

Question: What is the difference between the LECAP and GVCNI programs?

Answer: **Get Vermont Connected Now Initiative** or **GVCNI** is a competitive program to award grants to fund the costs of deploying broadband service. It can cover the cost of service drops but only applies to fiber to the home services. There are no per-consumer or per-project limits, but it is part of a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process; proposals may not be funded.

Line Extension Customer Assistance Program or **LECAP** is a program to cover the consumer portion of the costs of a line extension project. A line extension is primarily focused on extending service along a shared right of ways, facilities that can support multiple customers and is technology-neutral. Participation by cable television providers is required under Public Utilities (PUC) rules. Other broadband service providers may participate voluntarily, but they must agree to the terms of the PUC cable line extension cost-sharing rules. It also can cover the costs of service drops, aerial or underground, up to \$500 each.

Question: What is a line extension?

Answer: A line extension is a cable or Internet Service Provider (ISP) construction process that will build the existing Cable/ISP provider network into a new, unserved neighborhood/street. Extension of the provider network into an unserved neighborhood/street, usually via utility poles in the right-of-way. A line extension is NOT the line from the pole to your home.

Question: How does a line extension work?

Answer: Cable Companies are required to extend cable video networks into unserved areas within its franchise area when requested by a valid consumer. But the consumer may be required to pay a significant portion of the construction cost.

Question: How will LECAP help me get cable and/or internet?

Answer: The LECAP program will help cover the customer cost of line extensions of between 500 feet and 850 feet per customer, depending on the number of customers and the length of the project. For a single customer, the program should cover approximately 528 feet. For projects that serve multiple customers, the program will cover more per customer as density increases. At six customers per mile it will cover 850 feet per customer; at densities above this, could cover the entire customer cost.

Question: If consumers need poles for the line extension, how do they get them? Does the company take care of that or is it the customer's responsibility?

Answer: The details of construction need to be discussed with the Cable/ISP. The estimate should provide some guidance.

Question: Can consumers apply for funding for a line extension that is already completed, in progress or already paid?

Answer: Line extensions purchased, completed, or in progress before the initiation of this program are ineligible.

Question: What if a consumer asked for a line extension earlier and agreed to it but it has not been completed yet can they apply for this grant?

Answer: Line extensions purchased or in progress before the initiation of this program are ineligible.

Question: What is "net near"

Answer: "Near net" is a general term. In this case approximately 500-850 feet from the existing Cable/ISP infrastructure.

Example: The LECAP program will cover the customer cost of line extensions of between 500 feet and 850 feet per customer, depending on the number of customers and the length of the project. For a single customer, the program should cover

approximately 528 feet. For projects that serve multiple customers, the program will cover more per customer as density increases. At six customers per mile, it will cover 850 feet per customer; at densities above this, it should cover the entire customer cost.

Question: What is a Line Extension vs. Service Drop?

Answer: Line Extensions: Extension of the provider network into an unserved neighborhood/street, usually via utility poles.

Service Drops: Individual cables connecting each subscriber home to the provider network. A typical connection is from a utility pole to the home via an aerial or underground cable. Cable providers will deliver a service drop 300' at no charge. Beyond 300' the customer will be charged. Each provider will have a different policy.

Example: A consumer with a 500' driveway requests a line extension. If the Line extension estimate is \$2500, and the 200' extra feet of service drop is another \$500, the consumer is eligible for the full \$3000 LECAP funds.

Question: Is there any timeline on when applications will be approved?

Answer: It will take approximately 2 weeks to review and respond to applications. Applications must be complete and include the estimate from a service provider.

Question: How will the consumer know if they have been approved/not approved?

Answer: They will receive an email from the department with details regarding the approval/rejection with details.

Question: What if the company cannot complete the extension before December 30, 2020?

Answer: The Consumer will not qualify for the line extension. The Cable/ISP must be able to provide a projected completion date excluding unforeseen circumstances, that is on or before December 30, 2020. This date is the deadline by which all Coronavirus Relief Fund monies must be spent, per federal law.

Question: Is there a deadline for other ISPs to notify of their desire to participate in the program?

Answer: Cable companies are obligated by the cable rules to provide line extensions. ISP's that wish to participate will be accepted on a rolling basis. They must agree to follow the cable line extension rules and program guidelines.

Question: My service drop will be underground, can LECAP help me?

Answer: Yes, service drops may be eligible for up to \$500.

Question: Does Comcast, for example, have a specific number that should be called or an email to send a message?

Answer: We are working with service providers to streamline the process. We will create a list of direct contacts if the providers make one available. The contacts will then be posted on the Department website LECAP page.

Question: How do you expect to handle blocks of addresses?

Answer: The line extension rules support community expansion. With each additionally confirmed subscriber the cost for everyone goes down. If neighborhoods wish to choose a designated coordinator, that person should contact us at PSD.Telecom@vermont.gov. Let us know who you are, and the scope of what you are trying to do. We can group the applications. Each household will still need to fill out an application and agree to the terms offered by the service provider.

Question: We live in Vermont, but our children go to school in another state do we qualify?

Answer: The service address must be in Vermont.

Question: My service provider is not on the list. What do I do?

Answer: You may ask the provider in your area to participate. Service providers can participate by emailing a letter of intent to PSD.Telecom@vermont.gov. Service providers must agree to follow the LECAP [guidelines](#).