



Louisiana Office of Broadband
Development & Connectivity

ÉTOUFFÉE 1.0 | CPF 1-B

Enhancing Technological Opportunity for yoU and your Family to Foster Education and Enterprise | Capital Project Fund 1B Accessible Device Distribution Program
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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Table of Contents

Understanding the Basics	4
Program Eligibility Questions	87
Other Application Questions	98
Device Distribution, Use and Maintenance	109
Compliance, Monitoring, and Reporting	10



Version History

Date	Version
6/2/2026	Version 1.0 Published

Version Policy

Version history is tracked in the table above, with notes regarding version changes. The dates of each publication are also tracked in this table. Policy changes within this document will result in the issuance of a new primary version number with a publish date clearly noted. For example, a change in eligibility criteria to the program would warrant issuance from Version 1.0 to Version 2.0, an increase in the primary version number. Future policy changes will result in additional revision and the issuance of a new primary version number.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This document is designed to provide answers to frequently asked questions related to the ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program. It consolidates guidance from the official Program Plan, Treasury's Capital Projects Fund requirements, and ConnectLA's administrative procedures.

Because the CPF ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program is a new initiative, the FAQs are considered a living document. Content will be updated periodically as ConnectLA finalizes program policies, clarifies implementation details, or issues new Treasury guidance.

Applicants are encouraged to review the latest version of this document in the ÉTOUFFÉE portal before submitting an application.

Understanding the Basics

1. What is the ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program?

The ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program aims to address affordability barriers to broadband access by providing accessible digital devices and upgraded Louisiana State Surplus equipment for distribution to eligible public entities.

Funding under the 1B eligible use category can be used for laptops, tablets, and desktop computers, which may be loaned to the public or provided in public facilities.

2. Is there any cost to Applicants associated with the program?

There are no costs to Applicants to participate in the program. This Program will never ask an Applicant for their credit card or bank account information.

3. Where did the funding come from?

The ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program is funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Capital Projects Fund (CPF) and administered by ConnectLA.

4. Will Applicants receive funds from the Program directly?

Applicants will not receive funds directly; instead, awarded devices and approved equipment will be provided to Subrecipients.



5. What is meant by “digital literacy” in the context of this program?

Digital literacy refers to skills needed to use devices, navigate the internet, access online services, use assistive technology, and participate safely and effectively in digital environments.

6. How can I apply?

Applications can be submitted beginning on June 3, 2026. For more information on the Program and what is required to apply, please visit the ConnectLA Program website located at etouffee.org.

7. What is the application deadline?

The application deadline is July 15, 2026, at 11:59 PM CST.

8. Who can I contact for questions regarding the application and subsequent process?

Questions related to grant application content or specific inquiries about the Program should be directed to connect@info.la.gov with “ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program” listed in the subject line.

9. Are paper applications being accepted?

No, all applications must be submitted through the online application portal. If you require additional assistance in completing your online application, please contact the Program at (225) 922-4608 or (225) 663-1205 on Monday – Friday during the hours of 8:00am – 5:00pm.

10. Can Applicants submit multiple applications?

No, Applicants can only submit one application per Applicant.

11. What are the eligibility requirements?

To be eligible for the program, the Applicant must:

1. Be a public - facing institute:
 - a. Veterans Service Organizations
 - b. Post-secondary Education Institution
 - c. Rural Public Health Agencies and facilities
 - d. Municipalities
 - e. State Government Agencies
2. Be located in areas where affordability is a known barrier to broadband use



3. Facilitate broadband internet access for the public, including State residents with disabilities that preclude them from accessing the internet, and promote digital literacy and skills training.
4. Ensure their project directly enables work, education, and health monitoring.
5. Ensure their project is designed to address critical needs identified during, or resulting from, public health emergencies.
6. Ensure their project is designed to address a critical need for the community to be served by it.
7. Participate in risk assessment and monitoring processes throughout the lifecycle of the grant.

12. What is considered a Rural Public Health Agency and facility?

A rural public health agency or facility is an organization that provides healthcare, public health, or related support services to people living in rural areas.

Examples may include:

- Rural hospitals and clinics
- Community health centers
- Local health departments
- Tribal health facilities
- Mobile health units
- Behavioral health or substance abuse treatment centers
- Public health outreach and prevention programs

12. What types of devices will be available through the Program?

- Laptops
- Tablets
- Desktops
- Technology Equipment

To view full device catalog, visit the program website at <https://etouffee.org/public/home/>.

