



Department of Health
and Human Services

Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

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Date: December 23, 2013

To: Interested MaineCare Healthcare Providers (HCPs)

Fr: Dawn R. Gallagher, Director of OSC, HIT and Meaningful Use Program and Lorie L. Smith, Project Coordinator

Re: Three, Proposed Grant Funding Initiatives

- USAC, Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Grant
- USDA, Distant Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant
- USDA, Community Connect Funds (CC) Grant

The MaineCare Grant Committee under the *Health Information Connectivity-Knowledge Rural Consortum* is **raising awareness to all interested**; MaineCare HCPs that wish to become actively involved in one or all of the proposed, USAC and/or USDA Grant Funding initiatives bulleted above. HCPs are defined as healthcare provider, physical site locations.

USAC HCF Grant is a multi-year grant funding opportunity for ¹eligible reduced broadband services to rurally defined areas for public or non-profit HCPs from eligible service providers. Rural is defined in the [FCC Report and Order](#) by Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) i.e. *a geographic area based around an urban center of at least 10,000 people (P57)*.

- The Health Information Connectivity-Knowledge Rural Consortum (HICK.RC) will be the:
 - Lead Entity
 - provide Project Coordinator(s) for project/grant management to act on behalf of interested HCPs
 - follow a three phased approach of combined grant and project planning:
 - Phase I, Pre-Application
 - Phase II, Application and Competitive Bidding
 - Phase III, Funding Commitment and Post-Commitment
- **Applicant eligibility types:**
 1. Post-secondary educational institutions offering health care instruction, teaching hospitals, medical schools
 2. Community health centers or health centers providing health care to migrants
 3. Local health departments or agencies
 4. Community mental health centers ([USAC CMHC Certification](#) additional form required)
 5. Not-for-profit hospitals
 6. Rural health clinics
 7. Consortium of HCPs consisting of one or more entities falling into the first six categories (P11)
 8. Off-site data center and off-site administrative office (conditions and restrictions apply) Section 54.637
 9. ²Grandfathered, original pilot project members of non-rural, HCP sites as of adoption date of Order
 10. ³Non-eligible HCPs, i.e. Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) may apply **as part of Consortia with > 50% rural HCPs** and pay 'fair share or undiscounted rate.' If SNF unit is physically located in an eligible entity i.e. hospital, etc. SNF qualifies. SNF that pay fair share or undiscounted rate as a Consortia member may benefit from lower broadband purchased rates.
- **Applicant financial** contribution - flat rate of 35% of all items and services and ⁴demarcation point expenses.
- **Applicant first steps Phase I** - includes existing account holders; person authorized to 'sign' on behalf org.:
 1. Determine eligibility by registering and filing/refiling F460 online with USAC (instructions to follow).
 - Obtain and share HCP# with F460; Deadline date: **January 30, 2014**.
 2. Complete and sign **a.)** USAC Letter of Agency (LOA) and **b.)** Contract agreement; return to Consortium
 - Deadline date: **January 30, 2014 (LOA and Contract provided to interested HCPs)**
 3. HCP provides documented identification of non-discounted costs [35%] to Consortium from ⁵eligible funding sources.
 - Deadline date: **January 30, 2014**

⁶**USDA DLT and CC Grant** information is based on 2013 grant criterion. Grant approach is to be determined.

¹ Eligible Services, Equipment and Providers P105-193; ²i.e. Jim Roger's Company; ³ non-eligible HCPs P61-68; [FAQs](#) # 54.

⁴demarcation point expenses P170; ⁵Full list of eligible funding sources P99-102

ADDITIONAL GRANTS TO BE APPLIED FOR AS THEY COME AVAILABLE IN 2014

[USDA DLT](#), 2013 available maximum funding for grants was **\$500k** and minimum funding amounts were **\$50k**. **Distance learning** means a curriculum delivered via telecommunications and stresses the connection of students and teachers at remote sites.

- **Applicant eligibility types:** only entities **legally organized** as one of the following and who **operate** a rural community facility; or **delivers DLT services** to entities that operate a rural community facility or to residents of rural areas, at rates that ensure the benefit of the financial assistance is passed through to such entities or to residents of rural areas.
 1. An incorporated organization or partnership
 2. An Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b
 3. A state or local unit of government
 4. A consortium, as defined in 7CFR 1703.102
 5. Other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for profit or not-for-profit basis
- **Project eligibilities:** contributions may be in-kind (new, non-depreciated items). Competitive based scoring.
 1. Required **15% flat rate** matching contribution with evidence of required match 15% documentation.
 2. **Rurality Score**, minimum rurality threshold is 20 points. Exceptionally rural area 45 pt. ($\leq 5,000$); Rural area 30 pt. ($> 5,000$ or $\leq 10,000$); Mid-Rural area 15 pt. ($> 10,000$ and $\leq 20,000$) and Urban 0 pt. ($> 20,000$).
 3. Projects located in areas covered by the [Coastal Barrier Resources Systems Act](#) (CBRS) are not eligible i.e. Lubec, zip code 04652 to Quoddy Head Park in Washington County, MSAD 19.
- **Eligible Equipment:** Audio and video equipment; computer hardware and software; computer network components; terminal equipment; data terminal equipment; interactive audio/video equipment; Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) or OEM-authorized warranties on eligible equipment up to 3-year life of the grant; and inside wiring.

[USDA CC](#) provides grants to eligible applicants where **no broadband exists today**. Grant funds are for improvement, expansion, construction or acquisition of a community center and provision of computer access points [limited to 10% of grant amount]. The grants will provide, on a “community-orientated connectivity” basis, broadband service that fosters economic growth and delivers:

1. Educational,
2. Health care, or
3. Public safety benefits.

Eligible applicants: same as DLT

Funding: minimum amount to be awarded was **100k** and maximum grant amount in 2013 was to be **3 million**.

Project Eligibility: **1.) 15%** flat rate matching contribution, **with 15% cash reserves on hand**. **2.)** Serve a ⁷PFSA in a contiguous eligible rural area and offer broadband grant speed to all residential and business customers within the PFSA. **3.)** Offer free service to all critical community facilities. **4.)** Provide community center access with after hours and weekend availability.

Project Scoring: 100 possible points. **1.)** Up to 50 points on challenges laid out on community-wide basis. **2.)** Up to 40 points on extent of project and support of local residents, institutions, and critical facilities. **3.)** Up to 10 points on level of past success and experience of operating broadband systems.

⁶2013 DLT / CC Grants criteria, 30-40 day application window; 2014 NOFA mid spring/summer 2014, Rob O’Hara, USDA, GFR. ⁷Proposed Funded Service Area.

Final selection between applicants: **a.** Persistent poverty, **b.** out-migration, **c.** rurality (same as DLT), **d.** speed of service by project, **e.** substantiality of underserved trust areas, **f.** persons with disabilities. This criterion is based on the ⁷PFSA.