

# Ohio Public Library Information Network

## Request for Proposal

Consortium bids for Wi-Fi Hotspots Adopted for the E-Rate Program, to be evaluated, contracted, and billed by local entities

## Wi-Fi hotspot equipment and service for the Off-Premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program

### THIS REQUEST IS FOR:

OPLIN seeks bids for off-premises mobile data service and equipment for local library and library system entities to evaluate, select, contract, and request reimbursement through the FCC Off-premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program. Ohio libraries have an estimated program budget of over \$33 million. During the Emergency Connectivity Fund era, there were 3,500 devices and data service contracts for about 20,000 lines requested statewide. There is potential for around 50,000 devices and the corresponding service under this program, though participation in this consortium bid is entirely voluntary and up to the discretion of the local entities. Bids are expected to follow all of the terms and conditions of the FCC Off-premise Wi-Fi Hotspot Program rules, and shall allow for termination at no penalty to the contracting entity in the event that the FCC Off-premise Wi-Fi Hotspot Program is terminated or significantly altered prior to the end of the contract term.

### TIME OF PERFORMANCE:

These bids shall cover the term of the FCC Off-premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program as they stand as of the date of this RFP; namely, the bids shall cover the term of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028, otherwise known as Funding Years 2025, 2026, and 2027 of the E-Rate program. Again, any contract executed under this RFP is subject to the longevity of the FCC Off-premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program. Any bid submitted under this RFP must include options for the contracting entities to either terminate or continue their contract in the event that the FCC Off-premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program is either terminated or significantly altered before June 30, 2028.

## SPECIFICATIONS

To be considered, bidders must do the following; failure to do so will result in automatic disqualification from consideration:

- Provide details regarding how the plan will meet the requirements of the FCC Off-premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program, namely
  - Automatically providing regular reports on usage for each device
  - Automatically identifying devices that have gone unused for 60 days
  - Automatically terminating service on devices that are unused for 90 days
  - Excluding or waiving early termination fees for lines of service associated with Wi-Fi-hotspots that are lost, broken, or unused
- Provide details for optional continuation or termination of the contract, in the event that the FCC Off-premises Wi-Fi Hotspot Program is either terminated or significantly altered before June 30, 2028.

### Highly Preferred Service Elements

The following requirements are highly preferred for all services proposed in response to this request. Responses that do not meet these requirements may not be considered, at the discretion of the local entity.

- Supply an engineering-level coverage map for the State of Ohio
- Supply a copy of standard warranty and terms of service
- Provide clear instructions for indicating BEAR or SPI billing
- Supply a secure web-based portal for local entities to access management and reporting tools
- Support the following capabilities in the secure web-based portal for the local entities
  - Ability to generate on-demand inventory reports, which shall include make, model, serial number, service number, last activity date, data usage, and library barcode number
  - Ability to temporarily disable any unit for periods of less than 30 days without loss of service line
  - Ability to use filtering technology and manage filtering settings per unit, if desired
- Provide unlimited data
- Utilize 5G technology for the hotspot and the internet service at all times when such technology is available
  - The service shall not switch to 4G if a data threshold is exceeded
- Utilize the highest speeds for connectivity available at all times
  - The speed of connectivity shall not be throttled if a data threshold is exceeded
- Specifically support the use of DNS-based filtering technologies, if desired.

### Additional Service Elements

The contracting entity shall have the ability to identify other service elements in their bid evaluation, including, but not limited to, past experience with the bidding entity. This RFP does not obligate any library or library system in Ohio to contract with any bidder.

### Causes for Termination of Contract

Causes for termination of the contract without penalty to the contracting entity include, but are not limited to

- Nonperformance
- Undisclosed exceptions or contract terms at the time of the bid
- FCC Red Light status
- Missing or invalid forms on file with FCC or USAC, including SPIN, FCC registration, or SPAC
- Violations of program gift rules
- Lack of document retention according to program rules.

## PRICE SCHEDULES

In addition to addressing the Specifications enumerated above, complete bids must include a detailed price schedule addressing the criteria described below.

### Wi-Fi Hotspots for off-premises use

- **For hotspots priced up to and including \$90.00 per unit, the program funding cap limit**
  - Per unit cost
  - Taxes
  - Asset tagging costs
  - Other inventory management services, beyond those required by program rules
  - Activation fees
  - Configuration fees
  - Asset tagging fees
  - Other processing fees (circulation cases, item barcoding, etc.)

- Replacement costs of lost or damaged units
  - Data technology used (4G or 5G)
  - Data caps
  - Supports for filtering
    - DNS filtering
    - Other filtering services and fees
  - Other device management features available via the service portal
- **For hotspots priced above \$90.00 per unit, the program funding cap limit**
    - Per unit cost
    - Taxes
    - Asset tagging costs
    - Other inventory management services, beyond those required by program rules
    - Activation fees
    - Configuration fees
    - Asset tagging fees
    - Other processing fees (circulation cases, item barcoding, etc.)
    - Replacement costs of lost or damaged units
    - Data technology used (4G or 5G)
    - Data caps
    - Supports for filtering
      - DNS filtering
      - Other filtering services and fees
    - Other device management features available via the service portal

Wireless Internet services that can be delivered with a Wi-Fi hotspot for off-premises use

- **For services priced up to and including \$15.00 per month, the program funding cap limit**
  - Per month cost
  - Taxes
  - Activation fees
  - Configuration fees
  - Data technology used (4G or 5G)
  - Data caps
  - Supports filtering
    - DNS filtering
    - Other filtering services and fees
- **For hotspots priced above \$15.00 per month, the program funding cap limit**
  - Per unit cost
  - Taxes
  - Activation fees
  - Configuration fees
  - Data technology used (4G or 5G)
  - Data caps
  - Supports filtering
    - DNS filtering
    - Other filtering services and fees

## EVALUATION, AWARDS, AND QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to [hotspot470@oplin.ohio.gov](mailto:hotspot470@oplin.ohio.gov). Questions are due in writing by 9am EST on Friday, December 6 and will be answered for the benefit of all applicants at [https://www.oplin.ohio.gov/hotspot\\_bidder\\_FAQ](https://www.oplin.ohio.gov/hotspot_bidder_FAQ) by 5pm on Friday, December 13. Bids shall be due by the allowable contract date on FCC Form 470, or on a date thereafter, as communicated at [https://www.oplin.ohio.gov/hotspot\\_bidder\\_FAQ](https://www.oplin.ohio.gov/hotspot_bidder_FAQ). Late, incomplete, or spam bids may not be considered.

Per program rules, the price of the eligible products and services must be the most heavily weighted factor in bid evaluation, but these additional criteria may be among those considered. Other bid evaluation criteria, and the weighting of any evaluation criteria, will be determined by the local billed entity.

**Final decisions will be made by public libraries within Ohio according to local bid evaluation matrices. Questions regarding selection criteria and results should be directed to the E-Rate Administrator for the local entity.**