

The Digital Citizenship Charter

A simple charter: In the 21st century, freedom and opportunity depend on digital access, literacy, and safety. No American should be left offline, unprotected, or unequipped to thrive in civic digital life. This charter affirms that digital rights are civil rights — and that every citizen will be empowered to navigate, create, and participate responsibly in the digital age.

Why It Matters

Millions of Americans lack reliable broadband, excluding them from education, work, and civic participation.

Digital illiteracy leaves communities vulnerable to disinformation, scams, and economic exclusion.

Children face unsafe online environments, from predatory behavior to harmful content.

Without universal standards, the digital divide deepens social and economic inequality.

Our belief: Just as the nation once built public schools, highways, and electricity grids, today we must guarantee digital literacy, broadband, and safety as essential infrastructure for democracy.

What We're Saying

This is not optional progress. It is a charter: that every American will have the tools, protections, and skills to be a responsible and empowered digital citizen.

What It Guarantees

- **Universal Digital Literacy:** Every student and adult equipped with the skills to navigate digital life.
- **Equitable Broadband Access:** High-speed, affordable internet in every household and community.
- **Online Child Safety:** Strong protections against exploitation, harmful content, and predatory behavior.
- **Civic Digital Participation:** Tools and standards for responsible engagement, privacy, and democratic participation online.

- **Digital Rights as Civil Rights:** Recognition that access, literacy, and safety online are foundational to freedom.

Programs You'll See

- **National Digital Literacy Corps:** A service initiative teaching digital skills in schools, libraries, and community centers.
- **Broadband for All Act:** Guarantees universal, affordable high-speed internet through federal–local partnerships.
- **Child Online Safety Act:** Establishes enforceable standards for platforms to protect children from harm.
- **Digital Citizenship Curriculum:** Integrated into every K–12 and adult education program.
- **Civic Tech Hubs:** Public access spaces offering broadband, training, and civic engagement tools.
- **Privacy & Responsibility Standards:** National frameworks promoting safe, ethical participation in digital life.

How We'll Make It Real

0–100 Days

- Establish the National Digital Citizenship Council with educators, parents, youth, and tech leaders.
- Begin broadband audits to identify unserved and underserved regions.

Year 1

- Pass the Broadband for All Act and Child Online Safety Act.
- Launch the first National Digital Literacy Corps deployments.

Years 2–3

- Integrate Digital Citizenship Curriculum in schools nationwide.
- Open Civic Tech Hubs in 200 communities.

Years 4–5

- Ensure every household has affordable broadband.
- Achieve nationwide benchmarks for digital literacy and online safety.

Accountability & Measures

- **Broadband Access:** % of households with affordable high-speed internet.
- **Digital Literacy:** % of students and adults completing digital literacy benchmarks.
- **Child Safety:** Reduction in online exploitation cases and harmful content exposure.
- **Civic Participation:** Rates of safe, responsible engagement in online democratic processes.
- **Equity:** Progress in closing digital divides across race, class, and geography.

Guardrails & Values

- **Equity First:** Rural, low-income, and historically excluded communities prioritized.
- **Child Protection:** Safety standards embedded in law, not left to corporate discretion.
- **Privacy & Responsibility:** Citizens protected while encouraged to participate responsibly.
- **Transparency:** Public dashboards tracking broadband rollout, literacy progress, and safety measures.
- **Community Voice:** Families, educators, and local leaders co-design digital initiatives.

Who This Helps (Snapshots)

- **Maya (10):** Learns safe and responsible online behavior through digital citizenship education.

- **Devon (19):** Accesses high-speed broadband for college classes in a rural town.
- **Mrs. Alvarez (42):** Trains in digital skills through her library's Literacy Corps program.
- **Tyrone (55):** Gains new job opportunities with improved digital literacy and broadband access.
- **Grandmother Helen (73):** Connects securely with family and civic resources online without fear of scams.

What Success Looks Like

In 24 Months

- Broadband for All Act in motion; major unserved areas connected.
- First wave of schools adopt digital citizenship curriculum.

In 5 Years

- Universal broadband access.
- Child Online Safety Act fully enforced; literacy programs reaching millions.

In 10 Years

- Digital citizenship is a national standard: every American online, skilled, safe, and participating responsibly in civic digital life.

The Commitment

The Digital Citizenship Charter is a vow: that America will not leave its people stranded on the wrong side of the digital divide. Every citizen will be connected, protected, and prepared to thrive in the digital age.

Historical Reference & Value

America has faced major transitions before: universal public schooling in the 19th century, rural electrification in the 1930s, and universal telephone access in the 20th century. Each effort expanded freedom and opportunity. The digital revolution demands the same vision. From the Communications Act of 1934 to the E-Rate program of the 1990s, government investments have shown that connectivity is a

public good. The COVID-19 pandemic further revealed that digital access is not optional — it is essential for school, work, healthcare, and civic life. The Digital Citizenship Charter builds on these legacies, declaring digital rights as civil rights for the 21st century.

Referenced Acts & Initiatives (Guiding Frameworks)

- **Broadband for All Act:** Guarantees affordable high-speed internet nationwide.
- **Child Online Safety Act:** Establishes enforceable protections for minors online.
- **National Digital Literacy Corps Act:** Deploys trained educators to expand skills in communities.
- **Digital Citizenship Curriculum Act:** Requires integration of digital literacy and responsibility into education.
- **Civic Tech Hubs Program:** Creates community-based access points for broadband and civic tools.
- **Privacy & Responsibility Standards Act:** Establishes national guidelines for ethical participation in digital life.

Sealing Line

So it is chartered: that America will step into the digital age not divided, but united — every citizen equipped, every child protected, every community connected.