

Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company - Bringing Fiber Fast Internet to Emerson - Attachment Letter J

In addition to making high-speed broadband services available to consumers in the described project area, Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company (NNTC) understands the importance of addressing service “affordability” and “digital literacy” concerns in a meaningful way. As its “Digital Inclusion Plan”, NNTC would take those actions outlined below, if it is awarded grant funds under the “Broadband Bridge Program”:

1. Free modems or routers would be provided to new customers signing up for NNTC’s broadband services within the proposed project area.
2. NNTC will also waive its standard broadband service install charges for new subscribers within the project area who sign up at initial request, which again eliminates a higher bill for customers who are unable to cover those extra expenses;
3. NNTC will offer two months of free service for TV, phone and/or internet for any customer who signs up upon NNTC’s initial marketing request;
4. NNTC will as part of its broadband service promotion and marketing within the project area undertake concentrated efforts to ensure that those individuals and households eligible for participation under any federal, state, or local broadband discount Program, such as the Lifeline Program and/or Emergency Broadband Benefit Program, are aware of any monthly broadband discounts they may receive and how to most easily sign-up for these discounts;
5. NNTC will also within the described project area take steps to ensure that students residing in the described project area have affordable access to the broadband service needed for educational needs by: (1) encouraging the participation of affected schools in the FCC’s “Emergency Connectivity Program” or other later, similar programs designed to better ensure student access to high-speed broadband services; and (2) installing free Wi-Fi hotspots in locations where that may be desired by educational institutions or students within the proposed project area;
6. It should further be noted that NNTC does not within its broadband service packages impose any data caps on monthly usage or impose any related surcharges for what may be viewed as excessive use of its broadband services and NNTC does not assess early termination disconnection fees on subscribers who may have a need to disconnect after only being on their broadband service for a short period of time. NNTC also works with customers for payment plans if they fall behind.
7. Non-adoption of broadband services is also linked to certain demographic factors like age and educational attainment, but it is also more generally connected to a lack of understanding by many individuals of the importance or relevancy of using broadband services in today’s world and deficient digital knowledge and skills in using either the required electronic devices or necessary software applications. NNTC understands the need to not only address internet access affordability issues but also the digital literacy concerns that prevent many lower-income individuals and families from subscribing to and using available broadband to improve their life circumstances. Accordingly, will as part of its outreach to residents within the project area include as part of its hard copy

promotional and informational materials, on its website, and in social media postings information geared toward improving the digital technology and skills of those individuals either subscribing, or interested in subscribing to broadband service. One initial step will be the creation of a Spanish language version of our company marketing materials which should assist in helping our Latino community members sign-up for the offered broadband services.