quality technical support; and applications and online content designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency, participation and collaboration” (National Digital Inclusion Alliance, n.d., para. 1). It is a term that needs to be redefined as technology continues to advance in society. As defined by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (n.d.), “digital inclusion requires intentional strategies and investments to reduce and eliminate historical, institutional and structural barriers to access and use technology” (para. 1).

**E-Rate** - “The universal service Schools and Libraries Program, commonly known as "E-rate," provides discounts of up to 90 percent to help eligible schools and libraries in the United States obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access. The program is intended to ensure that schools and libraries have access to affordable telecommunications and information services. Eligible participants include public and most non-profit K-12 schools as well as all public and many private libraries. Program participants must carry out a competitive bidding process to select the most cost-effective companies to provide the goods and/or services requested” (U.S. Department of Education, 2019).

**Hotspot** – The physical location or device that provides an internet connection for public use (Strover, 2019).

**internet Computing Technologies (ICT)** – The technologies that offer access to information through telecommunication, and may include the internet, cell phones, and wireless networks (Hollins, 2015).

**internet Service Provider (ISP)** – Organizations such as AT&T, Verizon, or Comcast that support paid services for accessing or using the internet (Norton, 2001).

**Mobile Devices** – Computing devices that are mobile and handheld including smartphones and tablet computers (Kinney, 2010).



**Rural** – According to the U.S. Census Bureau, any area with fewer than 2,500 residents within a geographic area.

# Appendices

## Appendix A

Site: [U.S. Census Bureau- Geographic Areas and Rural Data](#)

### Geographic Areas and Rural Data

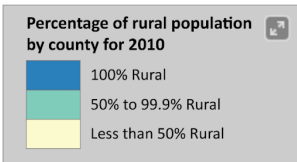
#### County Rurality

Counties can be categorized into levels of rurality based on the percentage of the decennial census population living in the rural areas. Using 2010 Census data, counties were classified as "mostly urban" (less than 50 percent of the population lived in rural areas), "mostly rural" (50 to 99.9 percent of the population lived in rural areas), and "completely rural" (100 percent of the population lived in rural areas).

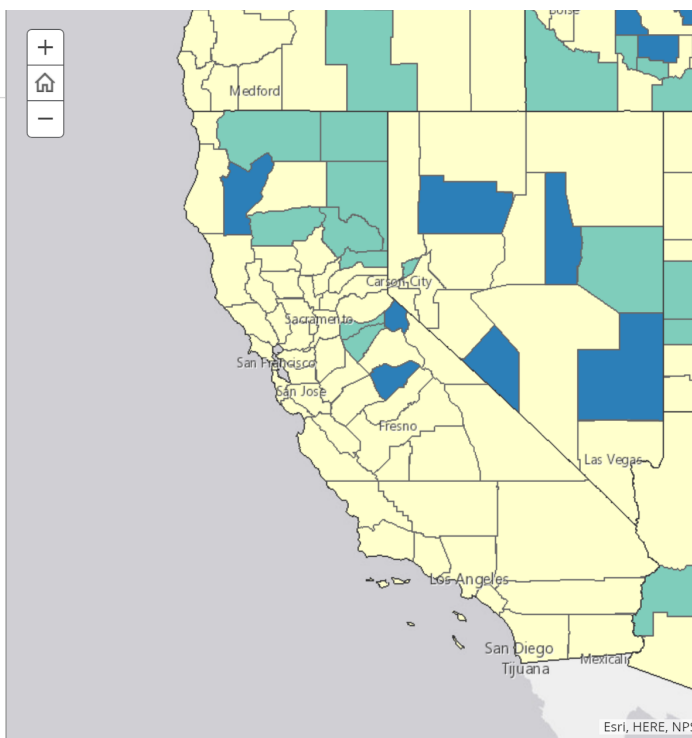


Click a category below to view the counties in the grouping.

[Completely Rural](#) [Mostly Rural](#) [Mostly Urban](#)



[Click here](#) to see the top five most and least populous counties by rurality level.



