



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC Enhances Support to Boost Broadband Access to California's Tribal and Underserved Communities

San Francisco, March 7, 2024 – In a commitment to advancing [Broadband for All](#), the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today approved enhancements to strengthen programs designed to boost broadband access to tribal and underserved communities across the state.

The [decision](#) brings about significant changes to two key programs:

1. **Broadband Public Housing Account:** The [California Advanced Series Fund \(CASF\) Public Housing Account](#), previously focused only on publicly supported housing, will now extend its reach to include non-publicly supported housing developments. This expansion, coupled with broader eligibility for project costs, aims to bridge the connectivity gap in low-income communities lacking free broadband service that meets the State's rigorous standards.
2. **Tribal Technical Assistance Grant:** The [program](#) has been refined to align more closely with the [Local Agency Technical Assistance](#) program's rules and guidelines. In addition, Tribal Consortia are now eligible to apply for and receive TTA grants for enhanced communication services to Tribal communities. These enhancements empower California Tribes by providing increased support for market studies, feasibility studies, and business plans, facilitating more effective development of communications infrastructure.

The enhancements reflect the CPUC's commitment to fostering equitable broadband access throughout the state. By expanding eligibility criteria and bolstering support mechanisms, these modifications are designed to accelerate the deployment of broadband networks in low-income communities, promoting digital inclusivity.

“As California moves towards meeting our ambitious commitment to the state’s broadband objectives, I am pleased to support these changes to the California Advanced Services Fund’s Broadband Public Housing Account and Tribal Technical Assistance programs,” **said Commissioner Darcie L. Houck.** “These changes will enhance and expand both programs to help meet our goal to close our State’s digital divide. I look forward to seeing investments from these programs implemented soon to help every Californian reach our full potential.”

Enhancements achieved through stakeholder collaboration

Today’s decision is the result of a comprehensive process of stakeholder engagement, incorporating comments from the [National Diversity Coalition](#), [The Utility Reform Network](#), [California Broadband & Video Association](#), the [Center for Accessible Technology](#), the [City and County of San Francisco](#), and Charter [Communications](#) Operating, LLC. Their input helped to shape a decision that reflects a collective vision for a digitally inclusive California.

The CPUC’s modifications to these key broadband programs underscore a commitment to equitable access to broadband services, recognizing the foundational role of connectivity in enabling education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. By extending eligibility and augmenting support, the CPUC is not only addressing the immediate needs of California’s low-income and Tribal communities, but also laying the groundwork for a more connected and inclusive future.

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About the California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. Visit www.cpuc.ca.gov for more information.