

**Broadband Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program**

**FY2025 Request: \$15,000,000**

**Reference No: AMD 65530**

**AP/AL:** Appropriation

**Project Type:** Information Technology / Systems / Communication

**Category:** Development

**Recipient:** NA

**Location:** Statewide

**House District:** Statewide (HD 1 - 40)

**Impact House District:** Statewide (HD 1 - 40)

**Contact:** Hannah Lager

**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2024 - 06/30/2029

**Contact Phone:** (907)465-5533

**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

The federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant program promotes the achievement of digital equity, supports digital inclusion activities, and builds capacity for efforts to increase the adoption of broadband by residents of the state. The Alaska Broadband Office (ABO) will use the Capacity Grant to establish an in-state grant program to make pass-through awards to other entities that will implement solutions identified in the Alaska Digital Equity Plan.

<b>Funding:</b>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>	<u>Total</u>
1002 Fed Rcpts	\$15,000,000						\$15,000,000
<b>Total:</b>	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Prior Funding History / Additional Information:**

Sec11 Ch1 SLA2022 P86 L5 HB281 \$6,000,000

The initial Digital Equity Planning Grant was included as \$1 million of the initial \$6 million appropriation for the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) grant in SLA 2022. This grant is made available through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be issued in spring 2024 and funding is anticipated to be available to the department in fall 2024.

**Project Description/Justification:**

The Digital Equity (DE) Act approved as part of the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) created three programs to promote digital equity and inclusion.

The DE Act funds activities that solve barriers to digital equity for eight covered populations designated by the NTIA. Those covered populations are:

- 1) low-income households;
- 2) persons with disabilities;
- 3) aging populations;
- 4) individuals with language barriers;

- 5) veterans;
- 6) rural residents;
- 7) racial and ethnic minorities; and
- 8) incarcerated individuals not in a federal facility.

The first DE program was the State Digital Equity Planning Grant for the purpose of developing individual State Digital Equity Plans. Alaska received \$567,800 through this program and the Alaska Digital Equity Plan was submitted to NTIA in January 2024 for final review and approval.

The Digital Equity Capacity Grant program is the second of the three programs. Under a formula-based distribution, Alaska is expected to receive up to \$15 million. The ABO will use the Capacity Grant to establish an in-state grant program to make pass-through awards to other entities that will implement the solutions identified in the Digital Equity Plan. ABO program and grant administrative costs are included in the total grant award. There is no state match requirement for these federal funds.