



# Digital Resources Guide for Reentry Organizations

In a world driven by digital tools, “most incarcerated Americans remain completely disconnected. While society races forward, they are locked out of the digital world, sometimes for years, even decades”<sup>1</sup>. This lack of access compounds the barriers justice-impacted individuals already face. Without training upon reentry, even tasks like applying for a job or checking in at a medical appointment can become insurmountable. Justice-impacted individuals who lack tech fluency are more likely to struggle with job applications, communication, and navigation of essential services. This disadvantage prolongs job searches and exacerbates economic instability, both of which are key contributors to recidivism. Programs and courses that boost digital literacy and facilitate self-efficacy could reduce recidivism. Read a success story of MIT-led Brave Behind Bars Program [here](#).



Compiled by the Illinois Office of Broadband, this guide gathers digital resources organizations can integrate into their reentry work and help guide individuals towards finding low-cost internet and devices and accessing free digital skills training. Many reentry organizations utilize a checklist and/or a case manager or counselor to assess the needs of a client. This checklist often includes items like identification, housing, mental health, employment, transportation, etc. Organizations then connect the client with relevant resources in each of these areas. With this existing touchpoint, organizations have the opportunity to screen clients for digital access needs and connect them to relevant resources, such as Internet, devices and digital skills training opportunities.

## Digital Resources

To understand tech needs of clients, use the [National Digital Inclusion Alliance’s Individual & Household Technology Check-up Tool](#) as a starting guide.

### Help Clients Get Affordable, Reliable Internet Access on Everyone On



- **Description:** [Everyone On](#) helps individuals find low-cost internet and computers based on location.
- **Contact:** Call/text (877) 779-1169 for enrollment assistance.
- **How to get started:** To start, click “Find low-cost Offers”, scroll down then enter your zip code, check all applicable programs you are participating in, then view internet offer results.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines “high-speed broadband” as 100 mbps download and 20 mbps upload. Here is a guide on what internet speed you may need based on your household activities by BroadbandNow:

Internet speed	Good for
10 Mbps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 or 2 users</li> <li>• Internet browsing and social media</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Music streaming and limited on-demand video streaming</li> </ul>
25 Mbps	All of the above, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 to 3 users</li> <li>• On-demand video streaming</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://thelastmile.org/digital-literacy-in-prisons-reentry-technology/>



Internet speed	Good for
100 Mbps	All of the above, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 to 4 users</li> <li>• Streaming on-demand video, including HD video</li> <li>• Video conferencing (e.g., Zoom)</li> </ul>
200 Mbps	All of the above, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 to 5 users</li> <li>• Streaming live and HD video on multiple devices</li> <li>• Online gaming</li> </ul>
500 Mbps	All of the above, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 to 6 users</li> <li>• Streaming live and HD video on multiple devices</li> <li>• More competitive online gaming and livestreaming</li> </ul>
1 Gbps (1,000 Mbps)	All of the above, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5+ users</li> <li>• Competitive online gaming on multiple devices</li> </ul>
2+ Gbps	All of the above, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ users</li> <li>• Business or enterprise use</li> </ul>

## Help Clients Access Low-cost or Free Computers



- [PCs for People](#)
  - **Description:** PCs for People specializes in refurbished laptop and desktop computers, tech accessories as well as internet solutions including internet hotspots.
  - **Contact:** Call 651-354-2552. **Address:** 4535 SW Highway, Oak Lawn, IL 60453.
  - **How to get started:** Browse devices and internet options and add them to cart as you would with online shopping.
- [Human I-T](#)
  - **Description:** Human I-T creates equitable access to opportunity by providing devices, internet access, digital skills training, and tech support for communities left on the wrong side of the digital divide.
  - **Contact:** Call 888-268-3921.
  - **How to get started:** Browse their programs which include tech programs, digital skill building, tech support and low-cost internet.

## Help Clients Access Low-cost or Free Computers *(continued)*

- [Compudopt](#)
  - **Description:** Compudopt provides technology access and education to under-resourced communities.
  - **Contact:** [info@compudopt.org](mailto:info@compudopt.org) or call 281-729-5511. **Address:** 1414 Brook Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60515.
  - **How to get started:** Browse their programs which include computer giveaways, tech programs, digital skill building and low-cost internet.

## Help Clients Get Discount on Qualifying Phone, Internet or Bundled Service Through Lifeline



- **Description:** Lifeline is an FCC program that helps make communications services more affordable for low-income consumers. Lifeline provides a monthly discount on qualifying phone, internet, or bundled service from participating providers. Lifeline provides up to a \$9.25 monthly discount on service for eligible low-income subscribers and up to \$34.25 per month for eligible subscribers on Tribal lands.
- **Website and contact:** [Home - National Verifier](#). Call the Lifeline Support Center at (800) 234-9473, 7 days a week, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET or email at [LifelineSupport@usac.org](mailto:LifelineSupport@usac.org)
- **How to get started:** [Fill out information](#) to see if eligibility requirement has been met for a discount on a phone, Internet, or bundled service. If eligibility has been met, the form will continue to the application page.

