

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Expands Access to Broadband Infrastructure for Rural Businesses and Residents Under Select Rural Development Programs

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14, 2020 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today announced that USDA released a final rule to allow the use of funds under select programs to help expand access to broadband services for America’s rural businesses and residents.

Effective immediately, entities may be eligible to use up to 10 percent of a loan, grant or loan guarantee to build, improve or acquire rural broadband facilities and equipment in areas not served by a minimum acceptable level of broadband service which is 25 megabits downstream and 3 megabits upstream for both mobile and fixed service. Eligible programs are:

- [Electric Infrastructure Loans and Loan Guarantees](#);
- [Water and Waste Disposal Loans Guarantees](#);
- [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program](#);
- [Revolving Funds for Financing Water and Wastewater Projects](#);
- [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#);
- [Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program](#);
- [Multi-Family Housing Direct Loans and Grants](#);
- [Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantees](#);
- [Intermediary Relending Program](#);
- [Business and Industry Loan Guarantees](#);
- [Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Loans](#);
- [Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant](#);
- [Rural Energy for American Program](#); and
- [Rural Business Development Grants](#).

This final rule is authorized by Section 6210 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (The 2018 Farm Bill).

Interested parties may submit comments on this regulation at www.regulations.gov by Nov. 16, 2020.

Additional information is available in the [Federal Register](#).

USDA encourages applications that will support recommendations made in the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#) (PDF, 5.4 MB).

If you’d like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.