



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Office of Broadband

Partners for Better Communities



# Broadband Resources for Tribal Nations

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# Broadband Resources for Tribal Nations

## **Dept. of Housing and Community Development Office of Broadband**

- Broadband Planning
  - Assist in evaluation consultant proposals
  - Identify unserved areas, affordability needs
- Technical assistance to access funding programs
  - Access to Broadband Infrastructure
  - Affordability and Adoption of Broadband

# Funding Opportunities

- Federal Resources
  - Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (NTIA)
  - Affordable Connectivity Program
- State Resources
  - Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI)





# Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TCBP)

- Additional \$2 billion in funding for the program
- Tribes must apply through a competitive grant program
- Eligible Uses:
  - Broadband infrastructure deployment
  - Affordable broadband programs, including:
    - Providing free or reduced cost broadband service
    - Preventing disconnection of existing broadband service
    - Distance learning
    - Telehealth
    - Digital Inclusion Efforts
    - Broadband Adoption Activities

Federal program guidelines are being formed. We'll know more on these funds in the coming months.

Input session on March 18 – email [broadband@dhcd.Virginia.gov](mailto:broadband@dhcd.Virginia.gov) if interested!

# TBCP – Upper Mattaponi Tribe Award

- Over \$470,000 in funding to directly aide Upper Mattaponi Tribe
- Provide affordable broadband services through payment assistance
- Provide citizens in need with laptops.
- These services will be provided to improve tribal citizens' access to telehealth, tele-education, and other modern economic development activities that promote job growth and household connectivity for the Upper Mattaponi community.

# Emergency Broadband Benefit

- \$30/month per eligible households for the cost of broadband services
  - \$75/month per eligible households on tribal lands
- A household is eligible if one member of the household:
  - Participates in one of many existing benefit programs (SNAP, Medicaid, WIC)
  - Participates in Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
  - Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income internet program.
  - Household Income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line

# State Resources

- Planning Assistance
  - Connect tribes with internet service providers and county broadband officials
  - Identify served, unserved, and planned-to-be served areas where tribe members live
  - Telecommunications Engineering Expertise
- Virginia Telecommunications Initiative Grants
  - Partnerships between tribe, internet service providers, and potentially other governments to provide broadband access.



# Pamunkey Tribe and Office of Broadband

- Pamunkey Tribe received wireless broadband proposal
- DHCD planners assisted with mapping of service proposal
- DHCD Telecommunications Engineers vetted technical specs
- Gathered all information before making a decision

# Virginia Telecommunication Initiative

- Program to deploy broadband infrastructure to unserved areas
- FY2023 Grant Round Timeline Released
  - April 1 - Draft Guidelines Released for Public Comment
  - April 7, 2pm-4pm & April 19, 12pm-2pm – Public Input Sessions on Draft Guidelines
  - May 2 – Public Comment Period on Draft Guidelines Closes
  - June 2, 10am - 12pm – VATI How-to-Apply Webinar, Application Window Opens
  - August 25 – Applications Due
  - Late December - Anticipated Announcement of Awards
- Tribal governments are eligible applicants
  - County and regional partnerships also an option

# VATI – Chickahominy Tribe and Charles City Co.

- Partnership between County, Tribe, and Comcast
- Connecting majority of county's unserved areas – 2,350 locations, 326 of which are businesses and community anchor institutions
- Providing broadband service to Chickahominy Community Center

# Contact

- Meetings with tribal leaders to discuss broadband opportunities and next steps
- Connect tribal leaders with county broadband leaders and internet provider officials
- Work to pull down federal and access state resources to bring broadband to tribal communities

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