



BEAM PERFORMANCE REPORT

2024

1. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Approved Program Plan number (as provided by Treasury): CPF_GP-000309

Program start date: December 6, 2023

Program end date: December 31, 2026

Actual CPF funds allocated to this Program: \$3,000,000.00

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document serves as the State of Mississippi's (the "State") Performance Report for the period ending June 30, 2023, as required by the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund ("CPF").

On December 6, 2023, the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) approved the Mississippi Capital Projects Fund Program Plan for \$3 million under the Digital Connectivity Technology expenditure category, designed to support recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency, address inequities in access to critical services, and work toward Mississippi's goal of providing every resident with access to high-quality, affordable broadband internet.

Mississippi intends to prioritize its CPF allocation with the overall goal of bridging the digital divide across the State and achieving the below identified measurable outcomes:

UNDERSTAND NEEDS	Understand the specific needs across the State through community feedback, input, and public comment in an effort to understand gaps, needs, and barriers to access and coverage
MAXIMIZE CONNECTIVITY	Utilization of competition and Internet Service Provider (ISP) match to enable the State to connect the largest number of unserved residents
SPENDING STRATEGY	Establish mechanism for multi-level, data-driven review process that aligns the State's goals with Treasury's statutory requirements
MONITOR AND IMPLEMENTATION	Implementation of key monitoring procedures to ensure the efficient, compliant use of all CPF funds awarded by the State

In order to achieve the State’s key priorities and objectives, in accordance with State statute, awards will be made to eligible ISPs in as identified below:

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL FUNDING AMOUNT
DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY TECHNOLOGY	To fund projects at public facilities allowing citizens to connect to Wi-Fi in areas where access is a barrier to adoption	\$3,000,000.00

3. USES OF FUNDS

Digital Connectivity Technology

The Digital Connectivity Technology (Public Wi-Fi) projects will provide \$3 million of CPF funding for technology projects installed as part of public Wi-Fi infrastructure. The goal of this project is to facilitate broadband internet access in areas where affordability is a barrier to adoption and use and push the State toward its goal of providing connectivity for every Mississippian.

Treasury approved the State’s Public Wi-Fi Program Plan on December 6, 2023; however, the commencement of this program was postponed until provisional awards were made in the Broadband Infrastructure category. The State has published key resources on its program website. The website can be accessed [here](#). Specifically, the Program Narrative, Application Questions, Scoring Rubric, and Draft Grant Agreement was compiled and published to inform prospective applicants of the key details regarding the application process including but not limited to eligible uses, form and content of applications, matching requirements, as well as various other administrative matters. The original CPF NOFO referenced above included information about the Digital Connectivity Technology program.

The State is set to open pre-registration on July 15th, 2024. The application portal is set to open on July 22nd, 2024. The application portal will remain open for 36 days closing on August 26th, 2024. Per MS Code 1972 Section 77-19-15 (2)-(4), preliminarily awarded projects will be posted on a map on BEAM’s website for comment/objection by ISPs. Final awards are anticipated to be announced in November 2024.

Applicants were required to provide details within their applications regarding the below topics/areas of interest:

- Project description
- Proposed project area including detailed boundaries of project reach
- Type of equipment installed
- Pricing structure (including required no-cost option)

- Maximum number of simultaneous users, expected number of users served, and upload/download speeds
- The applicant's commitment to sustain the infrastructure and the scalability over time of such infrastructure
- The community impact of the project

A complete listing of all application questions can be located [here](#).

Additionally, the State developed an objective scoring system designed to award points to prospective projects based on the following factors:

- Adequacy of the description of the project
- Timeline over which project can be deployed
- Applicant's readiness to comply with federal awards
- Project readiness
- The impact the project will have on the community
- Pricing structure and access
- Number of simultaneous users and upload/download speeds
- Match percentage (required minimum of 33% match)

The complete Scoring Criteria can be found in the Rubric [here](#).

