



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
District Instructional Leaders
District Information Technology (IT) Leaders
District Hotspot Contacts

FROM: Betsy Carpentier
Deputy Superintendent, Division of Data, Technology, and Agency Operations

DATE: July 7, 2020

RE: Update on Act 142 on Free Hotspots and Service Plans

On Wednesday, June 30, I sent a [notice](#) to district superintendents introducing one of the provisions of Act 142, which was signed into law last week on June 25. The Act directs the Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) to work with the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to “procure mobile hotspots and monthly service through December 2020 for distribution to a minimum of one hundred thousand households.” That memorandum mentions our intention to send to districts last week some information we were compiling from earlier surveys with questions specific to hotspots. As we have worked with ORS and other agencies, it has become apparent that an application or order with verifications will be necessary. Therefore, we will not be sending you customized information from those surveys.

Nevertheless, because there likely will be short turnaround deadlines in implementing this law, we are asking districts to begin compiling information that we believe will be needed. We also want to clarify that the Act 142 program is not only for provision of hotspots, but also for provision of monthly service, regardless of internet source. We therefore request that districts begin compiling the following:

1. The (a) identity of any student without internet access (whether because of availability of wired service or affordability issues); (b) household address, and (c) “pupil in poverty” (PIP) status of students in that household.

Act 142 applies only to households with a student and with an income at or below 250 percent of federal poverty. The Education Finance Act PIP metric includes students at no more than 208 percent of poverty, and therefore all of those students' households could be eligible.

Addresses are necessary to determine what internet service providers — wired, cellular, or otherwise — are available to serve the household. In addition to cellular hotspots, Act 142 allows ORS to fund “monthly service” from now through December 2020.

2. Develop a process for determining whether households with no student with the PIP indicator still meet the 250 percent of federal poverty criteria. A table with the annual and monthly income levels by household size is at the bottom of this memorandum.
3. If the district is already providing eligible student households with devices or service plans, the district will need to investigate issues related to both the contract and the equipment. Please also note that the federal law does not allow reimbursement for expenditures that were covered in a local government's budget on March 27, 2020.

Contractually, the district would need to determine whether the monthly service for those households (wired or with hotspots) could be purchased by ORS instead of the district for the statute period. For hotspots, the district and an internet service provider would need to review whether the equipment is compatible with the vendor's system. This requires a review of the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI).

The following are Verizon's instructions for collecting the IMEI. Verizon is not, however, the only vendor under review with ORS. If the district collects the IMEI information, we anticipate that the vendors will be able to look up the devices and determine verify coverage.

How to find device ID on Windows Laptop:

<https://www.verizon.com/support/knowledge-base-205836/>

How to find device ID (IMEI) on iPad: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204073>

How to find device ID on Jetpack/ Hotspot, USB Stick, and most other devices: <https://www.verizon.com/support/knowledge-base-55843/>

(There is usually a sticker on the back of the device.)

4. ORS is able to offer through the SCDE for non-eligible households, at district expense, the state-negotiated rates for Verizon hotspot equipment and service; it is reviewing whether this will be available for other vendors of wired and cellular monthly service. If the district is interested, the district should gather information similar to what is required for eligible households (name, address, etc.). This might be an option, for example, for covering teacher households.

5. The hotspot portion of the program is going to require the district to designate a CIPA Compliance – Content Filtering Administrator to work through issues of instructional content that is blocked by the standard filtering software. The district should begin its process for identifying who that person will be.

Once the application-order-verification process is finalized, we will be sending the forms to you with additional instructions. This memorandum is to give you advance notice of what will be required so that you will be prepared to respond promptly.

If you have questions or need assistance, please email Hotspots@ed.sc.gov.

2020 Federal Poverty Guidelines

Household - Family Size	250% Annual	250% Monthly
1	31,900	2,658
2	43,100	3,592
3	54,300	4,525
4	65,500	5,458
5	76,700	6,392
6	87,900	7,325
7	99,100	8,258
8	110,300	9,192
9	121,500	10,125
10	132,700	11,058