



# Rural Utilities Service

## Telecommunications Program

### Programs Overview and Updates

Presented by:

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General Field Representatives  
Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas





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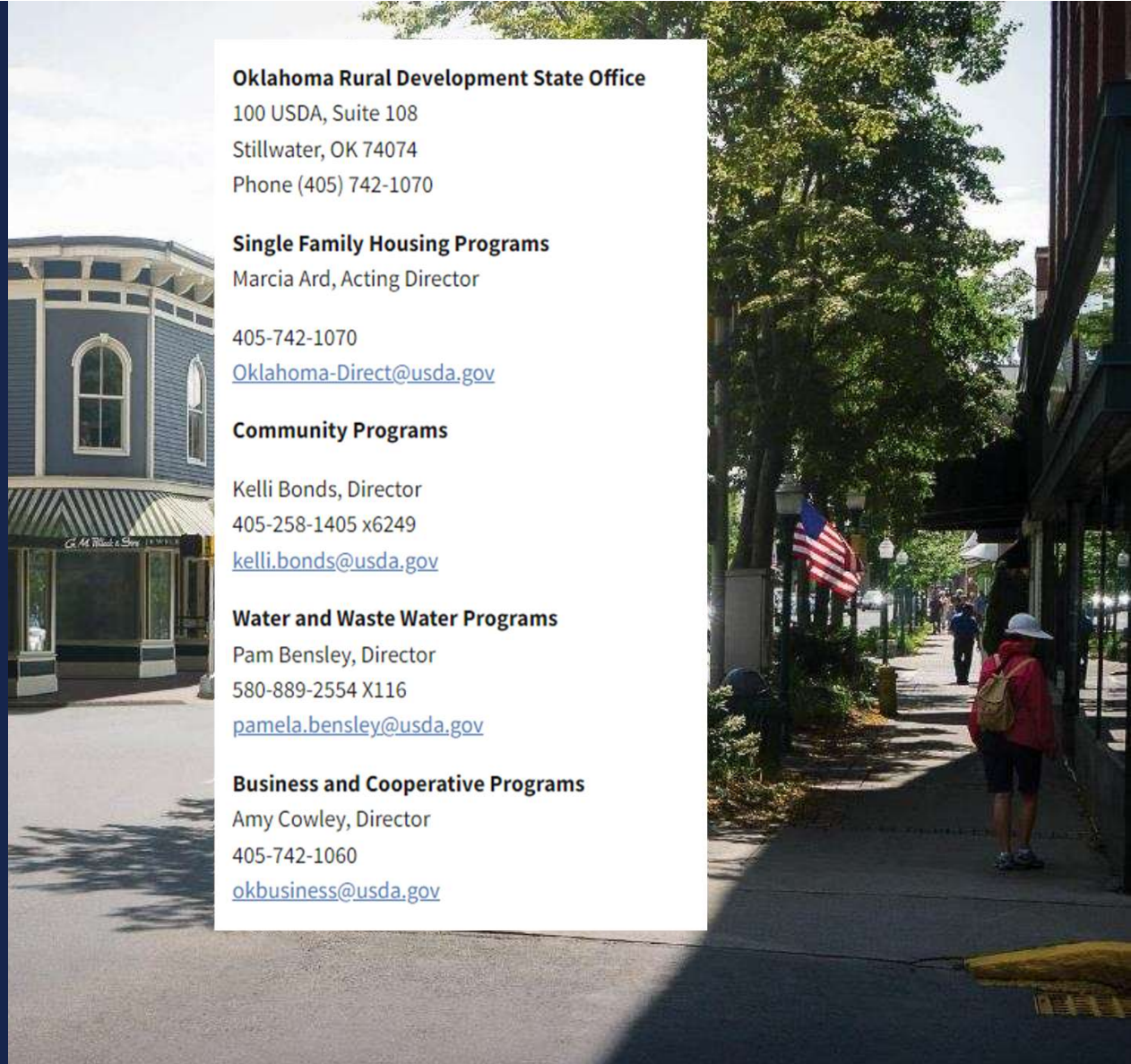
## General Field Representative (GFR)

**GFR is the primary point of contact for an Awardee.**

- Questions/Concerns
- Desired Changes
- Initial review of construction contract documents
- Reimbursement requests
- Challenges with Project Completion
- Requests to National Office
- Inquiries from National Office



# USDA State Programs & Program Directors Contacts



## **Oklahoma Rural Development State Office**

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Phone (405) 742-1070

### **Single Family Housing Programs**

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### **Water and Waste Water Programs**

