

COVID-19 Challenge No. 1: Inequitable Internet Access

17% of Texas Households w/Children Currently Lacking Broadband Subscription w/ Significant Geographic Concentrations in Both Major Urban Areas and the Rio Grande Valley

Challenge(s):

- Per U.S. Census data, **1.3M households with children, or ~17% of these 7.3 million households in Texas**, do not reflect broadband subscription, with 800k (62%) of these households located in just 10 (4%) of Texas's 254 separate counties.
- While largest numbers are in the large metro urban counties (Dallas, Tarrant, Harris, etc.) the largest percentages of households without broadband are concentrated in the Rio Grande Valley and select rural counties.
- Over 89% of Texas has broadband access (100mbps or faster); our state's primary challenge is **low subscription rates due to cost and insufficient household credit to purchase the service** combined with **insufficient access to public Wi-Fi** via libraries, coffee shops, etc.
- Internet connectivity is not only important to remote learning for K-12 and higher education students but is **also important in accessing post-secondary enrollment, critical job training and job-seeking sites, tele-medicine health and community connectivity including faith-based institutions.**