

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **SPL partnering with Saskatoon Food Bank to lend WiFi hotspots**

Saskatoon Public Library (SPL) is helping bridge the digital divide by partnering with the Saskatoon Food Bank to lend WiFi hotspots to people without internet access at their homes.

The program kicked off on Apr 26, when SPL employees met with patrons who qualified for the program and sent them home a hotspot. Because there is a limited supply of hotspots available, the Food Bank asks interested patrons to fill out a short survey to determine eligibility for the program. There are a total of 40 hotspots available to be borrowed, and the loan period for each device is three months.

To be eligible for this program, patrons must be Saskatoon residents, at least 18 years old, have a valid library card, and have a valid need for a hotspot in their home.

While SPL offers free WiFi and public computers at all nine of their locations, this is only available during library hours. Lending hotspots will allow patrons to access the internet on computers and mobile devices within their own home, 24 hours a day.

“Internet access is a vital part of day-to-day life in Canada, but it can be cost-prohibitive for many low-income households,” explained Beth Cote, SPL’s Director of Public Services. “This is another example of the work we’re doing to ensure our services reflect current patron needs.”

Patrons who receive a hotspot will be asked to fill out a short survey so SPL can gauge how effective the program is during the six-month pilot phase. The service may expand or contract following the pilot phase depending on patron feedback and circulation statistics.

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### **For more information, contact:**

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