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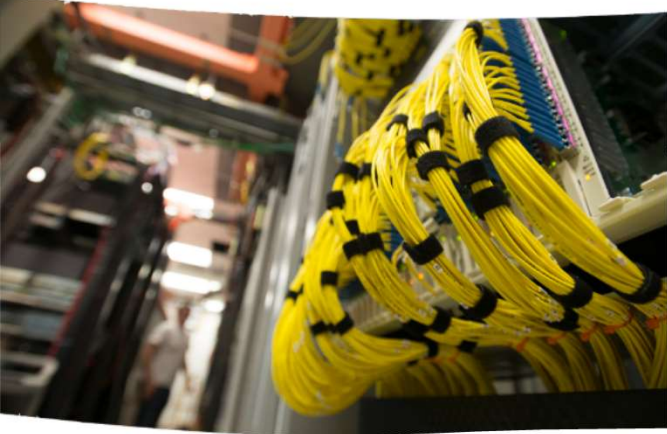
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### **Business and Cooperative Programs**

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# 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**

## Funding for Rural Broadband

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



## Telecommunications Program Overview

- **Purpose:** Provides loan and grant funding to expand broadband networks primarily serving rural residents.
- **Eligible Entities:** State and local governments, Tribal entities, Non-Profits, For-Profits, LLCs and Partnerships.
- **Eligible Projects:** Based on regulation and funding announcements, financially and technically feasible and meets non-duplication requirements.
- **Application Periods:** Except for Infrastructure Program, applications accepted during annual period based on release of funding announcement.



# Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program

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# Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program

- Regulation 7 CFR 1735 [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov)
- Fact Sheet: [Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans & Loan Guarantees \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/telecommunications-infrastructure-loans-and-loan-guarantees)
- Applications: Accepted year round
- Eligibility
  - Rural areas and towns with a population of 5,000 or less
  - Areas without telecommunications facilities or areas where the applicant is the recognized telecommunications provider
  - Area lacks broadband 25/3

## Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans & Loan Guarantees

Application Window:  
**OPEN**

[Fact Sheet](#)

[Overview](#)

[To Apply](#)

[Other Requirements](#)

[Contact](#)

[Events](#)

**Notification to RD Apply users:** Starting on November 16, 2023, The Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan (Infrastructure) Program online application will migrate from RD Apply to Salesforce and will use the application intake system (Intake) currently used by ReConnect applicants. If you intend to submit an Infrastructure application prior to the end of calendar year 2023, we encourage you to use RD Apply at your earliest convenience. If you do not intend to submit an Infrastructure application during calendar year 2023, we encourage you to submit any future Infrastructure applications through Intake. We will publish a link to Intake on this page. Please reach out to your local [General Field Representative](#) or submit a question via [Contact Us](#) if you have any questions about this upcoming change.

### Application Intake System Resources

- [RUS Application Intake System](#)
- [Application Intake System User Manual](#)
- [Telecommunications Program Funded Service Areas Map](#)
- [Infrastructure Program Network and Financials Workbook \(Excel\)](#)

# Rural Broadband Loans & Loan/Grant Program

A stylized graphic of the American flag is located in the bottom right corner of the slide. It features several light blue stars of varying sizes arranged in a pattern, and three wavy, horizontal stripes in a slightly darker shade of blue below them.

# Rural Broadband Program

## Recent regulatory changes include:

- Lengthening build-out period of the broadband system from 3 to 5 years
- Tying the required broadband lending speeds to the term of the award
- Providing technical assistance and training through grant funding to help applicants intending to serve the most rural areas prepare an application

See [7 CFR 1738](#) published in the [Federal Register](#) on March 12, 2020 for a comprehensive review of the updated content.

**CURRENTLY NOT ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS**

# Community Connect Grant Program



# Community Connect Grant Program

- Regulation 7 CFR 1739 [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov)
- Fact Sheet: [Community Connect Grants Factsheets \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/programs/community-connect-grants)
- Applications: Funding Announcement
- Eligibility Speed: 10/1 (100% PFSA)

## How may the funds be used?

- The construction, acquisition, or leasing of facilities, spectrum, land or buildings used to deploy broadband service for:
  - All residential and business customers located within the Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA)
  - All participating critical community facilities (such as public schools, fire stations, and public libraries)
- The cost of providing broadband service free of charge to the critical community facilities for 2 years.
- Less than 10% of the grant amount or up to \$150,000 may be used for the improvement, expansion, construction or acquisition of a community center that provides online access to the public.

## Community Connect Grants

Application Window:

**CLOSED**

Program Application Period:

**Completed applications for grants must be submitted electronically by no later than 11:59 a.m. Eastern Time (ET), February 20, 2024.**

[Fact Sheet](#)

[Federal Register Notice](#)

[Grants.gov Posting](#)

[Overview](#)

[To Apply](#)

[Other Requirements](#)

[Contact](#)

[Events](#)

### What does this program do?

The Community Connect provides financial assistance to eligible applicants that will provide broadband service in rural, economically-challenged communities where service does not exist.

# Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner of the slide, featuring a cluster of light blue stars above several wavy, horizontal lines in shades of blue, resembling a stylized American flag.

# Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

- Regulation 7 CFR 1740 [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov)
- Fact Sheet: [USDA Rural Development Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Fact Sheet](#)
- Applications: Funding Announcement
- Maximum Grant: \$1 million

## Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grants

Application Window:

**CLOSED**

Program Application Period:

Applications are due by April 29, 2024, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

[Fact Sheet](#)

[Federal Register Notice](#)

[Grants.gov Posting](#)

[Overview](#)

[To Apply](#)

[Other Requirements](#)

[Contact](#)

[Events](#)

### What does this program do?

This competitive program helps rural communities use advanced telecommunications technology to connect to each other - and the world - overcoming the effects of remoteness and low population density. We encourage you to consider projects that promote equity and economic opportunity in rural America, specifically those that advance these key priorities:

- Assisting rural communities recover economically through more and better market opportunities and through improved infrastructure.
- Ensuring all rural residents have equitable access to Rural Development programs and benefits from Rural Development funded projects; and
- Reducing climate pollution and increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities.

Based on Fiscal Year 2023 appropriated funding, the agency estimates that approximately \$60 million will be available for Fiscal Year 2024. As permitted, we also will make available any unused appropriations from prior fiscal years, and can increase funding if additional appropriations become available.

To learn more about recently funded DLT projects, Rural Development has developed a map of recently [funded DLT projects](#). All upcoming events will be posted on the events program tab.



# ReConnect Program



## ReConnect Program – Round 5 (Overview)

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) – Published 2/21/24
- Application Period: Opens March 22<sup>nd</sup> – May 21<sup>st</sup> , 2024
- Enforceable Commitments (Federally Funded Projects)
- State Program Interactions (BEAD)
- Broadband Eligibility – 25/3 (90% HH cannot receive per PFSA)
- Available Funding - \$700 million

