

Washington's Internet for All

Washington State Broadband Office
(WSBO)

Erika Henry

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON STATE BROADBAND OFFICE

OCTOBER 2023



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

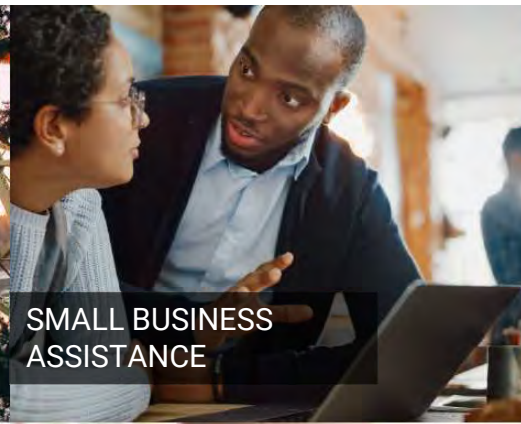
We strengthen communities



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS



INFRASTRUCTURE AND BROADBAND



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE



ENERGY



PLANNING AND TECH ASSISTANCE



COMMUNITY SERVICES



CRIME VICTIMS AND PUBLIC SAFETY



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Internet for All Goals

- The goal of “Internet for All” is to connect all communities to reliable high-speed internet (broadband), which is defined by the FCC as a minimum of 25/3 Mbps (download/upload speed), and to increase digital equity.

The “**digital divide**” refers to the gap between those who have access to high-speed Internet and its benefits, and those who have limited or no access, driven by three key barriers.



States will be applying for federal funding to help close the digital divide focusing on “unserved” (<25/3 Mbps) and “underserved” (<100/20 Mbps)* locations.

Benefits of high-speed Internet can include:



ARPA Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Awards

- [\\$121.5M awarded in May 2023](#)
 - 14 entities in 19 grants of 52 applications
 - 5 PUDs
 - 2 Electric co-ops
 - 4 County organizations
 - 1 Tribal entity
 - 2 Ports
- Broad geographic dispersion
- Nearly 15,000 household connections
- Estimated Construction Completion Oct. 2026

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- \$1.2 Billion Funding Allocation from NTIA
 - WA stepped up to the plate! State Broadband Office and other efforts (QR code, social media, press releases, crowdsourcing) added 71,000 unserved locations to FCC map through Jan 13th on a base of 167,000; 42% increase is top 10 in the nation
 - Fabric location challenges added 20,000 locations
- Bead 5-year Plan considered:
 - Wireless technology
 - Use of existing infrastructure and dig-once
 - Streamlined permitting
 - Access to poles
- 5-year Plan submitted on Aug. 11
 - Broad outline of the strategic plan and community needs

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- Worked with Guidehouse (contractor) to formulate a plan
 - WSU-Ext local planning workbooks submitted June 15; Completed review
 - 19+ public listening/focus group sessions through mid-June
 - Continuing formal consultation with Tribal Governments
 - Continuing engagement with Digital Equity Forum
 - Public comments received through Oct. 15
- Draft Digital Equity Plan
 - [Public comment Sept. 1 thru Oct. 31](#)
 - Key performance indicators for progress to digital equity across covered populations
 - Final digital equity plan due to NTIA Nov. 30 (Extension request submitted)

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- Two volumes: Volume 1 and Volume 2

Volume 1

- NTIA-required State Challenge process
- State challenge process is required to enhance the accuracy of served and unserved locations to improve map
- State modifications to NTIA model process
 - Speed tests
 - Tribal consent
 - Expansion of Community Anchor Institutions (CAI)
- Challenge process needs to be completed prior to applications
- [Draft Volume 1 was published the week of Oct. 9 With 30 day comment period](#)
- Challenge process will begin April 2024 approximately 120 day period

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

Volume 2

- Volume 2 provides detail on:
 - Project area definition
 - Affordability (beyond ACP)
 - Application scoring criteria
 - Fair labor practices
 - Workforce development
 - Cyber security
 - Draft Volume 2 will be published in early November with a 30-day comment period
- Final Volume 1 and Volume 2 will be submitted to NTIA by Dec. 27
- We expect the application process to open in the third quarter of 2024.

Digital Navigation

- In the fiscal year 2023 funding
 - \$30 million expended
 - 32 Digital Navigation partners
 - 100,232 individuals assisted with navigation services
 - 101,207 individuals received an internet-connected device
- In fiscal year 2024
 - \$15 million appropriated
 - Three awards were granted in Aug. 2023
- There is a substantial need for additional funding to support Digital Navigation across the state

Webinars and technical listening sessions



Ongoing webinars, information sharing, tribal office hours once a month, every two weeks or once a month Internet for All webinar

[Visit our Internet for All page for more details.](#)

Thank you!



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

www.commerce.wa.gov



Questions?

Mark Vasconi

DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON STATE BROADBAND
OFFICE

Mark.Vasconi@commerce.wa.gov

(360) 725 2972