



Affordable Housing Connectivity Program | Property Owner Question & Answers

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1. What technologies will the vendors use to provide service?

The Affordable Housing Connectivity Program is designed to deliver reliable, durable, high-speed broadband to affordable housing properties. This broadband, per the terms of the U.S. Department of Treasury funds supporting the program, must provide minimum symmetrical speeds of 100 Mbps. New York State will prioritize deployments using fiber because of its superior connection quality, enhanced security, and scalability. However, ConnectALL encourages owners to note in their survey responses if it is believed that there will be an issue connecting all of the affordable housing units with fiber. Property-specific deployment plans and network designs will be developed by the grantee with oversight and approval from CAO to ensure a technology solution that provides all residents with high-speed broadband service.

2. How will tenants afford the broadband service?

ConnectALL understands that affordability of monthly service is key to residents being able to take advantage of the new broadband infrastructure in their buildings. The AHCP will address this in three ways: 1) ConnectALL will work with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) committed to providing affordable service and participating in the federal [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) (ACP) or any subsequent subsidy. (The ACP is a benefit program administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reduce costs of broadband through a monthly discount of up to \$30 toward internet service for eligible households and a one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer.) 2) ConnectALL will encourage broadband deployments that include open-access networks that allow for competition and lower-cost consumer options. 3) ConnectALL will encourage that ISPs offer affordable internet packages without bundling other services (e.g., phone, cable), even before application of an ACP discount.

3. What other types of support will be provided to tenants?

The State will work with Internet Service Providers, digital inclusion coalitions, community-based organizations, and similar groups to ensure that residents of affordable housing are provided digital literacy, navigation, and device services. Depending on the plan for a property, services may be provided by a property manager, a partner organization, or the Internet Service Provider. Services may include ACP application

support, cybersecurity training, digital literacy upskilling, computer science and coding courses, device loans, and more.

4. I am an owner of many affordable properties. Do I need to apply for each of them?

Yes, we ask that owners submit a survey for each property interested in participating in the program. For technical assistance or support, please contact ConnectALL's outreach partner Civix at AHCPOutreach@gmail.com or 504-399-8520. We encourage owners to assign survey response to property managers if feasible.

5. Is new construction eligible for AHCP?

Only existing affordable housing properties with rental units regulated by a government entity are eligible to participate in the program.

6. Can I submit a Building Conditions Self-Assessment if I didn't submit a response to the earlier Broadband in Your Property interest survey?

Yes. Early interest surveys are not a prerequisite to participation. The new Building Conditions Self-Assessment is needed for any property to participate in the AHCP.

7. What is the deadline to submit the survey?

Please submit a survey response as soon as possible. There is not a deadline for survey submission. However, ConnectALL is reviewing submissions as they come in to consider properties for participation. We expect to begin to publish Portfolios of properties in March. The sooner you apply, the better your chances are for participation.

8. My property already has internet. Why should I participate?

AHCP can provide upgrades to existing infrastructure to offer higher quality service, choice in providers, and/or additional offerings and a wider range of price points. The program is designed to address the needs of affordable housing properties statewide regardless of the status of existing broadband infrastructure. ConnectALL will prioritize locations that are unserved or underserved or that otherwise do not have the benefits of a robust broadband marketplace.

9. What if our building has an existing exclusive contract for service with an ISP, but the current wiring is not highspeed.

ConnectALL cannot provide legal advice and/or direction regarding the terms, conditions and/or implications of a contract between a property owner and an ISP. Owners with exclusive contracts with an ISP may, at their option and discretion independently of any guidance or involvement from ConnectALL, choose to consider reviewing the terms of the contract to determine if the contract will expire in the near future, or to assess the viability and desirability of paying any cost associated with buying out the contract. Owners with such contracts could also potentially consider, at their option and discretion independently of any guidance or involvement from ConnectAll, approaching their current provider to encourage the ISP to apply for grant funding via the Affordable Housing Connectivity Program. Owners can indicate a preferred partner in the Building Conditions Self-Assessment. Note that such indications are not binding for ConnectALL, the property owner, or the ISP Applicant.

10. What are the benefits of this program for owners?

There are numerous benefits that housing owners stand to gain by participating in this program. Families and individuals of all ages and capabilities benefit from access to high-speed internet that enables them to go to school, work remotely, find a job, start a business, access healthcare, and communicate with loved ones. Internet connection is also linked with decreased feelings of isolation, especially for senior populations. This no-cost program will also increase property values, enable digital communication with residents, and allow owners to install cost-saving smart technologies to improve energy efficiency or remotely monitor and mitigate risks.