## ReConnect Round 5 Update – Total Applications Received/Funding Requested

Application Window Closed May 28<sup>th</sup>

\$700 million made available

148 applications received

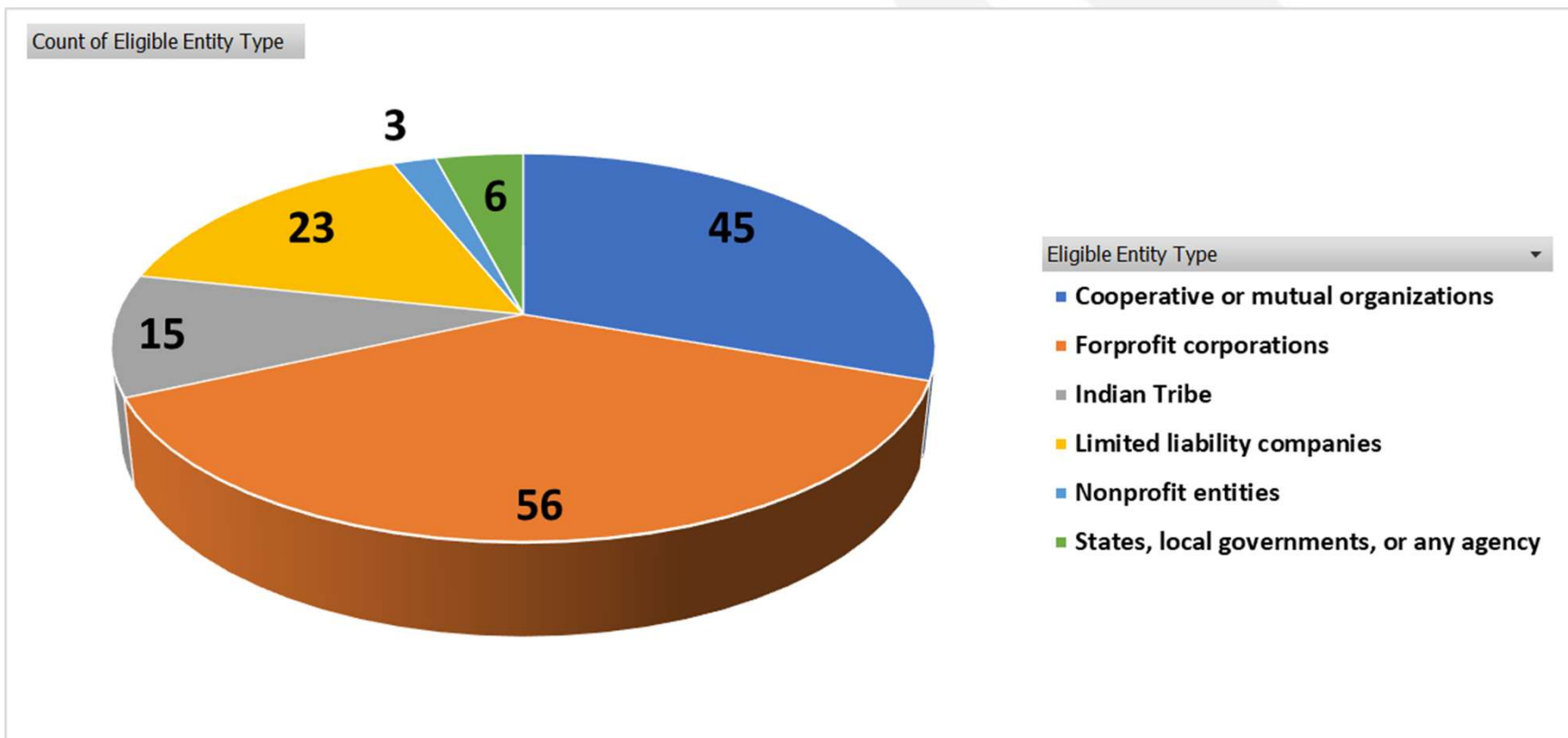
\$1.97 billion requested

## ReConnect 5 Update – Applications Received by Funding Type

### Applications

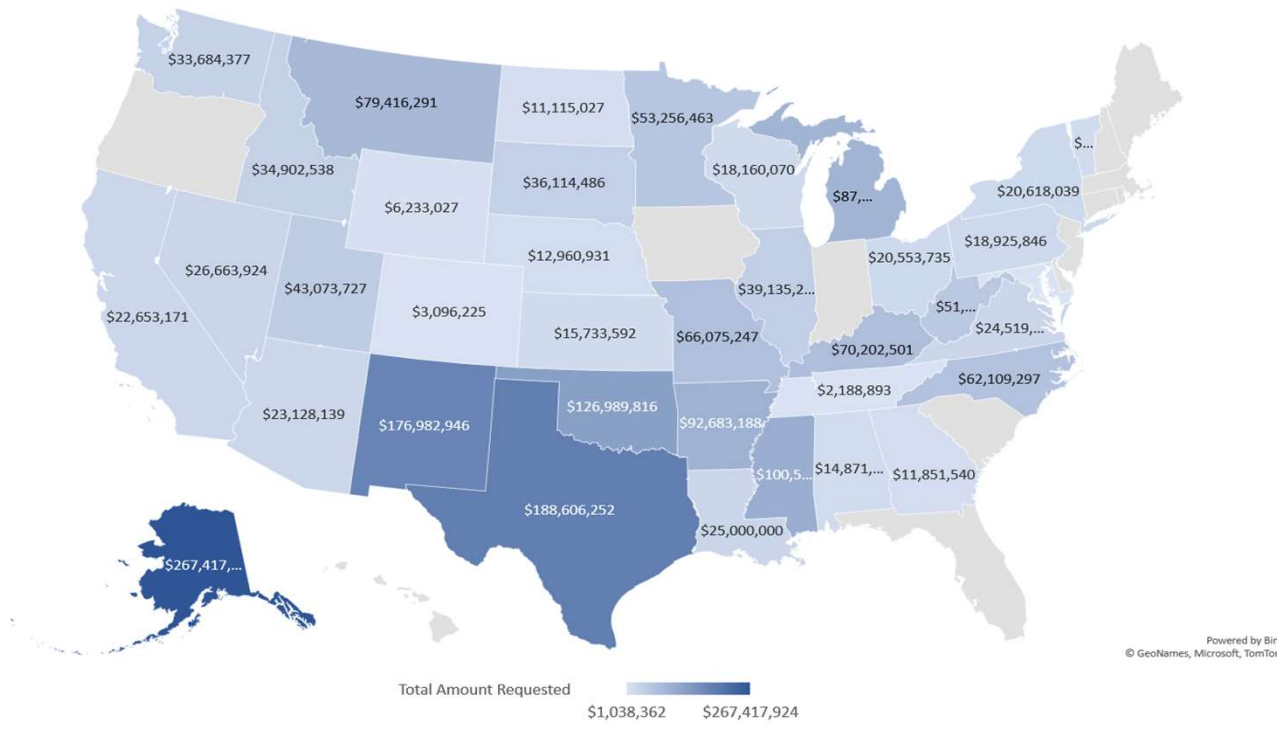
- **100% Grant:** 38 applications received; \$314 million requested
- **100% Grant for AK Native Corporations, Tribal Governments, Colonias, Persistent Poverty Areas and SVCs:** 62 applications received; \$951 million requested
- **50/50 Loan/Grant:** 23 applications received; \$325 million requested
- **100% Loan:** 25 applications received; \$381 million requested
- **Total:** 148 applications received; \$1.97 billion requested
  - Applications proposed to serve 38 states and 1 U.S. Territory