A listing of the key milestones achieved is included below:

- Conducted and participated in 39 community engagement meetings
- Identified highly impoverished counties throughout the State primed for Public Wi-Fi projects
- Received Treasury approval of Public Wi-Fi Program Plan
- Developed application questions and portal for ISPs to apply for projects
- Published useful program resources for applicants

A summary of the outputs produced is included below:

On December 6, 2023, Treasury approved BEAM's Public Wi-Fi Program plan, including the program narrative, application questions, and scoring rubric. These useful program resources are posted on the

BEAM website and can be found [here](#). As of June 30, 2024, the application portal has not yet been opened for ISPs to apply. The pre-registration process is scheduled to begin on July 15th, 2024, and the application portal will open one week after the opening of the pre-registration process currently scheduled for July 22nd, 2024. Final awards are expected to be made in November 2024.

A summary of the outcomes achieved is included below:

- Approval of Public Wi-Fi Program Plan by Treasury
- Application process: Developed application questions and rubric for application process beginning in July 2024. Final awards are expected to be made in November 2024.
- Developed draft grant agreement for projects
- Compliance & monitoring: The State has developed a robust compliance and monitoring system which involves multiple levels of review and the use of subject matter experts. This system is continuously evaluated and improved to ensure the most efficient use of federal funds.

A listing of the activities planned for the next period covered are included below:

- Open application portal for Digital Connectivity Technology Projects
- Conduct State mandated comment/objection process
- Make final awards
- Execution of grant agreements with subrecipients
- Projects begin public wi-fi construction
- Monitoring activities conducted by subrecipients

Notable challenges and the status of each challenge are included below:

CHALLENGE	STATUS
IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE LOCATIONS FOR CPF FUNDING	Complete
UNDERSTAND NEEDS OF STAKEHOLDERS	Complete
NAVIGATING CONFLICTING FEDERAL FUNDING	In progress
ADJUDICATING OBJECTED AWARDS	Upcoming

Information about individuals/households benefiting from CPF funds is included below:

The application process has not yet begun for the Digital Connectivity Technology program. The application portal will open in July 2024, and final awards are anticipated to be made in November 2024. Further information will be available about the individuals/households and the corresponding benefits as awards are made.

Overview and outcomes of ancillary costs incurred to support bringing the capital asset(s) into full use are detailed below:

The application process has not yet begun for the Digital Connectivity Technology program. The application portal will open in July 2024, and final awards are anticipated to be made in November 2024. Further information will be available about the individuals/households and the corresponding benefits as awards are made.

4. PROMOTING EQUITABLE OUTCOMES AND ADDRESSING CRITICAL NEEDS

Communities with Critical Need

For the Digital Connectivity Technology category, the State identified 44 of the 82 counties have a persistent poverty rate above 20%. These counties represent project areas where affordability is a barrier to adoption. Projects not within one of these 44 counties have the potential to be funded; however, the scoring rubric gives priority to funding projects within these highly impoverished counties to help bring high-speed internet to communities where residents may not be able to afford service.

Awareness Efforts

For projects within both the Broadband Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity Technology categories, the BEAM office engaged in 39 community engagement meetings in geographically diverse areas of the state. In addition, BEAM staff attended numerous meetings with local government officials and staffed two days at the Capitol during the recent legislative session to meet with all state legislators and provide information for them to take back to their constituents. BEAM director Sally Doty or a BEAM staff member presented at the Mississippi Board of Supervisors Conference and the Mississippi Municipal League Conference in 2022, 2023, and 2024. A copy of all community engagement meetings is attached to this report. At all meetings BEAM discussed the CPF programs and encouraged all participants to take the speed tests at www.Broadbandms.com to help provide observational data for the CPF eligibility map. The BEAM office distributed flyers publicizing the speed tests at all events, provided flyers at County Office Buildings, and sent 28,000 mailers to underserved areas to further refine the eligibility map. BEAM also provided flyers and information on the ACP program at each event and/or meeting.

For projects within the Digital Connectivity Technology category, applications will be required to include a marketing plan that will inform the communities of the available service. Each awarded applicant will be required to provide a quarterly marketing report that indicates the actions taken to promote awareness of the infrastructure as well as the engagement with such infrastructure within the community.

Progress in Addressing Critical Need

The Digital Connectivity Technology program has not yet begun the application process. This process will begin and conclude during the next reporting period, and final awards are anticipated to be made in November 2024.

