



# Broadband and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security or “CARES Act”

Act 142 of the South Carolina General Assembly allocated \$50 million of the Coronavirus Relief Fund for South Carolina included in the CARES Act to the SC Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) for broadband initiatives related to COVID-19.

**Allocation:** \$50,000,000  
**Total Funds Expended:** \$38,391,886



## Online Learning Initiative

**Procuring mobile hotspots and monthly internet service for qualifying student households through December 31, 2020**

### Funding

**Allocation:** \$20,000,000  
**Total Funds Expended:** \$12,265,071  
**Funds Transferred to SCDOE:** \$8,200,000

### Program Update

The ORS collaborated with schools across the state. Schools reported monthly on the status of mobile hotspots and monthly internet service. The ORS created communications materials including press releases, a program overview, and a video tutorial on how to complete monthly reporting.

The Online Learning Initiative program transferred to the SC Department of Education (SCDOE) on December 31, 2020 along with \$8.2 million to provide service through June 2021.

### Participating Schools

**Public K-12:** 82  
**Private K-12:** 4  
**Charter:** 3  
**Higher Ed Institutions:** 26  
**Total:** 115

### Hotspots/Wired Services

**Verizon:** 59,701  
**AT&T:** 24,476  
**T-Mobile:** 1,377  
**Service Only:** 390  
**Wired:** 6,598  
**Total:** 92,542



## Mapping and Planning

**Securing a vendor for the development of a broadband statewide county-by-county mapping plan and statewide broadband infrastructure plan**

### Funding

**Allocation:** \$300,000  
*CostQuest: 299,900*  
*RFA: 120,000*  
**Total Funds Expended:** \$419,900

### Program Update

The ORS requested all broadband service providers and broadband infrastructure owners operating in South Carolina to submit broadband availability data to the ORS. The ORS procured the services of CostQuest Associates, Inc. to perform various Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-related services. A detailed map was made available in December 2020. The ORS also contracted the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) for the continuing storage, security, and maintenance of the map.



## Broadband Infrastructure Program

Expansion of broadband infrastructure with emphasized services to rural communities and communities with a high prevalence of COVID-19 or with demographic characteristics consistent with risk factors for COVID-19

### Funding

**Allocation:** \$29,700,000

**Total Funds Expended:** \$17,157,488

### Program Update

The ORS engaged Revolution D, Inc. to identify areas of the state that are unserved, impacted by COVID-19, and that if broadband were available, would support distance learning, telehealth, and/or teleworking. Companies completed infrastructure projects in December 2020, helping to expand broadband availability in the state.

The ORS created a program overview, various press releases, an application, guidelines, funding agreements, and reporting tools. Companies were required to submit Financial Progress Reports and Construction Progress Reports to the ORS.

**Applications Funded:** 78

**Companies:** 14

**Counties Served:** 27

**Program Targets:** 59

**Priority Targets:** 35

**Households Served:** 2,169

**Households Passed:** 18,574

**Businesses Passed:** 1,000

**Community Anchor Points Passed:** 202

**Educational Institutions Passed:** 38

**Health-care Facilities Passed:** 29

### Allendale Broadband Pilot Project

To advance deployment of broadband to unserved areas during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ORS partnered with SCETV, USC Salkehatchie, Allendale County School District, the Allendale Hampton Jasper Regional Library, and Revolution D, Inc. to launch a pilot program allowing free Wi-Fi to students and/or the public together with residential broadband service in Allendale County. Project partners worked with Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative to get fiber backhaul and Dominion Energy to get electricity to the SCETV towers located in Allendale County. Equipment was installed on the towers that will provide residents with fixed wireless (citizen broadband radio service) access to broadband service.

**Potential Number of Impacted Households:** 1,000

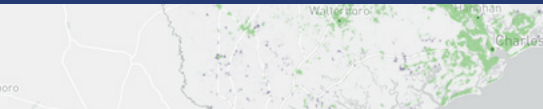
**Public Wi-Fi Maximum Download/Upload Speeds:** 50 Mbps / 10 Mbps

**Residential Network Maximum Download/Upload Speeds:** 78 Mbps / 6 Mbps



## Questions

Broadband Information  
[CARESAct@ORS.SC.GOV](mailto:CARESAct@ORS.SC.GOV)



More information can be found at [ORS.SC.GOV/broadband](https://ORS.SC.GOV/broadband)