# ReConnect 5 Update – Applications Received by Entity Type



# ReConnect 5 Update – Funding Requested by State/Territory

ReConnect 5 Funds Requested by State



Rank	State	Funds Requested
1	Alaska	\$267,417,924
2	Texas	\$188,606,252
3	New Mexico	\$176,982,946
4	Oklahoma	\$126,989,816
5	Mississippi	\$100,568,443
6	Arkansas	\$92,683,188
7	Michigan	\$87,185,437
8	Montana	\$79,416,291
9	Kentucky	\$70,202,501
10	Missouri	\$66,075,247

US Territories	Funds Requested
Federated States of Micronesia*	\$25,000,000

\*Not Pictured

**Oct. 17, 2024 Announced - \$173 million in funding**

# Broadband Technical Assistance Grant Program

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# Broadband Technical Assistance Grant Program

Broadband technical assistance provides financial assistance to technical assistance providers and rural communities to promote the expansion of broadband service into eligible rural areas.

Applications are submitted electronically through [www.grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) application system.

Resources are available on the website at:  
[Broadband Technical Assistance | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/rural-development/broadband-technical-assistance)

## **Contact Information**

Policy and Outreach Division

<https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us>





# Reporting & Compliance Required Reports



## Who Uses R&C in 2024

- Entities Reporting in the R&C System:
  - Telecom Infrastructure Borrowers
  - Organizations that received a Rural Broadband (Farm Bill) loan or Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) award
  - ReConnect awardees, including Electric entities
  - Community Connect (CC) grant awardees
  - As of January 1, 2025 – Distance Learning and Telemedicine awardees

• Electric Entities will use the Data Collection System (DCS) for **Electric Program reports.**

## Access Requirements – eAuth to Login.gov transition

- RUS has transitioned to Login.gov for access to our systems
- New Users without a verified User ID
  - Go to the R&C website found here: <https://reporting-and-compliance.rd.usda.gov/s/>
  - Select the **Customer** option and click the **Login.gov option**
  - You will be directed to the Login.gov website to create a new account
  - For more information, please reference the Login.gov & USDA eAuthentication User Aid found here: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/usda-rd-loginuseraid.pdf>
- Existing Users with a verified eAuthentication (eAuth) User ID
  - When accessing R&C, users will be required link their accounts to Login.gov
  - For more information, please reference the Login.gov & USDA eAuthentication User Aid found here: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/usda-rd-loginuseraid.pdf>

## Access Requirements – Entities without established Users on their Accounts

- Verified User ID
  - For more information, please reference the Login.gov & USDA eAuthentication User Aid found here: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/usda-rd-loginuseraid.pdf>
- Authorized Representative Request (ARR)
  - Designate Rep Sign Cert, assign Administrator(s)
  - Upload Signed ARR Resolution
  - Submitted by Rep Sign Cert or Administrator
- Resources available on ReConnect website:
  - ARR Resolution Samples and Instructions:  
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/arr-resolution-instructions-samples.pdf>
  - Rural Development Reporting & Compliance User Guide:  
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/rural-development-reporting-compliance-user-guide.pdf>

# For Help with the R&C System

- USDA Contact Us Form
  - <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us>
  - Subject: Reporting
  - Please include your entity's legal name and any specific details

Submit your ReConnect comments and suggestions to help us identify how we can meet your broadband service needs.

To contact us about other USDA programs, visit the [Contact Us page](#).

Subject:

--None--

- None--
- About Funding
- Applicant Eligibility
- Authorized Representative Request
- Engineering
- Environmental
- Financial
- Project Eligibility
- Public Notice Filings/Responses
- Reporting**
- Scoring Criteria
- Service Area
- Submitting an Application
- Other

Email Address:

# Required Reports



## Reports in the R&C System



- The type of Telecom award and legal agreement will determine what Account Level and Project Level Reports are required for the entity.
- Two classes of Reports
  - Account Level Reports: Information for the entire entity
  - Project Level Reports: Information specific to the project.
- Three types of Account Level Reports
  - Financial Reports (due quarterly)
  - System Data Reports (due annually)
  - Audit Reports (due annually based on fiscal year)

## Reports in the R&C System (cont.)



- Five Types of Project-Level Reports
  - Construction Progress Reports (due annually during construction)
  - Annual Performance Reports (due annually for 3 years after construction finishes)
  - Annual Project Performance Activity Report (due annually during construction)
  - Final Project Performance Activity Report (one-time report at end of project)
  - Close Out Reports (one-time report at end of project)
- See the R&C User Guide for more information:  
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/rural-development-reporting-compliance-user-guide.pdf>