March 12, 2024, Additions

11. I completed the Building Conditions Self-Assessment survey. What's next?

ConnectALL is reviewing surveys and assembling portfolios across New York State Metropolitan Statistical Areas on an ongoing basis. Owners will be notified when a portfolio that includes their property/ies is awarded to a Grantee. Owners will have the opportunity to review proposed deployment plans prior to entering into an agreement with the Grantee.

12. When will the grants be announced and who will receive them?

Grantees will be internet service providers and other broadband deployment entities who submitted successful applications in response to ConnectALL's Affordable Housing Connectivity Program Request for Applications. Awards will be made on a rolling basis beginning in Q3 or Q4 2024.

13. I manage very small rental buildings. Can I participate?

Yes. There is not a minimum property size for participation.

14. Will broadband infrastructure be deployed only to apartments or to common areas as well?

The program will fund infrastructure to enable broadband access to affordable rental units; however, some Grantees may also propose to undertake to provide common area broadband at their own expense.

15. Can this grant retroactively fund broadband installation at my property?

No, program funding cannot be used for costs incurred prior to an award of funding.

16. How much will the service cost? Who will pay for it?

Service costs will vary. See Response 2 above regarding ConnectALL's efforts to ensure affordable services are offered. Grantees will be required to offer service to individual tenants. ConnectALL anticipates this will generally be a retail service in most instances, but it can also be a free service available to all qualifying units. Grantees may also offer bulk agreements to property owners, but property owners are not currently required to enter into such agreements, and Applicants should not assume such agreements will be in place when formulating their Application.

17. What happens if the ISP awarded a grant to serve my property goes out of business?

Grantee agreements with ConnectALL will require that if the project property (i.e., broadband infrastructure) is transferred prior to December 31, 2034, the ISP must send notice of the transfer and secure agreement of the successor to comply with the terms and conditions of the Capital Projects Funds to avoid forfeiture and/or recapture of grant funding. Additionally, ConnectALL will provide a template agreement for Property Owners to execute with Grantees. Such agreements should address both ownership of the grant-funded infrastructure and transfer of ownership if the ISP awarded a grant to serve a property can no longer operate and maintain the infrastructure. Lastly, ConnectALL is prioritizing awards to Applicants proposing open-access networks. Such networks will lower the barrier to entry for subsequent service providers to offer service at such properties.

18. I have indicated a preferred broadband partner in my Building Conditions Self-Assessment and encouraged that partner to apply for AHCP grant funding. Is there anything else I can do?

Yes, affordable property owners can provide letters of support to a broadband partner, which can then be included in the broadband entity's AHCP Section One and/or Section Two applications.

19. Are affordable coop properties, such as Mitchell-Lama coops, eligible to participate?

Regulated affordable coop properties, with income restricted units where tenants pay monthly carrying charges that are considered to be akin to rent are eligible to submit a Building Conditions Self Assessment survey to be considered for program participation.

June 10, 2024, Additions

20. Will ISPs be building open-access infrastructure?

AHCP aims for, but does not mandate, open-access infrastructure. The ultimate availability of open-access infrastructure will depend on the nature and scope of applications received, and the terms and conditions of the resulting grant awards.

21. Can one owner end up working with multiple ISPs via AHCP?

Yes, potentially. ConnectALL will notify owners when a Portfolio that includes their property/ies is awarded to a Grantee. Owners will have the opportunity to review deployment plans prior to entering into an agreement with the Grantee.

22. Will a franchise arrangement be used in AHCP?

Cable television service is not contemplated under the Program. Any authorization required to install in the public rights of way is the responsibility of the grant awardee.

23. Are homeless and/or temporary housing shelters eligible for AHCP?

The AHCP is aimed at improving broadband access in affordable housing rental units. The program does not include homeless or temporary housing shelters.

24. In older buildings, will an AHCP installation/project trigger an environmental review?

It is expected that ISPs' technical proposals minimize environmental and aesthetic impacts to the property(/ies). If an ISP anticipates that the installation will have an environmental impact, the proposal should include a description of changes, challenges, or risk to project timeline, and a mitigation plan. ESD will review all projects and determine, based on the information provided, if SEQR, State Historic Preservation, and Smart Growth reviews are required.

25. Will properties outside the 15 metro areas be eligible?

Yes. For properties outside the 15 metropolitan areas, ConnectALL may, at its reasonable discretion, incorporate those into nearby areas or issue them in distinct Portfolios.

August 30, 2024, Additions

26. Can public libraries apply to AHCP for their community of library users?

No. Only properties with affordable rental units supported by a range of HUD, state, county, or local funding programs may be eligible for participation in the Affordable Housing Connectivity Program.