How Some Public Libraries Are Addressing the Digital Divide

[New Orleans Public Library in New Orleans, Louisiana](https://nolalibrary.org/)

Take Home a Tablet program is a Samsung A7 Lite tablet with an unlimited data plan from T-Mobile. They can also be used as a Mobile Hotspot, serving as a Wi-Fi access point for up to 10 other devices. All tablets come preloaded with popular education and entertainment apps. (Checkout is for 6 months). Also, NOPL offers Book a Librarian program for those needing computer, smartphone, or job help in an hour-long appointment for one-on-one help.

[Seattle Public Library in Seattle, Washington](https://www.spl.org/)

Technology for Beginners courses, for those new to using computers or the internet. A variety of courses are available in person either during a one-to-one Tech Help session or by attending SPL’s technology classes. Such as Mousercise introduces beginning computer users to the “mouse” and “cursor” for navigating computer screens, with practice opportunities. SPL also offers a service called TechConnect, which is free, virtual tech assistance for Washington residents via chat, email, or phone. Assistance is provided in Spanish, Tigrinya, Afaan Oromoo, Amharic, Sidamo, Wolaytta, and English.

[Springfield Public Library in Springfield, Massachusetts](http://www.springfieldlibrary.org)

Borrow a Chromebook and/or Hotspot programs. Patrons can check out a Chromebook, a small laptop running software by Google that allows you to access an internet browser via a Wi-Fi connection. The Chromebook has speakers and a camera that can be used for pictures or video (perfect for telehealth visits). If the patrons don’t have internet access at home; then they can check out a mobile hotspot with the Chromebook. A hotspot is a small, portable device that allows you to connect to Wi-Fi internet from a computer, tablet, smartphone, or other internet-connecting device. (Checkout is for 14 days)

[Sno-Isle Public Library in Marysville, Washington](https://www.sno-isle.org/)

Laptops, Wi-Fi Hotspots & To Go Kits can be placed on hold and checked out together if needed. The hotspot is a pocket-sized mobile router for quick internet access. (Checkout is for 3 weeks). Sno-Isle also provides access to Northstar Digital Literacy, which allows patrons to build skills and confidence in using computers, email, and the internet through assessments. Some assessments focus on essential computer skills, including basic computer skills, internet basics, and using email.

[Detroit Public Library in Detroit, Michigan](https://detroitpubliclibrary.org)

The Detroit Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) is at the Douglass Branch. It offers services, materials, and events to anyone with a visual or physical handicap or a reading disability. The Detroit Public Library provides accommodations by request for physical access, communications, or other needs to ensure services, activities, and programs are available to people with disabilities. DPL also offers computer classes and one-on-one computer assistance with a Technology Training Associate.