# Account-Level Reports

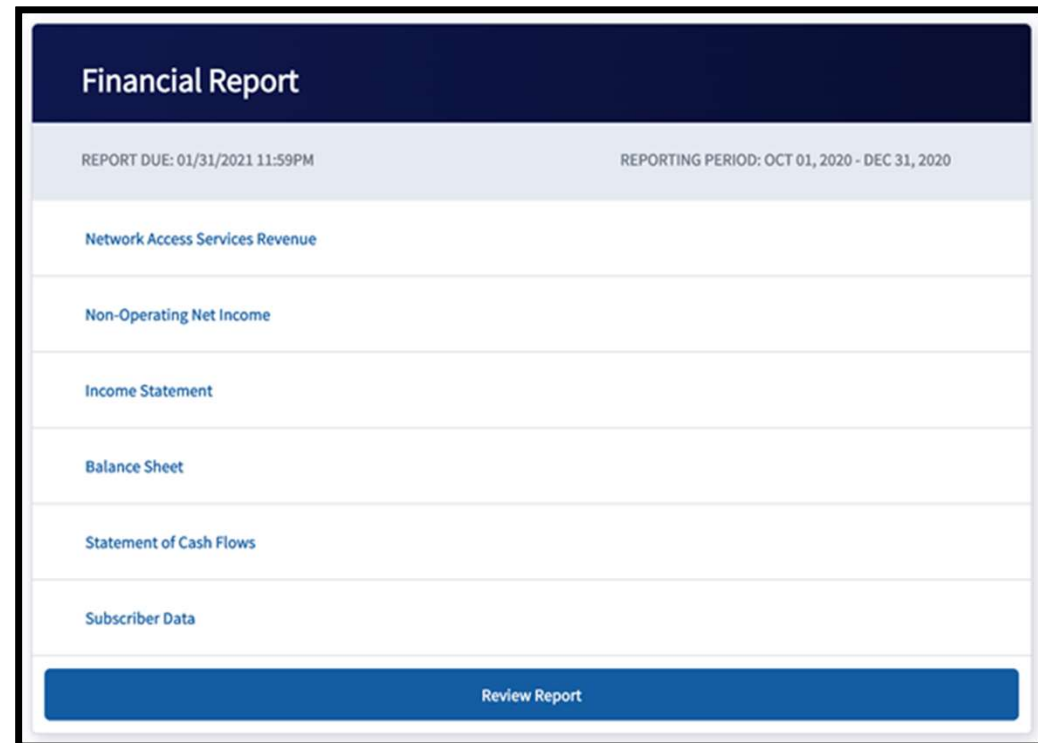


## Account-Level Reports

- Entity level (not reports that are specific to each award)
  - Financial Report
  - System Data Report
  - Audit Report
- Frequency is based on underlying legal agreements with USDA
- Note: Navigation and data entry is similar across the Financial and System Data reports

# Financial Report

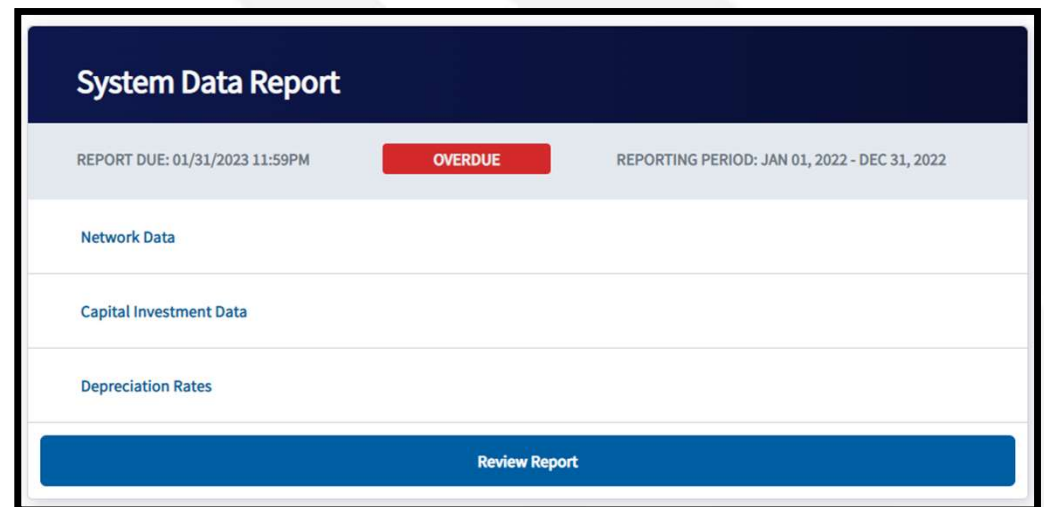
- The Financial Report is completed using cumulative fiscal year data through the reporting period end date, excluding the Subscriber Data section which is only for the 3-month reporting period.
  - Six sections
  - Each section has a data entry page and a review page
  - Recommended to complete sections in order from top to bottom



The screenshot displays a web interface for a Financial Report. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the text "Financial Report". Below this, a light blue bar contains two pieces of information: "REPORT DUE: 01/31/2021 11:59PM" on the left and "REPORTING PERIOD: OCT 01, 2020 - DEC 31, 2020" on the right. The main content area is a list of sections, each with a blue link: "Network Access Services Revenue", "Non-Operating Net Income", "Income Statement", "Balance Sheet", "Statement of Cash Flows", and "Subscriber Data". At the bottom of the interface, there is a prominent blue button labeled "Review Report".

