

# BEAD Program Changes

On June 6, 2025, NTIA released the [BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice](#). The Policy Notice removes certain non-statutory requirements outlined in the [BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#). Per the Policy Notice, the Commission is required to rescind previous BEAD preliminary awards, rerun the grant allocation process with a “Benefit of the Bargain” (BOB) round, and submit the BEAD Final Proposal by September 4, 2025.

## Notable Changes:

- Fiber preference replaced with a technology neutral approach: priority projects now include *any* proposed technology that can meet the technical requirement of BEAD: service at speeds of at least 100 /20 Mbps, latency at most of 100 milliseconds, and deployment that is scalable. Technology may now include licensed or unlicensed fixed wireless and low-earth orbit satellite.
- Low-cost service plan revised: there is no set price for the low-cost service plan (previously a maximum of \$40) and eligibility is reduced to only those that qualify for the FCC Lifeline Program (generally those 135% below poverty line).
- Previously approved non-deployment activities, including broadband workforce training programs, are rescinded and allowable use of non-deployment funding guidance will be

## Removed NOFO Requirements:

- Local Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement
- Fair Labor Practices & Highly Skilled Workforce
- Advancing Equitable Workforce Development and Job Quality Objectives
- Civil Rights and Nondiscrimination Law Compliance
- Contracting with Small and Minority Businesses, Women’s Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Firms
- Climate Resilience
- Open Access & Net Neutrality
- Middle Class Affordability

## BEAD Local Coordination & Engagement:

The Policy Notice eliminates the local coordination and stakeholder engagement requirements and scoring preference under BEAD. Applicants who previously met with local leaders, hosted public engagement sessions, or received formal resolutions of endorsement will no longer have those activities considered as part of their application score. Partners may still encourage ISPs to apply for BEAD funding in their area, but such engagement will not influence the BEAD allocation process. Partners may also consider offering match or in-kind contributions to reduce BEAD funding requests and increase the match that an applicant is offering.

The Commission is grateful to ISPs, local governments, Tribal Nations and community stakeholders for their ongoing dedication and robust participation in Wisconsin’s BEAD program. Local coordination and engagement are critical to bringing Internet for All Wisconsinites.

### **BEAD BOB Letter of Intent:**

Prior to conducting the BOB round and similar to the original subgranting round, the Commission reopened the [Letter of Intent \(LOI\)](#) phase on June 17, 2025. Potential applicants seeking BEAD funding submitted an LOI that demonstrates the potential applicant meets the managerial, operational, technological, and fiscal capacity to construct and maintain a BEAD funded project. The deadline to submit a LOI was June 30, 2025, at 1:30 PM CT.

### **BEAD Benefit of the Bargain (BOB) Grant Round:**

- BEAD BOB is the new subgranting round per the Policy Notice.
- BEAD BOB reopens the application process to new entities and makes all BEAD eligible locations available for new applications in the grant round.
- BEAD BOB removes the original approved scoring rubric from [Initial Proposal Volume Two](#). In the BOB round, primary scoring criteria related to minimal BEAD outlay and secondary criteria is used only when project costs are within 15% of the lowest cost for the same general area. Secondary criteria that will be used in Wisconsin:
  - Speed of Network & Other Technical Capabilities
  - Previous preliminary award

### **BEAD BOB Update Estimated Timeline:**

June 2025: Rescind all prior preliminary awards, complete the unlicensed fixed wireless review process, optimize BEAD locations, re-open the BEAD Letter of Intent Process, and review qualifications.

July 2025: Complete BOB round preparations and open and close the BEAD BOB round.

August 2025: Review applications and score as needed, select BEAD BOB subgrantees, complete direct negotiations to fill in BEAD eligible locations, continue to optimize BEAD locations, and post a draft final proposal for public comment.

September 4, 2025: Final Proposal Due to NTIA.

### **Resources**

- [PSC Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Grant Webpage](#)
- [NTIA BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice](#)
- [Updated PSC BEAD FAQ \(6/27/2025\)](#)
- [PSC BEAD Preliminary Awards Rescinded Notice](#)
- [ERF Docket 5-BD-2025](#)

[Subscribe to Commission docket 5-BD-2025 on ERF](#) to receive email updates and communications on the BEAD subgranting process. For questions regarding the BEAD subgranting process or other questions regarding the BEAD program, email: [PSCBEADGrants@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCBEADGrants@wisconsin.gov).