

## Virginia Office of Broadband (OOB)

### Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program

#### *Policy Notice on Technical Assistance, Stakeholder Engagement, and Communications*

**General Statement:** This policy notice is provided to fulfill the Virginia Office of Broadband's commitment to and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) requirement for a fair, open, equitable, and competitive subgrantee selection process. This policy reinforces the safeguards identified in Virginia's approved BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 2 to protect the integrity of the competition, including measures against collusion, bias, conflicts of interest, arbitrary decisions, and other factors that could undermine confidence in the subgrantee selection process for last-mile broadband deployments. These commitments are provided throughout Virginia's approved BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 2 and collaborative inquiries are encouraged.

To effectuate the goals and commitments outlined in the previous paragraph, the following guidance will commence at the start of Virginia's 90-day BEAD application process. As of the drafting of this document, this application process window is scheduled to begin on December 1, 2024, but may be adjusted pending NTIA's final approval of BEAD eligible locations under Virginia's BEAD Challenge Process.

#### **Technical Assistance**

BEAD stakeholders are strongly encouraged to reach out to the OOB for technical assistance throughout the BEAD subgrantee selection process. To meet the OOB's commitments and NTIA's requirements outlined above, stakeholders are required to submit questions and meeting requests to [broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov). The OOB staff will not address ad hoc questions submitted outside of our Technical Assistance framework and will redirect any stakeholder questions received outside of this process to submit a written question or meeting request. Frequently asked questions may be added to the existing list of FAQs located at [dhcd.virginia.gov/bead](https://dhcd.virginia.gov/bead) at OOB's discretion.

#### **Weekly Office Hours**

Upon the commencement of Virginia's 90-day BEAD application process, and until the application window closes, the OOB will hold a weekly office hour to answer questions from stakeholders. These office hours may include brief updates from the OOB regarding the BEAD subgrantee selection process. To encourage participation from a wide variety of stakeholders, these weekly office hours will be announced via email prior to the start of the 90-day application process, and registration will be required. Frequently asked questions during these office hours may be added to the existing list of FAQs located at [dhcd.virginia.gov/bead](https://dhcd.virginia.gov/bead) at OOB's discretion.

#### **Ad Hoc Webinars and Technical Assistance Sessions**

The OOB may elect to hold specific topic-focused webinars and technical assistance sessions to further explain certain aspects of the BEAD subgrantee selection process. Justification for holding such ad hoc webinar may include the OOB becoming aware of gaps in understanding by a wide range of potential BEAD applicants. To encourage participation from a wide variety of stakeholders, these ad hoc webinars and technical assistance sessions will be announced via email at least 10 days in advance and registration will be required. Frequently asked questions from these sessions may be added to the existing list of FAQs located at [dhcd.virginia.gov/bead](https://dhcd.virginia.gov/bead) at OOB's discretion.