# System Data Report

- Three sections
  - Network Data
  - Capital Investment Data
  - Depreciation Rates
- Information is for the entire entity
- Data is entered manually, pulled automatically by the system from previous reports, and auto-populated
- Line item details are found in the R&C User Guide



The screenshot displays the 'System Data Report' interface. At the top, the title 'System Data Report' is shown in white text on a dark blue background. Below this, a light gray bar contains the text 'REPORT DUE: 01/31/2023 11:59PM' on the left, a red button labeled 'OVERDUE' in the center, and 'REPORTING PERIOD: JAN 01, 2022 - DEC 31, 2022' on the right. The main content area is divided into three sections: 'Network Data', 'Capital Investment Data', and 'Depreciation Rates', each with a blue link-like text. At the bottom, there is a prominent blue button labeled 'Review Report'.

# Audit Report

- Due 120 days or 276 days after the close of Awardee's fiscal year depending on the Awardee's legal structure
  - 7 CFR 1773 applies to Awardees who are:
    - Corporation, Commercial Business, Limited Liability Company, Cooperative, Mutual Organization
    - Audit Report due 120 days after the close of the fiscal year
  - 2 CFR 200 applies to Awardees who are:
    - Authority, Municipality, Public Body, Public Power or Utilities District, Indian Tribe, Tribal Government, Higher Education, Non-Profit, Territory or Possession of the U.S., State or Local Government
    - Audit Report due 276 days after the close of the fiscal year

# Requesting Time Extensions for Audit

To be considered for an audit extension request, awardees must provide detailed information addressing the 4 items listed below. Information should be in the form of a letter and requesting extension of time. Request would be sent by awardee to Technical Assistance Branch (TARB) [Compliance.TARB@usda.gov](mailto:Compliance.TARB@usda.gov) . It's recommended you copy your GFR on request for awareness.

1. Description of the problem causing the delay and the need for the extension.
2. The length of time needed for the extension with the expected submission date to RUS.
3. The current situation and status of the audit report.
4. What actions are being taken to avoid the problem from recurring in the future.

# Project-Level Reports



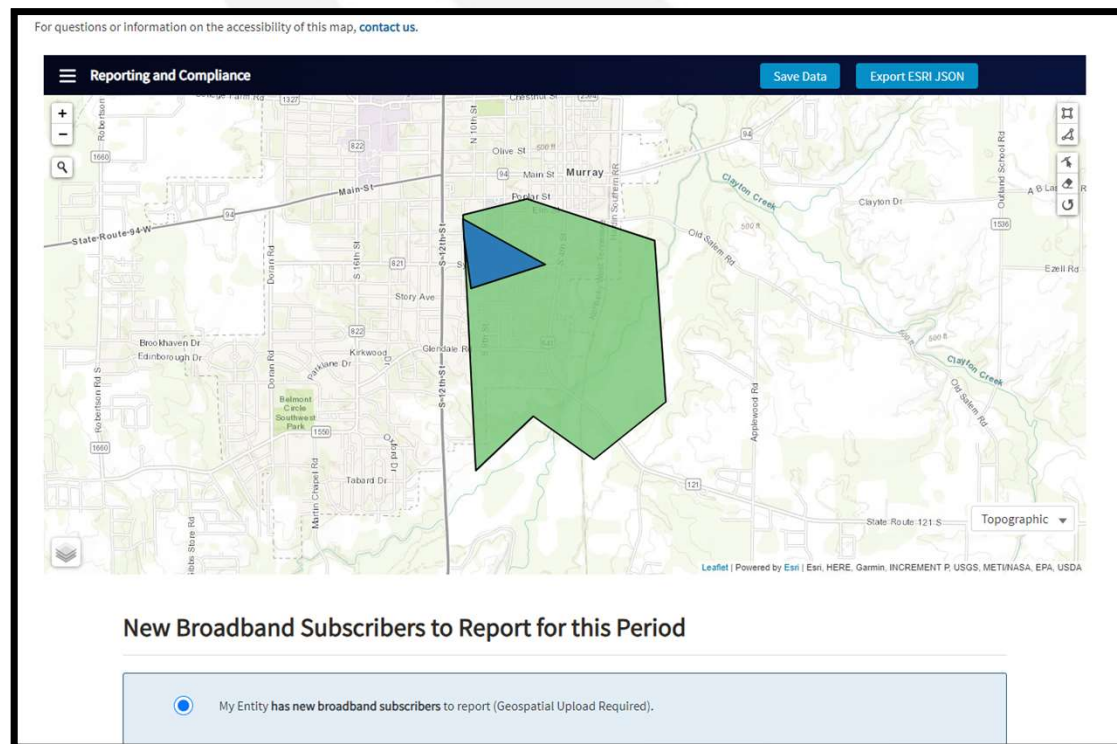
# Project-Level Reports Overview

- Required on an award-by-award basis
- Reconnect Project-Level Report
  - Construction Progress Report
  - Annual Performance Reports
  - Close Out Report
- Community Connect and DLT Project-Level Reports
  - Annual Project Performance Activity Reports
  - Final Project Performance Report