Esri, HERE, NPS

## Appendix B Terms of Agreements and internet Policy

### **Santa Cruz Public Libraries "Tech Take-Out" Device Lending Agreement**

#### **Eligibility**

Tech Devices (Fire tablet, Chromebook, and WiFi Hotspot) are available for use by Santa Cruz Public Libraries cardholders in good standing with a signed Device Lending Agreement on file. A new Agreement must be signed annually. Upon checkout patrons 18 years old and over must provide a valid, government-issued ID matching their library record. Patrons 17 years old and under may not check out a Tech Device.

#### **Usage**

Tech Devices are first come, first serve and patrons may only check out one of each type of device at a time. Patrons must take care of the Device and the accessories that come with them. Proper transport, handling, and use is imperative.

Printing is allowed via wireless printing or files may be saved on a compatible drive or to the cloud. All user data is deleted when the device is returned, though the borrower should take every precaution to log out of all accounts before returning the device. Instructions for doing this are included with the device.

The borrower agrees to return the device in clean and undamaged condition.

#### **Fines and Fees**

Overdue Tech Devices will accrue a \$.25 late fee every day past their due date. After 28 days of being overdue the total replacement cost will be applied to their library record. Patrons agree to assume any and all liability for the cost of repair or replacement in the event of loss due to theft, damage, negligence or misuse. Repair or replacement prices are as follows:

Fire tablet = \$50

Fire case = \$25

Chromebook = \$275

WiFi Hotspot = \$25

Chromebook + WiFi Hotspot Bundle = \$300

Library staff reserve the right to suspend privileges for any reason.

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Patron Name (Print)

Library Card Number

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Primary phone

Email

I have read and understand the Tech Device Lending Agreement and agree to accept all terms and liability.

---

Signature

Date

#### **Staff Use Only**

Patron Name:

Staff Initials:

Date:



## Internet and Wireless Access Policy

JPAB Policy # 317

Approved: 12/7/2017

Five-year Review Schedule: 12/2022

Santa Cruz Public Libraries (the Library) is committed to providing free and equitable access to information in all forms including the Internet. The Library Strategic Plan expressly ensures access to innovative tools and technologies necessary to find, evaluate, and use information and resources.

The Library makes every effort to provide high quality computing services to the community in a safe and welcoming environment for all patrons. Internet-enabled computers and unsecured wireless Internet access are available at all branches free of charge to all users.

The Library respects the responsibility of all parents and legal guardians to guide their own children's use of the library, its resources, and services. Because current technology intended to filter out inappropriate websites and images often blocks legitimate research sites and materials, SCPL does not utilize Internet filtering. However, the Library is CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act) compliant and does utilize geo-blocking as necessary to ensure the security of confidential patron information and the integrity of the Library's networks.

While the Library upholds the principles of the First Amendment, some materials are more suited to private viewing or are illegal. **Library equipment and networks may not be used for any illegal activity, or to access pornography or material that is obscene or harmful to minors** (18 USC 2252). Library users not abiding by these restrictions will be required to stop immediately. Offenses to this restriction will result in suspension from the Library.

The Library will not be responsible for any information (e.g. credit card) that is compromised, or for any damage caused to an individual's hardware or software due to electric surges, security issues, or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. All are expected to use the Library's Internet access in a legal and responsible manner. Violation of federal, state, or local laws, including the transmission or receiving of pornography or harmful material, fraud, or unlawful use of copyrighted material is prohibited.

# Contact your elected officials

- 01** Organize a local advocacy group or partner with a community organization.
- 02** Identify your city/county/state elected officials.
- 03** Attend town hall meetings with your advocacy group or community partner.
- 04** Visit your elected official's office.
- 05** Organize phone calls. Make sure all group members address the same issue or ask similar questions.
- 06** Go public. Share your results on social media or other media outlets.
- 07** Follow-up with your elected official. Thank them for their time and effort.

\*For more resources on engaging with stakeholders, check out the [ALA Public Policy and Advocacy page](#) or your state library association's page such as [California Library Association](#)

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