13. Will accessories be included with the awarded device?

Yes. Accessories such as headphones, wireless keyboards, and wireless mice will be included based on the organization's selection in the application

To view full device catalog, inclusive of accessories, visit the program website at <https://etouffee.org/public/home/>.



14. How will Applicants receive the devices?

Devices will be delivered to the mailing address listed in the application.

15. What are the minimum and maximum number of devices Applicants can receive through the Program?

Applicants must request at least 20 devices. There is no maximum set; organizations may request any number of devices based on their organizational need and capacity.

Note: Device awards are subject to availability.

16. How are Subrecipients expected to incorporate training into their device distribution approach?

Subrecipients are expected to include access to free digital skills and literacy training as part of the ÉTOUFFÉE Accessible Device Distribution Program. The training approach should align with the overall program design and support effective and meaningful use of devices by end users.

Training does not have to be mandatory. Subrecipients with existing training programs must outline the goals, components, and timeline, as applicable.

17. Can digital training include accessibility components?

Yes. Training may include how to use assistive technologies, accessibility features built into devices, or navigating ADA-compliant websites.

All Program offerings, including all training resources, must be accessible and aligned with the Program's accessibility requirements.

18. What is the full program timeline?

The program follows a defined timeline:

- Application Period: June 3, 2026 – July 15, 2026
- Award Notifications: July 24, 2026
- Required Subrecipient Summit: August 2026 (dates to be provided)
- Project Completion Deadline: December 31, 2026

All approved projects must be fully implemented by the completion deadline.



Program Eligibility Questions

1. What types of entities are eligible for the Program?

- a. Veterans Service Organizations
- b. Post-secondary Education Institution
- c. Rural Public Health Agencies and facilities
- d. Municipalities
- e. State Government Agencies

2. Can organizations apply if they are not located in a high-affordability-barrier census tract but serve one?

Yes. Organizations may still be eligible if they can show that their project serves residents in areas where affordability is a known barrier, even if their physical office is elsewhere. The program requires projects to facilitate broadband access for the public and address affordability barriers in the community served. Organizations are listed as eligible when affordability barriers are present in the area they serve.

3. What documentation is required to be considered eligible for the Program?

Applicants must complete all required sections of the application and provide supporting documentation where requested. This may include existing policies, plans, or program materials. If such documentation does not currently exist, Applicants may be required to confirm that they will develop and implement the required policies or plans if awarded and provide said policies or plans.

4. How will the application be scored?

Applications will be evaluated through a competitive scoring process using a standardized rubric aligned with program requirements. Scoring criteria include project eligibility, program requirements, sustainability and maintenance planning, compliance and monitoring capacity, and community impact. Applications must meet a minimum threshold to be considered for award. Awards are prioritized based on highest scores until devices are fully allocated.

5. What are the allowed uses of devices under the program?

Devices must be used for one or more of the following public-facing activities:

- Free and open device lending programs
- Free and open public computer labs
- Programs supporting workforce development, education, or health monitoring

All uses must be free, publicly accessible, and non-discriminatory.



6. How is “affordability barrier” determined for eligibility?

Affordability is determined using census-based indicators, including median household income, unemployment rate, percentage of households receiving SNAP benefits, and percentage of uninsured individuals within the community served. Applicants must demonstrate that their project primarily serves areas where these indicators reflect barriers to broadband adoption.

7. Are community partners required and what role do they play?

Community partners are not required but are encouraged. Applicants should identify any partners supporting project implementation and describe their role, such as outreach, training delivery, or program support. Applicants should also describe how they will promote awareness and engagement within the community.

Other Application Questions

1. Can I monitor the status of my application?

Yes, Applicants will be able to view the status of their application upon logging into the application portal.

2. How will I be notified that I have been granted access to a device?

Applicants will be notified through the application portal if their application is approved.

3. Is there an appeal process in place if I disagree with my eligibility determination?

Applicants may appeal certain Program eligibility decisions. Applicants are not allowed to appeal approved Program policies.

Following a formal Program determination, a Notice will be issued on your application within the ÉTOUFFÉE Portal. Applicants will have a period of 7 calendar days following Program Notice to initiate and submit an appeal in writing. Applicants who wish to appeal a determination will be required to complete and submit an appeal request, including a justification for the appeal and uploading any supporting documentation for the appeal request. Any requestor submitting an appeal shall attest that the information in the appeal is accurate and that the appeal is submitted in good faith.



