



December 21, 2020

For immediate release
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Escanaba Public Library Launches WiFi Hotspot Lending Program

The Escanaba Public Library announces the launch of its mobile WiFi hotspot lending program, expanding free Internet access to patrons beyond the library building. With this new service, patrons are invited to “check out the Internet,” just as they would check out a book or other library resource.

Hotspots are portable, easy to use and provide a connection to the Internet by using nearby cellular towers to create a wireless network that can be shared between mobile-enabled devices. Library hotspots operate on the Northern Michigan University Educational Access Network (EAN). To use a hotspot, patrons must be within 3 miles of an EAN cellular tower and have an Internet ready device, such as a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone to use with the hotspot. The hotspots offer 4G LTE connectivity. Signal strength will vary based on the physical location of the hotspot. Each WiFi hotspot kits contains a hotspot device, Micro USB cable, power brick, quick start guide and coverage map.

"The goal is to keep people connected," said library director Carolyn Stacey, "to remove barriers to digital access and expand connectivity options in our community. With students live-streaming classes, adults attending virtual meetings, and so much of daily life online, the need for service is high."

The program is funded with a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) administered by the Library of Michigan.

Hotspots check out for a 7-day period. There is no fee for the service. Borrowers must be 18 or older and have a valid Escanaba Public Library card. For more information or to reserve a WiFi hotspot, call the library at 906-789-7323 or visit the library online at www.escanabalibrary.org



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