

# Technology and Internet Access

Technology has become a necessary part of everyday life — and that includes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Smartphones, computers, smart home devices, and the internet help people with IDD live more independently, stay connected, find jobs, get an education, and stay safe.

## **The problem:**

Most people with IDD have low incomes, and the cost of devices and internet service is often too high. Insurance and government benefits usually don't cover these expenses.

## **Why does internet access matter so much?**

The internet is now as essential as electricity or running water. Important information about weather emergencies, health alerts, and public safety is shared online. People without internet access can be left out — and even put in danger.

## **What needs to change?**

- Treat internet access like a basic utility that everyone needs
- Make sure people with IDD have the same access to technology as people without disabilities
- Allow government programs like Medicaid to pay for everyday devices, not just specialized ones
- Include technology needs in each person's individual education and support plan
- Make sure coverage includes the cost of devices, setup, training, and high-speed internet
- Keep policies flexible so they can include new technology as it develops
- Invest in research to find the best technology solutions for people with IDD
- Make specialized assistive technology available for those who need it

## **The bottom line:**

Technology is not a luxury — it's a necessity. People with IDD deserve full and affordable access to the digital world, just like everyone else.