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Governor Evers, PSC Announce Dates for 2021 Broadband Expansion Grant Round

\$24 million in state funding available to expand broadband to unserved areas

MADISON - On Monday, Governor Tony Evers and Rebecca Cameron Valcq, Chairperson of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC), announced key application dates for the next round of grants available from the Broadband Expansion Grant Program. The PSC will make applications available on September 1, 2020 and will be due on December 1, 2020. The funding for the grants was appropriated in the 2019-2021 state biennial budget.

In this grant round, \$24 million has been made available to applicants to help expand high-speed broadband internet to unserved areas of the state. The grant funding is equal to the 2020 grant round which, at the time, was more funding offered than all the seven previous rounds combined.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the critical need for broadband service. With many working from home, distance learning for our children, and health care through telemedicine as the only option for some, broadband internet is an essential service," said Governor Evers. "Too many in our state lack access and with this funding, we need to look at those who are most affected by this pandemic and target these dollars to connect them."

"Broadband access is an essential catalyst to drive community, public safety, learning, health, and economic goals across the state of Wisconsin," said Chairperson Valcq. "Governor Evers and the PSC have a strong commitment to the continued equitable expansion and use of broadband services to meet the needs of all Wisconsin communities and residents."

The 2019-2021 biennial budget, which was signed by the Governor Evers last year, provided \$48 million over the biennium for broadband expansion grants. For the 2020 round of funding, the PSC received 143 applications requesting \$50.3 Million for large and small projects. In March of this year, just prior to Governor Evers' *Safer at Home* order, the PSC awarded 72 grants to extend high-speed internet access to as many as 3,182 businesses and 46,537 homes, including 39,778 locations that are currently unserved.

The broadband expansion grants aim to help private companies find a path to return on investment in areas of the state that are challenging to serve. Since 2014, 210 grants have been awarded, and have connected or are in the process of connecting over 7,000 businesses and 117,000 homes to high-speed broadband internet service.

Click [here](#) for more information about the Broadband Expansion Grant Program.

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