

# Introduction to the USDA & Overview of Rural Utilities Service Programs

EVENT: GMA South Georgia Broadband Summit

LOCATION: Virtual

DATE: October 21, 2021

Presented by: Andrew E. Hayes



# Funding for Rural Broadband

- Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program
- Rural Broadband Program
- Community Connect Grant Program
- ReConnect Loan and Grant Program



# Community Connect Grant Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	Broadband Service Speeds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Grants	Areas with populations ≤ 20K	\$100,000 - \$3,000,000	15% of requested grant amount	Broadband Service: <10/1 Mbps Broadband Grant Speed: ≥25/3 Mbps	Submit through the <b>Community Connect Portal</b>	Applications are not accepted at this time

## Available Funding

### FY2019

**\$33 million** available

### FY2020

**\$29 million** available in FY2020 after awarding 8 grants from FY2019 application cycle

### FY2021

**\$35 million** available

## Program Updates

### FY2019

**12 grants** approved: **\$24.3 million**/9 states impacted

### FY2020

**8 grants** approved: **\$15.7 million** (from the FY2019 Application window)/7 states impacted

- No FY2020 application window due to regulation update

### FY2021

**Application window** closed on December 23, 2020

**73 Applications** received: **\$146.4 million**

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-connect-grants>

# Community Connect Grant Program

Applications were submitted electronically through the new online application system.

Resources are available on the website at:  
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-connect-grants>

## Contact Information

Loan Origination and Approval Division  
Email: [community.connect@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:community.connect@wdc.usda.gov)  
Call: 202-720-0806

## Home

Welcome, Toby

## Community Connect

Thank you for your interest in the Community Connect Grant Program. The purpose of the Community Connect Grant Program is to provide financial assistance in the form of grants to eligible applicants that will provide, on a "community-oriented connectivity" basis, broadband service that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced educational, health care, and public safety benefits.

You can create your Proposed Funded Service Area and upload your Community Connect Grant application by clicking the button below.

*Funding Window Open: July 01, 2020 - August 15, 2020*

Get Started

Central Internet Company

Switch Entity View



# ReConnect Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	Broadband Service Speeds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Loan/Grants/ Loan-Grant Combinations	Areas with populations ≤ 20K	≤\$50 million for loans & loan-grant combinations ≤\$25 for grants	For grant-only: 25% of requested grant amount	Broadband Service: <10/1 Mbps Broadband Buildout Speed: ≥25/3 Mbps	Submit through the <b>RUS</b> online application system	Applications are not accepted at this time

## Available Funding

### FY2019

**\$550 million** available

### FY2020

**\$655 million** available in FY2020 (includes CARES funding)

### FY2021

**\$635 million** available

## Program Updates

### FY2019 – “Round One”

**146** Applications processed: **\$1.4 billion**

- **78** 100% Grant applications
- **53** 50/50 Loan/Grant applications
- **15** 100% Loan applications
  - **77** awards approved: **\$663 million**/33 States impacted

### FY2020 – “Round Two”

**172** Applications submitted: **\$1.57 billion** requested

- **87** awards approved: **\$674 million**/35 States impacted

<https://www.usda.gov/reconnect>

# ReConnect Program

**“Rural eConnectivity Program” regulation has been published. Highlights of the new regulation include:**

- Broadband speeds, funding limits, scoring criteria, and protected areas will be announced in Federal Register notices or Funding Opportunity Announcements when new application windows are opened
- If awarded, grant funds may be used for eligible preapplication expenses in the first advance request

See [7 CFR 1740](#) published in the [Federal Register](#) on February 26, 2021 for the regulation text.

# Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

**Distance Learning** means the real-time, interactive delivery of curriculum via telecommunications and promotes the connection of students and teachers at remote sites.

- Provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area, whether rural or not, to students and teachers who are located in rural areas; or
- Connect teachers and students, located in one rural area with teachers and students who are located in a different rural area.

**Telemedicine** is a real-time, interactive, telecommunications link to an end user from medical professionals at separate sites in order to exchange health care information for the purpose of providing improved health care services to residents of rural areas.

- Benefits rural residents both in reduced travel and improved access to service

# Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

- <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>



# Rural Utilities Service Telecommunications Key Contacts

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Rural Development

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