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1,584 Tablets to be Distributed to USVI Students through Federal Program

889 tablets for St. Thomas-St. John and 695 for St. Croix to support student learning

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The V.I. Dept. of Education has provided an update to families in the U.S. Virgin Islands on the status of tablet distribution as part of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

This program, developed by the Federal Communications Commission, is designed to assist families in affording necessary internet services for education, work, and health by offering a monthly discount on internet services and a one-time discount for the purchase of a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet. The program ceased accepting applications on February 7, 2024.

Under the ACP, 1,584 households across the U.S. Virgin Islands have qualified to receive a tablet and internet service, with distribution divided between 889 recipients in the St. Thomas-St. John District and 695 in the St. Croix District. Heritage Wireless, responsible for supplying the tablets, will also confirm eligibility to all applicants, according to the Dept. of Education.

The tablets, already shipped to the territory by Heritage Wireless, are being organized for distribution by the D.O.E. Families eligible to receive the tablets will be informed of a distribution schedule and will be required to sign a receipt form, which outlines the terms of use and provisions for the tablets. These devices, each fitted with a SIM card for T-Mobile's network, will be owned by the students and do not need to be returned.

This initiative, fully funded by the Federal Government's \$15 billion allocation to the ACP, aims to ensure no cost is passed on to the families for the tablet or the internet service. The Dept. of Education emphasizes that the ownership of the devices rests with the households, and they are not responsible for the devices' maintenance or internet service fees.

Continued free internet service under the ACP is contingent upon the availability of federal funding and the ongoing provision of the \$30 subsidy benefit. According to Education officials, Heritage Wireless has committed to offering affordable internet and cellular service plans, starting at \$30 per month, under FCC regulation to ensure privacy and proper use of application data.

The Dept. of Education said it supports the ACP as part of its mission to provide equitable educational opportunities and resources for all students, reinforcing the department's commitment to creating an inclusive learning environment. For further details about the Affordable Connectivity Program, families are encouraged to visit the FCC's official [ACP webpage](#).