The Program will review submitted appeal requests and provide an updated Program determination to the Applicant within the ÉTOUFFÉE Portal.

4. **Can I use grant funds to purchase my choice of device type/model?**
 No. Funding will not be provided to subgrantees. ConnectLA has preselected Apple as the device provider and established a list of eligible devices that Subrecipients may choose from as part of the award.

Device Distribution, Use, and Maintenance

1. **Are Subrecipients required to track the devices they receive?**
 Yes. Subrecipients must maintain detailed records of all distributed devices, including the number, type, and serial numbers of devices and where they are located. If devices are loaned to end users, Subrecipients must retain signed borrower agreements outlining loan terms and conditions. This information will be reported quarterly to ConnectLA as part of ongoing performance monitoring.
2. **What are the maintenance and replacement responsibilities?**
 Subrecipients are responsible for maintaining all devices in working order throughout the grant performance period. Each applicant must include a five-year sustainability plan. Subrecipients must also replace lost or damaged units not covered under warranty, ensuring continued public access to functional devices.
3. **Can Subrecipients request a specific device brand or model?**
 No. Devices will be selected from a preapproved list of Apple devices provided through the program. Device types and configurations will be standardized to ensure consistency, accessibility, and alignment with program requirements.
4. **Can Subrecipients charge a small fee for lost/damaged devices?**
 No, Subrecipients may not charge fees, small or otherwise, for lost or damaged devices.

Compliance, Monitoring, and Reporting

1. **What compliance requirements apply to this program?**
 All Subrecipients must comply with federal, state, and ConnectLA program requirements, including the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and U.S. Treasury Capital Projects Fund terms. Compliance covers record retention and asset tracking. Subrecipients are required to

maintain documentation for asset tracking and make records available upon request. Subrecipients are also required to participate in risk assessment and monitoring processes throughout the lifecycle of the grant.

2. How will ConnectLA monitor Subrecipients?

ConnectLA will conduct risk-based monitoring throughout the grant lifecycle. Each Subrecipient will complete a Subrecipient Profile Questionnaire that evaluates management capacity. The resulting risk rating determines the frequency and depth of monitoring. Monitoring includes quarterly desk reviews, data verification, and periodic on-site visits.

3. What is included in the monitoring process?

Monitoring will include review of performance reports and inventory records; verification of device usage and accessibility compliance; and review of Subrecipient adherence to program terms and conditions. ConnectLA's compliance contractor will assist with ongoing monitoring, following a written Monitoring Plan for each Subrecipient.

4. Will Subrecipients receive help with compliance?

Yes. ConnectLA and its federal compliance contractor will provide training, resources, and technical assistance to help Subrecipients meet all reporting and performance requirements. Assistance may include webinars, office hours, and compliance workshops.

5. What happens if a Subrecipient is found noncompliant?

If noncompliance is identified, ConnectLA will issue a Corrective Action Notice and work with the Subrecipient to resolve the issue. Persistent or serious noncompliance may result in temporary suspension, reduced award scope, or termination from the program, in accordance with Treasury and state policy.

6. What must Subrecipients report during the program?

Subrecipients are required to submit quarterly progress reports. These reports must include the number and type of devices distributed, training participation metrics, accessibility upgrades completed, and program outcomes. ConnectLA will use this data to fulfill Treasury reporting obligations.

7. What happens at program closeout?

At the end of the performance period, Subrecipients must complete a final closeout report confirming that all devices are in eligible use, documentation is complete, and all corrective actions (if any) are resolved. ConnectLA will perform a final compliance review before certifying closeout to Treasury.



8. What happens if a Subrecipient wants to withdraw from the program?

A Subrecipient may withdraw but must complete a formal closeout process and comply with all device disposition and reporting requirements.

- a. Subrecipients must notify ConnectLA in writing with justification and proposed effective date.
- b. ConnectLA will review the request to determine whether:
 - i. Devices must be returned
 - ii. Devices may be transferred to another eligible Subrecipient
 - iii. A partial closeout or termination is required
- c. Subrecipients must complete all required closeout documentation, including:
 - i. Updated inventory records
 - ii. Final performance and expenditure reports
 - iii. Reconciliation of any outstanding compliance issues
- d. ConnectLA may conduct a final compliance review before releasing the Subrecipient from obligations.

9. What are the long-term responsibilities after receiving devices?

Subrecipients must ensure that devices remain in eligible public use for a minimum of five years and comply with ongoing reporting, monitoring, and maintenance requirements throughout the performance period.