## Accessibility Resources for All Abilities - Illinois Assistive Technology Program



- **Description:** [Illinois Assistive Technology Program](#) provides information, training, device demonstrations, loans and specialized services like 3D printing and recycling programs to help individuals find and obtain the technology they need to enhance their independence in education, employment, and community living.
- **Website and contact:** [Illinois Assistive Technology Program](#). Call (217) 522-7985 or (800) 852-5110.
- **How to get started:** Browse offerings under “How We Help” and choose the desired option.

## Digital Literacy and Skills Training Free Resources



Use [National Digital Inclusion Alliance's Digital Skills Checklist](#) as a guide to understand skills needs.

### Online Options

- [Compudopt](#) provides [digital skill building programs](#).
- [Digital Skills Online Resources](#)
- [Ventura County Digital Upskilling Training Program](#)
- [Free Digital Skills Library](#)
- [Federal Reserve Education](#), a free platform with economics and personal finance resources for classrooms and communities.
- Free basic digital literacy learning website [Digi-Scape](#)
- Women's Business Development Center – Ongoing on-demand digital skills courses - [Digital Learning - Women's Business Development Center](#)

## Digital Literacy and Skills Training Free Resources *(continued)*

### In-Person Options

- Check [local public libraries](#) for workshop and resources. Please note that some of the listings might be out of date.
- [Digital Growth Initiative Lake County](#)
  - **Description:** Ongoing in-person basic digital skills courses in English and Spanish
  - **Contact and registration:** To register via email: [digitalnavigators@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:digitalnavigators@lakecountyil.gov) or call: (847) 377-3442; Location: 20 S County Street, Waukegan, IL 60085
- scaleLIT
  - **Description:** Resources for adult education and workforce digital literacy and The Digital Learning Lab. [Digital literacy sessions](#) are offered on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at different Chicago locations.
  - **Contact and registration:** Register [here](#). Find locations and course offerings [here](#).
- Land of Lincoln Goodwill Industries, Bloomington/Normal Area
  - **Description:** [Free computer classes and digital training](#), and general employment support
  - **Contact:** 217-220-9445; Email: [Ursula.Loercher@llgi.org](mailto:Ursula.Loercher@llgi.org)
- Tri-County Urban League, Peoria, IL
  - **Description:** [Community Technology Center](#) with basic and intermediate computer instruction for youth and adults.
  - **Contact:** Phone: 309-673-7474; Location: 317 S. MacArthur Highway, Peoria, IL 61605
- YWCA Rockford, IL
  - **Description:** [YW Tech Lab job training and digital skills lab](#).
  - **Contact:** Phone: 815-968-9681; Location: 4990 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61108

## General Reentry Resources



### Mapping Your Future - A Guide to Successful Reentry

- **Description:** [Mapping Your Future](#) was created by the Reentry Resource Program (RRP), a group of committed Education Justice Project (EJP) members. EJP is part of the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Since 2008, EJP has taught college courses to people incarcerated at Danville Correctional Center in Central Illinois. We created Mapping Your Future because we care about people like you, who are being released from prison. This guide is also available in Spanish.
- **Contact:** Education Justice Project, Reentry Resource Program 1001 S Wright St Champaign, IL 61820.
  - Website: [Educationjustice.net](http://Educationjustice.net)
  - Phone: (217) 300-5150
  - Email: [reentry@educationjustice.net](mailto:reentry@educationjustice.net)
- **How to get started:** Refer to Table of Contents to navigate to the desired section. Or search through keyword. Starting on page 149, there is a directory of different resources across the state, such as housing, employment, legal and family and children resources.



## Illinois Reentry Resources Database

- **Description:** The [Illinois Reentry Resources database](#) is a comprehensive, online directory designed to connect formerly-incarcerated individuals across Illinois with essential services and support. Whether you're searching for housing assistance, employment opportunities, food programs, healthcare, legal aid, or other vital resources, this easy-to-use platform helps you find what you need.
- **Contact:** Education Justice Project, Reentry Resource Program 1001 S Wright St Champaign, IL 61820.
  - Phone: (217) 300-5150
  - Email: [reentry@educationjustice.net](mailto:reentry@educationjustice.net)
- **How to get started:** Search by location, category, or keyword to access up-to-date listings from trusted local organizations.



<https://dceo.illinois.gov/broadband.html>



[Broadband@illinois.gov](mailto:Broadband@illinois.gov)



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/illinois-broadband-lab/>

