

USDA Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program (DLT)

Immediate Measures to Support Rural Communities Affected by COVID-19

- **Congress provided USDA Rural Development an additional \$25 million in DLT funding through the CARES Act to fight the adverse health and economic effects COVID-19 has made across the Nation.**
- **The additional funding will help health care facilities and schools implement distance learning and telemedicine practices at a time when rural communities are depending on these services the most. Distance learning and telemedicine make it easier for thousands of rural residents to take advantage of health care, economic and educational opportunities without having to travel long distances or be or be among large groups of people.**

What does this program do?

This grant program helps rural communities acquire the technology and training necessary to connect educational and medical professionals with the teachers and medical providers who serve rural residents at the local level.

Who may apply for this program?

Eligible applicants that provide education or health care services through telecommunications facilities, include:

- State and local governmental entities
- Federally recognized Tribes
- Nonprofit organizations
- For-profit businesses
- Consortia of eligible entities

What is an eligible area?

The intent of the DLT program is to benefit rural areas with populations of 20,000 or less.

How may funds be used?

Grant funds may be used for:

- Audio, video and interactive video equipment
- Broadband facilities that support distant learning or telemedicine
- Computer hardware, network components and software
- Acquisition of instructional programming
- Acquisition of technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment

What kinds of funding are available?

Grants funds are awarded through a nationally competitive process. Funding is not currently available for DLT loans or loan / grant combinations.

What are some grant requirements?

- Awards can range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000
- A minimum 15 percent match is required and cannot be from another federal source.

How do we get started?

- Application windows for this program are announced through the national office on a periodic basis.
- Program Resources are available online at rd.usda.gov (includes forms, guidance, certifications, etc.).
- Check back here or contact your General Field Representative for additional information.

Who can answer questions?

Contact a General Field Representative that serves your area. Call (202) 720-0800 or email dlinfo@usda.gov.

What governs this program?

- Code of Federal Regulation: 7 CFR Part 1734

Why does USDA Rural Development do this?

The DLT program helps rural residents tap into the enormous potential of modern telecommunications and the Internet for education and health care, two of the keys to economic and community development.

NOTE: Because citations and other information may be subject to change, please always consult the program instructions listed in the section above titled “What Governs This Program?” You may also contact your local office for assistance. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at rd.usda.gov. *USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*