



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC ADOPTS PROGRAM RULES TO BRING BROADBAND TO COMMUNITIES MOST IN NEED

SAN FRANCISCO, April 21, 2022 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in ongoing efforts to help bridge the digital divide, today adopted rules for a new \$2 billion grant program focused on building broadband Internet infrastructure for communities without access to Internet service at sufficient and reliable speeds.

The rules adopted in today's decision apply to the Federal Funding Account (FFA), created by Governor Gavin Newsom and the State Legislature (Senate Bill 156) as part of the state's historic broadband package, and funded through the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, in accordance with U.S. Treasury Department requirements.

The program will fund wireline networks that provide reliable service in communities that need it most. Networks must be built to provide modern speeds of 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload. The program encourages local and tribal government participation and reflects the State's priority of bringing affordable service to all Californians.

"This broadband program is exciting, ambitious, and will enable us to make future-proof investments in communities across the state," said CPUC President Alice Busching Reynolds. "The program is designed for all communities without high-quality, reliable connections. The funding will target networks that can meet the demands of tomorrow and provide service that is affordable."

"This decision is a major step forward in the CPUC's implementation of the Governor's \$6 billion broadband package," said Commissioner Darcie L. Houck. "The rules established today allow for the distribution of \$2 billion in grants for much-needed last-mile infrastructure to unserved locations

throughout rural and urban areas in California. I'm pleased to support this decision and to see the projects this program will support start to come to life.”

Added Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma, “The Decision achieves a careful balance with a preference for local government, non-profit, and tribal projects, while also maintaining an opportunity for private providers.”

The rules adopted today include, among other items, project eligibility, application objections, allocating FFA funding between rural and urban counties, reimbursing grantees, a review process whereby CPUC staff may approve certain projects, and minimum performance standards for grantees.

The proposal voted on is available at

<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M469/K653/469653128.PDF>.

Documents related to the proceeding are available at

https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/apex/f?p=401:56:0::NO:RP,57,RIR:P5_PROCEEDING_SELECT:R2009001.

More information on the CPUC’s broadband efforts is available at <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/broadband-implementation-for-california>.

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians’ access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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