

GILMER COUNTY DIGITAL EQUITY FACT SHEET

WHAT IS DIGITAL EQUITY?

Digital equity ensures that all individuals and communities, regardless of location or socioeconomic status, have access to affordable, reliable internet, as well as the skills necessary to fully participate in today's digital society.

Households without Device:

WEST VIRGINIA 11.2%

GILMER COUNTY 19.7%

Households without Broadband:

WEST VIRGINIA 17.3%

GILMER COUNTY 25.7%

Covered Population Demographics

There are **7,444** Residents in
GILMER COUNTY



22.11%

Households with incomes at or below the national poverty level.

17.5%

of the population are aging individuals (65+)



15.5%

of the population are individuals living with a disability

21.8%

of the population are part of a minority group



Why Digital Equity Matters in Gilmer County



Education:

- Broadband access helps students participate in online learning, complete assignments, and develop digital skills.



Healthcare:

- Telemedicine access can be crucial for rural areas, providing healthcare without the need for extensive travel.



Workforce Development:

- High-speed internet fosters job opportunities, skills training, and remote work potential in rural communities.

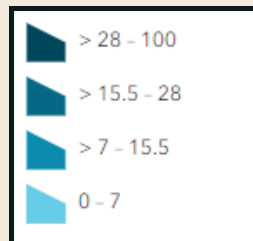


Civic Engagement:

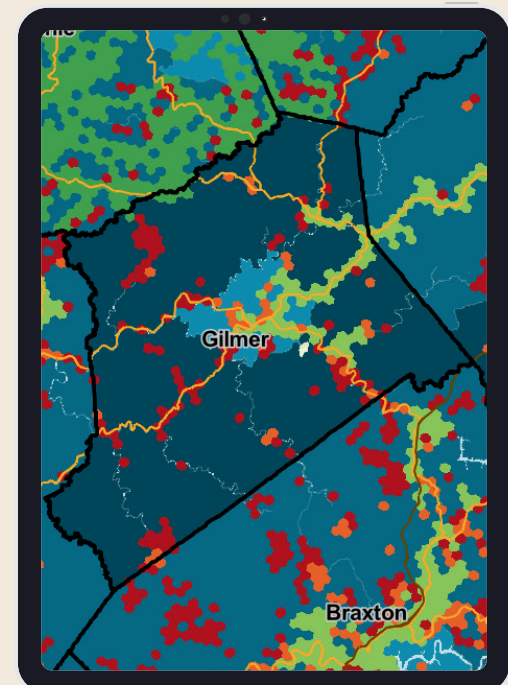
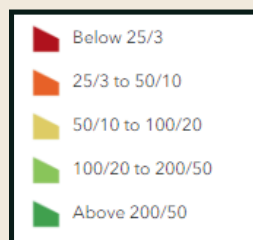
- Broadband helps residents participate in democracy, access public services, and stay informed.

Broadband Coverage in GILMER COUNTY

% of no broadband
subscription



Claimed Speeds



Digital equity plans were completed by Generation WV on behalf of Gilmer County in Fall 2024. GWV hosted community workshop and planning meetings. This factsheet highlights key points from those plans.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS TABLE

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
<p>Affordability of devices/technology, and services. Lack of affordable subscriber options.</p>	<p>Advocacy and Funding: Advocacy for funding programs for low-income residents (ACP), Subsidies for devices like mobile hotspots to fill in the gaps.</p>
<p>Lack of education on technology, lack of access to training about using digital resources/tools.</p>	<p>Education and training programs: Create and nurture opportunities for community training & coordination, Host training and community workshops, Provide education on benefits of the digital world, convert terminology to ordinary language for the community.</p> <p>Partnership with educational institutions, senior centers, the VA, workforce organizations to host trainings.</p>
<p>Cyber security risks, fear around use of online services. Fear of AI</p>	<p>Infrastructure development: Smart Networks,, All fiber everywhere</p>

What would broadband access mean for Gilmer County?



Gilmer County Next Steps

- Invite key community leaders and organizations to boost participation.
- Create a strategy to connect with underrepresented communities.
- Apply for grants to support digital equity initiatives.
- Set a timeline and framework for ongoing stakeholder input.

Digital Equity Plan:

The full Digital Equity Plan for Gilmer County can be found at

<http://generationwv.org/broadband>