# Construction Progress Report

- Information related to the specific award area
- Required until the entire approved project service area is capable of receiving service
- Submit the following information:
  - Build-out Status of the Approved Project Service Area
  - Service Area Maps where construction has been completed
  - Geospatial location of residences and businesses that are receiving new or improved broadband service.



# Annual Performance Report

- Required for three years after Project Completion
- Submit the following information:
  - Existing network service improvements and facility upgrades as well as new equipment and capacity enhancements
  - Progress towards fulfilling the objectives for which the assistance was granted
  - Geospatial location of residences and businesses that are receiving new or upgraded service.

New Broadband Subscribers to Report for this Period

My Entity has new broadband subscribers to report (Geospatial Upload Required).

My Entity does not have any new broadband subscribers to report (Geospatial Upload Optional).



# Annual Project Performance Activity Report

- Used to report accomplishments to performance goals and objectives
- Submit the following information:
  - A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives set forth in the Application
  - A description of problems, delays, or adverse conditions that occurred which affected the attainment of overall Project objectives
  - A List of the Objective and Timetables established
  - Upload the SF-425 form for the reporting period

# Closeout Report

- Due 120 days after the completion of the project and expenditure or recission of all award funds.
- Submit the following information:
  - A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives set forth in the Application
  - A description of problems, delays, or adverse conditions that occurred which affected the attainment of overall Project objectives
  - A comparison of how funds were spent against the original general budget in the Application

# Final Project Performance Activity Report

- Due 120 days after the completion of the project and expenditure or recission of all award funds.
- Submit the following information:
  - A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives set forth in the Application
  - A description of problems, delays, or adverse conditions that occurred which affected the attainment of overall Project objectives
  - A comparison of how funds were spent against the original general budget in the Application

## Available Resources

- **Telecom Programs Website:** [Telecom Programs | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/rural-development/telecom-programs)
- **Rural Development eConnectivity Toolkit**
  - Rural Prosperity Taskforce - Launched February 6, 2019
  - <https://usda.gov/broadband>
- **General Field Representative (GFR) & State Office**
  - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr/all>
  - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>

# Map Resources

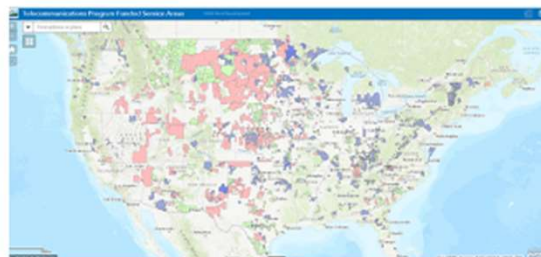


**NEW** Mapping Tool

[ReConnect Mapping Tool](#)

## Telecommunications Program Funded Service Areas

The [Telecommunications Program Funded Service Areas Map](#) includes the service areas of entities who have received a RUS loan and/or grant under the following program area(s): Broadband Initiatives Program, Farm Bill Broadband Program, Telecommunications Infrastructure Program, and the ReConnect Program. Community Connect (CC) projects that were obligated after Calendar Year 2014 are also available on the map. If the entity received a CC award prior to CY 2015 but has other service areas included under different program(s) in the map, those CC projects will also appear on the map.



[Telecom Maps](#)

## Proposed and Approved Projects

View all submitted applications, including those currently under review, by viewing the project map. Once the map opens, select the “Under Review” or “Approved” layers to learn more about the projects under each option. All applications that are not funded under the ReConnect program will be removed from the map.

[View Map](#)

[ReConnect Proposed & Approved Map](#)

## Additional Map Resources

- **DLT Map:** [DLT Project Map Link](#)
- **Community Connect:** [Community Connect Mapping Tool](#)

Map links provides project location and information regarding funding specific to each project.



# Stay Connected - Email Subscriptions



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Sign up for USDA email updates, please enter your contact information below.

\* Email Address

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## Email Updates

To sign up for updates or to access your subscriber preferences, please enter your contact information below.

Email Address \*

Submit

Cancel

 **Stay up to date**

Stay up to date with the latest information on the ReConnect Program.

**Subscribe**

[ReConnect Subscription](#)

# Resources



- Contact Us: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us>
- The Rural Development Reporting & Compliance User Guide:  
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/rural-development-reporting-compliance-user-guide.pdf>
- Resources listed for the R&C System found here:  
<https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/reporting-compliance>

**Questions?**





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