

Hamden Public Schools

At-Home Learning - Internet Access Information

Internet access in your home is needed in order to use Hamden's at-home learning program through Google Classroom. If you already have access to wireless Internet where you live, you are good to go! If you do not currently have Internet at home, we want you to know that Hamden Public Schools is exploring ways to make sure your child can connect at home. As we know more, we will be sure to let you know. In the meantime, the information below may help you get connected on your own.

Ask a Neighbor

When you turn on your device, you can see any networks that are near enough to you to provide a signal that you could use. The majority of these networks belong to your neighbors, and most of these will be "locked" – which means they require a password. Thankfully, this is a time in our lives where people are really trying to work together to help each other. Consider asking your neighbors if they would give you their passwords to their networks (or even type them in for you so you never see it). It won't cost them any more to allow you access, and if your reason for needing the access is to help a child continue learning, it's very possible they will allow it. It doesn't hurt to ask!

Connecting Through Comcast-Xfinity and AT&T

To help communities during the Coronavirus pandemic, Comcast-Xfinity and AT&T are providing new or modified Internet connection options. Some of the options are free, while others are low cost:

Hotspots

There are hundreds of "hotspots" (locations that allow Internet access) in Hamden. You just have to find one that allows you to connect.

- During the next months, Comcast will allow anyone to connect to one of their existing hotspots for free. You can find the closest hotspot to where you live here: <http://hotspots.wifi.comcast.com/> If you are lucky, there may be one right near your home and you can access it from your living room! We are also working with Comcast to establish new hotspots.

Getting Your Own Internet Network

- **Comcast** created a program years ago called *InternetEssentials*. The program is currently free for new customers who meet low-income qualifications. Even if you didn't qualify before, the rules have changed a bit, so it may be worth a try - <http://www.internetessentials.com/covid19> or call (800) 934-6489.
- **AT&T** has a program called *Access from AT&T*, which provides \$5-\$10/month Internet access to households that have qualified for free or reduced lunch or who qualify as a limited income household. New AT&T customers get two months of free service. <https://m.att.com/shopmobile/internet/access/>

Using Your Smartphone

Smartphones have the ability to become hotspots. However, cell phone hotspots can really rack up charges on your data plan. If you have unlimited data as part of your plan, download an app by your provider to make your smartphone a hotspot – and you're connected! If you don't have unlimited data, we suggest contacting your provider to find out if they have implemented special programs due to Coronavirus. Some phone service providers are waiving data charges and allowing unlimited data for the next 60 days.