

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

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Presented by:  
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Telecommunications Program

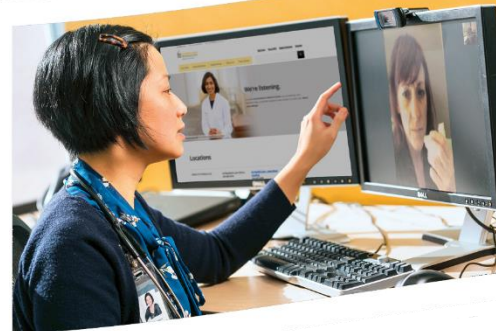


# Rural Development's (RD) Mission

USDA Rural Development

*Committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America.*

- Provide **loans, grants, and loan guarantees** that support essential services, such as:
  - Housing
  - Economic Development
  - Health Care
  - First Responder Services and Equipment
  - Water, Electric, and **Telecommunications Infrastructure**



# Rural Development Background

Rural Development includes 3 agencies with unique programs and objectives:

- **Rural Utilities Service (RUS)**
- Rural Housing Service (RHS)
- Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)
- Across the three agencies, Rural Development administers over 40 programs.
  - RUS Electric & **Telecommunications** programs are administered by National Office
  - RHS and RBS programs are administered by State & National Offices

# RUS Telecommunications Program History

## From electricity to broadband...

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- 1935** Rural Electrification Administration (REA) created and began providing financing to promote rural electrification
- 1949** REA received authority to finance telephone service in rural communities
- 1995** Evolving from the REA, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) required all financed telecommunications networks have the capacity to deliver broadband
- 2010 to present** RUS has approved nearly **\$9 billion** in loans and grants to build out broadband infrastructure and expand distance learning and telemedicine services in rural areas

# Funding for Rural Broadband

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



# Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Loans/Loan Guarantees	Primarily benefits communities ≤5K	N/A	Submit through the <b>RD Apply</b> online application system	Year-round

## Available Funding

### FY2019

**\$690 million** available

### FY2020

**\$690 million** available

### FY2021

**\$690 million** available

### FY2022

**\$690 million** received in appropriations

## Program Updates

### FY2019

**12** loans approved: **\$181.5 million**/10 states impacted

### FY2020

**8** loans approved: **\$98.6 million**/10 states impacted

### FY2021

**4** loans approved: **\$71 million**/3 states impacted

**5** loans in process: **\$71.1 million**

### FY2022

**4** loans approved: **\$61.3 million**/ 4 states impacted

**3** loans in process: **\$10.2 million**

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-infrastructure-loans-loan-guarantees>

# Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program

## **Standard Loan Terms include:**

- 2 Year Principal Deferral
- Interest Rate at the Cost-Of-Money
- Loan Maturity - Life of the Facilities Financed Plus 3 Years

**Staff can assist and review loan applications before submission**

# 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

### FY2022

**\$35 million** received in appropriations

## Program Updates

### FY2019

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

### FY2020

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

### FY2021

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

**23 grants** approved: **\$47 million**/15 states impacted

### FY2022

**4 grants** approved: **\$10 million**/3 states impacted (from the FY2021 Application window)

<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

### FY2022

**\$2.3 billion** received in appropriations

- **\$1.9 billion** received in the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA)
- **\$436.6 million** received in annual appropriations

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

## Program Updates

### FY2019 – “Round One”

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

- **76 active awards: \$656 million/33 States** impacted

### FY2020 – “Round Two”

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

- **105 active awards: \$852 million/37 States** impacted

### FY2021 – “Round Two” cont..

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

- **181 active awards: \$1.5 billion/38 States** impacted

### FY2022 – “Round 3”

**305 Applications** submitted: **\$4.8 billion** requested

# 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 and Telemedicine Program

# Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	DLT System	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Grants	Primarily benefits rural areas	\$50,000 - \$1,000,000	15% of requested grant amount	Must include hub and end-user sites	Submit through the <b>Grants.gov</b>	Applications are not accepted at this time

## Available Funding

### FY2019

**\$64 million** available

### FY2020

**\$95 million** available

### FY2021

**\$57 million** available

### FY2022

**\$62.5 million** received in appropriations

## Program Updates

### FY2019

**181** applications received for **\$58.1 million**

- **144** grants approved for **\$44.8 million**

### FY2020

**FOA #1: 276** applications received for **\$155.9 million**

- **112** grants approved for **\$70 million**

**FOA #2 (obligated in FY2021): 534** applications received for **\$252.1 million**

- **86** grants approved for **\$42.1 million**

### FY2021

**274** applications received for **\$122.2 million**

- **105** grants approved for **\$49.6 million**

### FY2022

- **9** grants approved for **\$4.2 million**

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

# 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

# Program Historic Numbers



# Telecommunications Programs – All State Investments

Between FY2010 and FY2022, RUS has approved nearly \$9 billion in funding for broadband and distance learning and telemedicine projects that serve rural residents.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Projects Approved</b>	<b>Funds Approved</b>
Telecommunications Infrastructure Program	202	\$3.3 Billion
ReConnect Program	181	\$1.5 Billion
Rural Broadband Access Program	10	\$273.4 Million
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program	1,303	\$474.5 Million
Community Connect Grant Program	138	\$241.8 Million
Broadband Initiatives Program	258	\$2.9 Billion
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,092</b>	<b>\$8.7 Billion</b>

\*Table shows award data **at time of obligation** for all programs except ReConnect and BIP, which show present award data.