5. LABOR

The State is committed to ensuring that project deployment will prioritize strong labor practices in the deployment of all CPF projects. Upon award, applicants will be required to report to the State the labor practices undertaken in the deployment of their project. To ensure this objective, the State included elements within the scoring criteria to incentivize those projects who will prioritize local hires, engage in local workforce development efforts, as well as conduct apprenticeship programs, training programs and attends job fairs.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To date, the State's broadband office has participated in 39 community engagement meetings that were attended by local elected officials, community leaders, tribal communities, and residents across the State. These meetings were done in two parts. The first being a presentation educating attendees on grant funding, the timeline of broadband deployment and buildout, who is eligible/ineligible for funding, and resources available to help bridge digital equity and skills. The second half of these meetings allowed for participants to ask questions and to share their experiences with unreliable internet or no access to the internet. The team documented questions and feedback received from these in-person meetings to develop programs that yield quality results for communities with critical needs.

To date, community engagement events have been focused on underserved communities and have been conducted only in English. The State's broadband office remains committed to continuing to engage communities statewide including communities with language barriers.

The below list represents the community engagement events attended by members of the State's broadband office:

DATE	LOCATION OF EVENT	TARGET AUDIENCE	NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS
7/25/2022	Bottom Rebuilders Legislative Forum – Jackson, MS	Local Communities	75
9/22/2022	Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus Forum Lexington, MS	Local Communities	100
10/27/2022	Mississippi Delta Cleveland, MS	Local Communities	75
11/17/2022	Clinton, MS	Local Communities	32
12/12/2022	Fayette, MS	Local Communities	22
12/12/2022	Natchez, MS	Local Communities	10 – plus live stream
12/12/2022	Liberty, MS	Local Communities	59
12/13/2022	Brookhaven, MS	Local Communities	24
12/13/2022	Woodville, MS	Local Communities	38
12/13/2022	Magnolia, MS	Local Communities	71
1/19/2023	Quitman, MS	Local Communities	25
1/19/2023	Tunica, MS	Local Communities	30
1/20/2023	Hernando, MS	Local Communities	50
2/17/2023	Okolona, MS	Local Communities	50
2/22/2023	Goodman, MS	Local Communities	23
3/8/2023	Indianola, MS	Local Communities	40
4/19/2023	Perkinston, MS	Local Communities	10
5/2/2023	Kosciusko, MS	Local Communities	20
5/9/2023	Terry, MS	Local Communities	48
6/1/2023	Learned, MS	Local Communities	47

7/14/2023	Carthage, MS	Local Communities	20
7/17/2023	New Hebron, MS	Local Communities	10
7/18/2023	Brookhaven Board of Alderman – Brookhaven, MS	Local Government	25
9/28/2023	Clarksdale, MS	Local Communities	20
11/01/2023	Legislative Black Caucus – Jackson, MS	Local Communities	20
1/18/2024	Southwest MS PDD – Natchez, MS	Local Communities	30
1/19/2024	Southern I PDD – Gulfport, MS	Local Communities	30
1/19/2024	Southern II PDD – Hattiesburg, MS	Local Communities	30
1/26/2024	Senatobia, MS	Local Communities	65
1/30/2024	East Central PDD – Newton, MS	Local Communities	20
1/30/2024	Golden Triangle PDD – Starkville, MS	Local Communities	20
1/31/2024	Three Rivers PDD – Tupelo, MS	Local Communities	40
1/31/2024	Northeast MS PDD – Booneville, MS	Local Communities	30
2/01/2024	North Delta PDD – Batesville, MS	Local Communities	10
2/01/2024	South Delta PDD – Greenville, MS	Local Communities	30
2/06/2024	Central MS PDD – Pearl, MS	Local Communities	50
2/06/2024	North Central PDD – Winona, MS	Local Communities	40
3/18/2024	State Pentecostal Board – Raymond, MS	Local Communities	16
5/03/2024	National Conference of State Legislators – Virtual	Government Leaders	Live Stream

7. CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

The State has incorporated language within each of the administrative contracts executed to date requiring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights act.

The State will further ensure that each subaward agreement executed with subrecipients includes a detailed description of the requirements to maintain compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. This provision will be closely monitored by the State in the ongoing monitoring of subawards.