BROADBAND Infrastructure & Access
Missouri is making progress on broadband, but there is a long way to go.

- Ranked 32nd nationwide for broadband access
- Increased state broadband access ranking by 9 slots
- Improved 3 points on the index due to increased speeds
- Down from 279,420 households in 2018
- Down from 586,630 Missourians in 2018

Missouri’s Digital Divide Index (Purdue, 2021)
Both infrastructure and affordability are barriers to access.

- 23% of Missouri students lack access.
- 55.2% of Missourians have access to a low-cost internet plan.
- 84 LEA’s reported students lacked physical access to broadband.
- Missouri ranks in the **Bottom 5** for access to low-cost Internet.
- 258 LEA’s reported students lacked access because of affordability.
Missouri’s Broadband Plan and Process

The Office of Broadband is working to address these challenges by coordinating the state’s broadband initiatives.

Bold efforts are being undertaken to address the following key priority areas:
• Data collection at the local level
• Infrastructure deployment programs
• Affordability initiatives
• Accessibility strategies

DED will continue its initiatives to leverage:
• Existing state programs for broadband priorities
• Educate and engage regional and community on tools for broadband development
• Convene and collaborate with major stakeholders to address local needs
$824 million invested
State CARES Act Programs

- $800,000 to 39 Libraries 80% rural awards
- $4.0M to distribute 10,045 hotspots to 38 health clinics
- $7.0M awarded to 73% of K-12 schools to expand campus Wi-Fi
- $2.4M to 26 projects to connect 2,500 homes 80% with Gigabyte service
- $8.3M in awards helped 88% of Higher Ed. facilities expand distance learning

$22.5 million reimbursed to clinics, libraries, schools, higher education, and providers
State Broadband Grant Program

- 6,950 households receiving access
- $15.1M in private investment
- $20.57M total investment
- 78% of projects installing Gigabyte service

$3.05 million for infrastructure development across the state
State and Federal Broadband Expansion Underway

**FCC Connect America Fund**
- 11 winning providers | $255 M
- Expanding access for 94,735 locations

**FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund**
- 13 winning providers & 4 consortiums | $346.3 M
- Expanding access for 199,211 locations

**USDA ReConnect Round 1**
- 6 winning providers | $103 M
- Access to 14,053 households/182 farms & businesses

**USDA ReConnect Round 2**
- 5 winning providers | $94.4 M
- Access to 15,989 households/2,173 farms & businesses

**Emergency Broadband Investment Program**
- 13 winning providers | $3.9 M
- Expanded access for 2,465 households

**Missouri Broadband Grant Program**
- 13 winning providers | $3.05 M
- Expanded access for 4,416 locations
$195 million coming
Coronavirus Response and Relief
Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021

**APRIL/MAY 2021**

**FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit Program**

$3.2 billion to help lower the cost of high-speed internet for eligible households during the pandemic

- Up to $50/month discount for broadband services;
- A one-time discount of up to $100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

**SUMMER 2021**

**NTIA Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program**

$285 million for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other minority-serving institutions.

- Purchase of broadband internet access service
- Purchase of eligible equipment
- Hiring and training information technology personnel
- Focus on minority anchor communities (15-mile radius of institution)

**APRIL/MAY 2021**

**NTIA Infrastructure Grants Program**

$300 million for the deployment of broadband in a project area that does not have access to 25/3.

- Eligible applicants include a state, or one or more political subdivisions of a state and providers of fixed broadband service.
- Prioritize service delivering 100/20mb or better, must not conflict with federal funding.
- Must construct within 12 months.
American Rescue Plan

**Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund**

$10 billion in state and local funding.

Although broadband isn’t specifically referenced in writing, it will be eligible for broadband costs.

The funding will be distributed as a formula, with a minimum of $100M going to each state.

**General state and local funding**

$340 billion for "water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure."

**FCC E-Rate Expansion**

$7.17 billion for broadband expansion for remote learning.

- Reimburse schools and libraries 100% of home connectivity purchases, including:
  - Connected devices
  - Routers
  - Modems
  - Wi-Fi Hotspots
  - Other devices that combine a modem and router
- Remain available until September 30, 2030.
State Grant Program

Governor Parson included $5 million in the FY22 State Budget, now under consideration by the Missouri Legislature.

If funded, DED would launch a grant round this summer.

Broadband Technical Assistance Request

Grant submitted in partnership with the MACOG to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for a pilot project for broadband modeling and engineering feasibility plans for up to 24 counties or 8 regional clusters.

Additional Broadband Initiatives

- Proposed legislation
  - HB735 & HB1378/SB108 & SB570 – Broadband Improvement Districts
  - SB184 – Electrical Corporations to operate broadband
- HB580 – DESE surveys the homework gap
- Budget appropriations – Missouri Broadband Grant Program
- Provide education on the use of local development tools for broadband
- Advocate for improved mapping with the FCC
How can education assist and get connected

• DESE leadership will be needed for guidance and counsel on resource allocation.

• Collaboration on other funding sources available to schools and communities.
  • Maximize all funding sources to help address multiple areas in broadband challenges

• School leaders can help with the following:
  • Spread the word on new programs to families
  • Evaluate initiatives undertaken by CARES and reassess, determine local level gaps
  • Be a leader for community and county connectivity strategies
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