Updated: 10/27/2021



# Telecommunications Programs – Tribal Investments – All States

As of August 1, 2021, RUS approved over \$148 million in telecommunications projects serving Tribal Lands, Tribal Organizations, American Indians, and Alaska Natives.

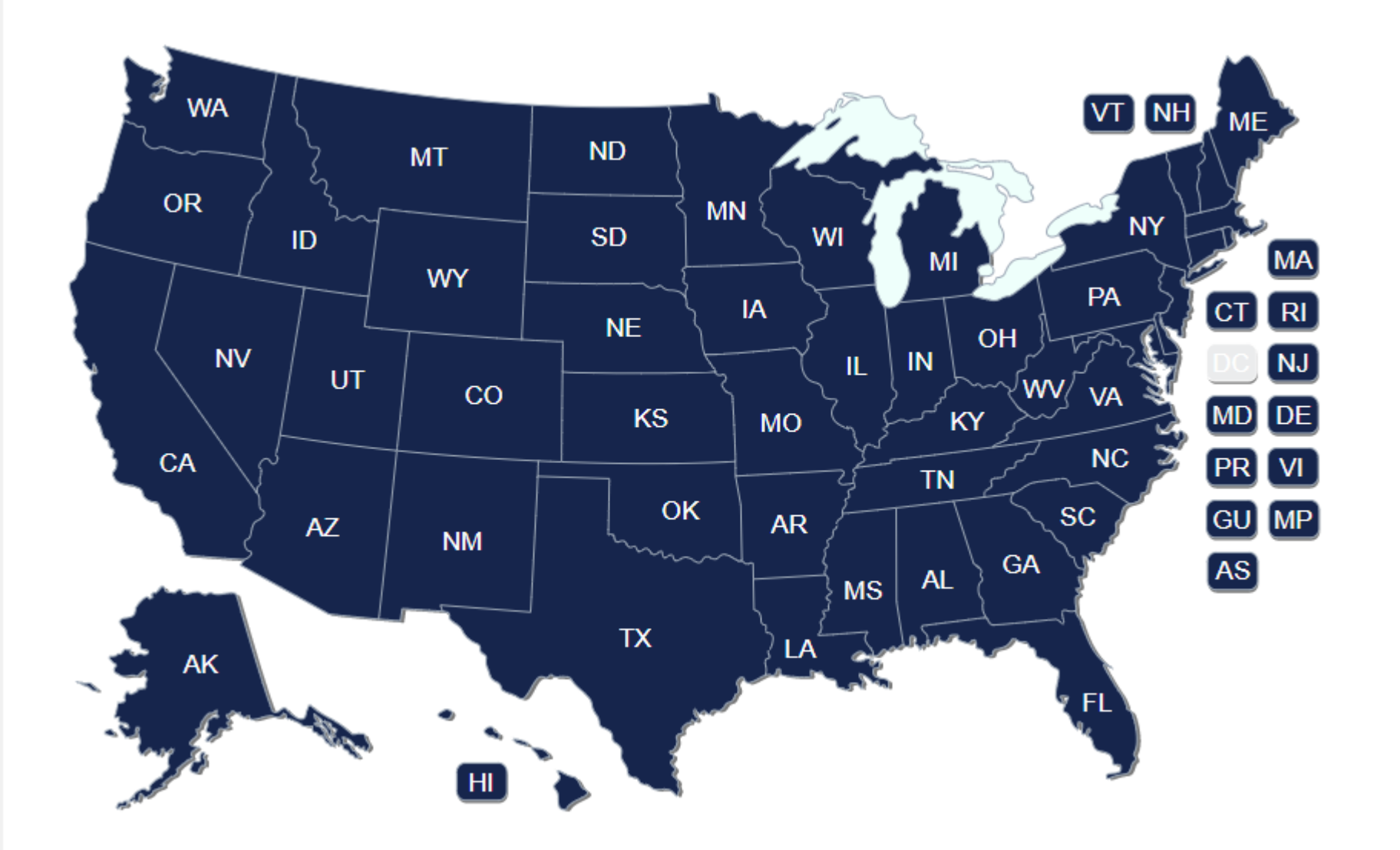
<b>Program</b>	<b>Funds Approved</b>
Telecom Infrastructure Program	\$9 Million
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program	\$6.3 Million
Community Connect Grant Program	\$3.3 Million
ReConnect Program	\$139 Million
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$148.6 Million</b>



Questions?

Questions?

# General Field Representative Coverage - [www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr](http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr)



# Rural Utilities Service Telecommunications Key Contacts

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Rural Development

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