

# New Mexico Now Stands To Receive Millions In Federal Funding To Close Digital Divide



*Kelly Schlegel*

## **DoIT News:**

SANTA FE — New Mexico joined all 50 states and 6 territories in meeting critical deadlines for federal digital equity and broadband expansion funds included in the \$65 billion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

“Ensuring New Mexico is positioned to secure its fair share of federal funding is a top priority,” said Director Kelly Schlegel of the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion. “All New Mexicans deserve quality access to digital services, no matter the size of their community.”

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion, which is administratively connected to the New Mexico Department of Information Technology, submitted its application for [Digital Equity Planning Grant Program](#) support through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration ([NTIA](#)).

The state also issued a [letter of intent](#) to NTIA, confirming New Mexico’s interest in the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program – starting with \$5 million in support for year-long work toward a 5-Year Action Plan, which is required to unlock hundreds of millions of dollars in future program funding for broadband expansion. To meet another milestone, the state will provide a more detailed proposal to NTIA outlining the state’s

anticipated use of the \$5 million planning funds by August 15.

“We are taking a disciplined approach to accelerating New Mexico’s digital transformation, which will allow all New Mexicans to fully participate in today’s economy,” Schlegel said. “Optimizing federal grant funding to launch a collaborative, state-led effort will empower our local governments, tribes, schools, small businesses and community organizations to eliminate the digital divide together – forever.”

In addition, the state applied for approximately \$740,000 in funding to support year-long digital equity planning, analysis, outreach, and engagement. This work will precede an anticipated \$17 million for New Mexico in federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant support in 2023, and an additional \$1.25 billion in competitive funding available nationally starting in 2024 through NTIA’s Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program.

“New Mexico must have adequate funding to ultimately be successful in eliminating the digital divide and meeting these critical federal milestones are fundamental to achieving the overall New Mexico state plan of collaboration, innovative approaches, comprehensive middle mile development, support for alternative technologies for hard-to-reach regions and achieve 100 percent connectivity,” Schlegel said.

*The New Mexico Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is the enterprise technology partner serving and supporting State Agencies with innovative solutions to advance the delivery of their core missions and create progress for all New Mexicans.*