



Broadband Satellite Resiliency Grant

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Funded by the State GREAT Grant Program

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ABOUT THE N.C. DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The mission of the N.C. Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) is to advance North Carolina with technology leadership, services, and digital capabilities that support a safe, connected, efficient, and innovative government. NCDIT provides technology services to state agencies and is charged with closing the digital divide by expanding availability of broadband services and promoting the adoption of affordable, high-speed internet through its Division of Broadband and Digital Opportunity.

BACKGROUND

Internet service provided via satellite is an important capability in the array of technologies that provide broadband connectivity solutions for households, businesses and government entities. Beginning in the early 2020s, the introduction of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites prompted significant change in satellite internet offerings across the globe. Specifically, LEO satellites operate closer to the Earth's surface than previous satellite technologies and provide significantly greater speeds and data capacity, as well as less latency, than predecessor technologies.

In 2020, Starlink Services offered the first beta internet service using LEO satellites, and since that time, Amazon Leo, another provider of LEO internet service, also has begun to provide commercial services.

Meanwhile, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) began tracking the status of broadband access at the individual location level, which greatly increased the granularity of data on broadband availability across the United States. Additionally, with federal funding made available following the COVID-19 pandemic, North Carolina appropriated almost \$1 billion toward deploying broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved households and businesses across the state with a prioritization on fiber deployments based on federal funding rules. Many of those fiber deployments are completed or will be completed in late 2026 to early 2027.

A critical component of current broadband solutions across North Carolina includes the utilization of satellite internet service, especially in times of emergencies and natural disasters. The newly authorized satellite grant program outlined below supports resiliency and redundancy needs for state agencies, local governments, and community anchor institutions. LEO satellite internet service proved invaluable to entities in Western North Carolina during Hurricane Helene and allowed for continued communications when other systems were down. This Broadband Satellite Resilience Grant program replaces two earlier satellite grant programs created by the state and offers a new opportunity for solutions for internet resiliency and redundancy for which the need was clearly demonstrated during Hurricane Helene.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The \$1 million Broadband Satellite Resiliency Grant program (the “Program”) awards funds to eligible entities to purchase equipment that can deliver satellite internet service, as well as related installation materials. Equipment must be for the grantee's own use and not for distribution to other parties. No portion of funds granted under this program shall be used for internet service subscriptions.

Funding Source & Funding Availability

N.C. Session Law 2025-89 directs NCDIT to utilize state funds appropriated for the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) program for fixed wireless and satellite broadband grants to award grants to eligible entities to purchase equipment that can deliver satellite internet service and installation materials. G.S. 143B-1373.2 authorized \$1 million in State Capital and Infrastructure Funds to be appropriated to the GREAT grant program for satellite grants.

Eligible Applicants

Per Session Law 2025-89, eligible applicants include the following public and community-focused entities operating within North Carolina:

- State agencies
- Local government units (counties, cities, towns, and municipalities)
- Volunteer fire departments
- Community Anchor Institutions, as defined in G.S. 117-18.1(d)(1). The term includes schools, libraries, community colleges, community centers, and other similar places.

Any non-governmental entities applying for funding must be registered with the N.C. Secretary of State as a business operating in North Carolina.

Entities on the Suspension of Funding List maintained by the Office of State Budget and Management and for-profit entities are not eligible for this program.

Prioritization of Funding

As mandated by the legislation, NCDIT will strictly prioritize applicants operating within the 39 North Carolina counties designated inside the Hurricane Helene federal disaster area, including Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Forsyth, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Iredell, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Nash, Polk, Rowan, Rutherford, Stanly, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Union, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, and Yancey (including the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) counties.

While applications are open statewide, NCDIT may further prioritize applicants within these zones that directly provide emergency services, disaster relief, educational services, or local economic development.

There is no limit on how much equipment can be requested under this Program by each applicant. If there is more demand for the Program than funding, entities requesting reimbursement for multiple pieces of equipment may not receive their full request.

Eligible Expenses and Use

To ensure compliance with state budget guidelines and legislative boundaries, NCDIT and applicants must clearly distinguish between covered equipment costs and ongoing broadband service costs.

This Program is to award grants to eligible entities to purchase equipment that can deliver satellite internet service, as well as related installation materials. Equipment must be for the grantee's own use and not for distribution to other parties. No portion of funds granted under this program shall be used for internet service subscriptions.

While there are no specific requirements regarding the internet speed and data capacity that can be delivered by this equipment, it is assumed that equipment would be compatible with LEO satellites that can deliver substantially more speed and capacity than legacy satellite technologies. Other satellite technologies may be considered with explanation by the applicant as to why it is necessary and best for a particular need.

NCDIT expects that equipment purchased under this Program by State agencies, local governments and many community anchor institutions would ultimately be utilizing the State network or other governmental networks. For these entities, only equipment reviewed and approved by NCDIT as having appropriate cybersecurity protections may be purchased and reimbursed under this Program.

Approved Equipment

In October, NCDIT will post a list of eligible “resilience in a box” vendors that meet the specifications set forth by the agency. This list will be updated as vendors make solution packages available to NCDIT that meet the program’s resiliency and cybersecurity requirements. All purchases must be made from this list.

Awarded Program funds will strictly cover the foundational product, cybersecurity components, and maintenance infrastructure provided in portable “resilience in a box” packages reviewed by NCDIT.

Excluded Costs

Funding for broadband service shall not be included in the grant funding and must be paid separately using alternative funding streams. This includes but is not limited to ongoing monthly data plans, internet access fees, or bandwidth subscriptions.

If an eligible entity is located within an area declared as a state of emergency or disaster, broadband service may potentially be considered a reimbursable or covered expense through other funding sources outside of this Program.

Additionally, personnel costs shall not be included in grant funding application requests, including but not limited to salaries or overtime for internal IT staff or local agency employees.

SUBMIT APPLICATION/EXPRESSION OF INTEREST BY SEPT. 23

Entities that wish to participate in the Program must express interest **by 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 23** by submitting the [NCDIT Application and Certification Form](#).

APPLICATION AND REIMBURSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

1. In October 2026, after review of submitted Application and Certification Forms, NCDIT will contact entities that have completed this form to confirm they meet the eligibility and program criteria and to confirm equipment type and funding amount being requested.
2. If the Application and Certification Form and any subsequent application materials are approved by NCDIT, applicants may then make a purchase of approved materials as part of the grant program.
3. After approval of application materials, approved grantees will submit a Substitute W-9 Form and Supplier Electronic Payment Form (or equivalent information for internal transfer for payments to state agencies), along with a reimbursement request/invoice/proof of payment showing purchase of equipment to NCDIT.
4. NCDIT will then process the reimbursement request and distribute payment to the grantee.

For questions about application requirements or the program, please contact NCDIT at satellitegrant@nc.gov.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is not legal or professional advice. While the division is available to answer questions and will attempt to help resolve any concerns, we cannot provide legal advice to applicants.