

# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## Why is Broadband Access Important?

Affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access can help people in your community **thrive**.

Attract business and industry to create new jobs, and support small businesses in your area



Support education with online tools, remote learning, and career training opportunities



Ensure public safety by making sure every 911 call can be answered immediately



Create a healthier community with telehealth and access to health management apps



And **so much more!** How could access to reliable, high-speed internet **change your life?**



Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity  
OFFICE OF BROADBAND



ILLINOIS  
BROADBAND  
LAB

# Broadband is Coming to Your Community!

## What is Connect Illinois?

Connect Illinois is a grant program that provides funding to internet service providers to extend broadband infrastructure into unserved and underserved places, both urban and rural.

Since 2021, Connect Illinois has invested \$380+ million to connect 45,000+ locations.

## What is BEAD?

The **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program** provides federal funding to the Connect Illinois grant program. BEAD provides \$1.04B million for this round of funding, which will connect about 142,000 homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions like libraries and municipal buildings by 2031.

## What is the Illinois Office of Broadband?

The Illinois Office of Broadband (IOB) is a division of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). IOB aims to provide affordable high-speed broadband access to every Illinoisan and ensure that they have the digital devices and skills to learn, work, and thrive.

The IOB partners closely with the Illinois Broadband Lab (IBL), part of the University of Illinois System. The IBL supports Connect Illinois with data, mapping, and community outreach.

## BEAD is on its Way

During the planning process, more than 142,000 locations were identified as eligible to be connected to broadband through BEAD. The IOB team traveled the state and worked with local governments, non-profit organizations, and community members to learn about broadband on a local level and identify barriers to access.

**~142,000+**

Locations to  
be Connected

**\$1.04 Billion**

In Federal  
BEAD Funds

**\$1.5 Billion+**

Total  
Investment  
from BEAD and  
Grantee Match  
Funds

*All data as of 9/2026*

## BEAD Broadband Technologies

To reach all 142,000 locations across the state, several different broadband technologies will be needed. The percentage of locations served by each technology are:

**68%**

Fiber-Optic  
Cable



**23%**

Fixed  
Wireless



**8%**

Low Earth Orbit (LEO)  
Satellite



## What To Expect

Internet service providers (ISPs) have been awarded contracts to extend broadband access to locations in your community. You may see some of these activities:

- ISPs speaking with landowners to secure permission before installing fiber on poles or in the ground
- Contractors burying or hanging cable along roads, installing access hubs, or preparing other physical infrastructure
- New wireless towers being constructed or wireless equipment being installed on towers or silos

## When Will My Community Get Connected?

### 2026-2027

- Internet service providers will work on project planning, permit acquisition, environmental review, and other necessary processes

### 2027-2031

- Construction, installation, network launches, and home connections

*Estimated timelines, subject to change*

Learn the latest about BEAD, Connect Illinois, and other state programs helping to connect all Illinoisans here!



<https://bit.ly/m/IllinoisBroadband>



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