



**Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB)**

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<https://publicservice.vermont.gov/vcbb>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**VCBB TO LAUNCH PROGRAM TO HELP VERMONTERS OVERCOME BARRIERS  
TO CONNECTING TO BROADBAND**

**Long Drop Program in Development**

**Montpelier, Vermont** – The buildout of broadband is well underway in Vermont, with eight out of the state’s ten Communications Union Districts (CUDs) currently connecting customers. But for Vermonters who live more than 400 feet from the fiber line along the road, that connection can come at a cost that’s unaffordable. On Monday, the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) approved a staff proposal to develop a new Long Drop Program later this year to address this issue and help low-income Vermonters get connected to broadband.

The VCBB Board voted unanimously to allow staff to develop a program that would provide funds to qualified providers to cover the extra cost to connect low-income Vermonters who live more than 400 feet from the fiber that runs along their road, including underground drops. Depending on the length, the cost can be up to several thousands of dollars for aerial drops and higher for underground drops where required, such as in manufactured home communities.

“If a Vermonter can’t afford to connect their home to the fiber that goes down their road, it is challenging for them to connect. The VCBB mission is to connect every Vermont resident, and the state has made a commitment to help residents overcome barriers to connecting to high-speed internet, which is now a basic necessity,” said VCBB Deputy Director Rob Fish.

The fund will be made up of \$2.5 million of remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Capital Projects Fund (CPF) that has been returned to the VCBB after some of the broadband buildout projects came in under budget, as well as \$1.5 million from the Connectivity Initiative.

The VCBB is in the process of developing the program and plans to issue a request for proposals toward the end of the year. The VCBB welcomes comments on the program. To provide comments or make suggestions, please email [Robert.Fish@Vermont.gov](mailto:Robert.Fish@Vermont.gov) or call (802) 522-2617. For more information, read the [VCBB Board's Approved Resolution](#) from its September 9, 2024 meeting.

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