

## **Line Extension Customer Assistance Program**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

This document contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Line Extension Customer Assistance Program within the Office of Broadband at the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). DHCD intends to update this document periodically in response to questions received from stakeholders. Recipients and stakeholders should consult the [LECAP website](#) for additional information, as this document does not describe all relevant requirements for individuals and internet service providers to participate in LECAP. This document is separated by those questions frequently asked by applicants seeking to participate in LECAP and those questions frequently asked by internet service providers.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions by Applicants**

1. What kind of income documentation is needed to determine my eligibility?
  - a. To determine eligibility for LECAP, we require one of the following: two most recent pay stubs for each wage earner, the most recently filed tax returns for each wage earner, or government benefits documentation such as SNAP, TANF, SSI, etc...
2. Will I get to choose which internet service provider I can receive services from?
  - a. Yes, however, you'll have to choose from service providers who are already providing service in your area.
3. Will my income information be available to the public?
  - a. Portions of your application documents, including your income information, may not be exempt from disclosure from public records requests under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). If we receive a public records request under a FOIA request of LECAP income documents, we may be required to release that information. However, DHCD will redact personal identifiable information such as your name, and social security number from any documents.
4. Am I allowed to redact my personal information from my income documentation before submitting?
  - a. Yes, but we would need to be able to see your name, address, and income.

## Frequently asked questions by Internet Service Providers

1. How long does an internet service provider have to complete the Request for Information (RFI)?
  - a. LECAP will be accepting RFI's on a rolling basis, so there is no deadline to submit an RFI. However, DHCD encourages all internet service providers to submit a RFI as soon as possible in order to provide services to LECAP participants in their areas.
2. There are interested residents within our service territory who are eligible for LECAP, how can I get them involved with the program?
  - a. DHCD has created a portal for internet service providers to submit a referral directly. This portal can be accessed [through this link](#). Once an internet service provider submits a referral, the LECAP Administrator will contact the referred individual and prompt them to complete an application.
3. A potential LECAP applicant's location is within a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) project area, can they participate in LECAP?
  - a. Please contact the LECAP Administrator to determine if a location is within a VATI project area. Locations within VATI awarded project areas in the FY21 and FY22 are not eligible for LECAP investment.
4. What does DHCD recommend when distinguishing which locations are best suited for a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) application and which are best suited to be covered under LECAP?
  - a. The LECAP guidelines state, "Please note that in instances of dense clusters of proposed line extensions, DHCD reserves the right to deny funding for this area and recommend the cluster of locations be included in a future Virginia Telecommunication Initiative application area."
  - b. DHCD recommends reaching out to the LECAP Administrator for technical assistance when trying to determine if an area is better suited for VATI or LECAP, as the most viable solution will vary on a case by case basis.
5. The privacy of our customer's data is important to us. How does DHCD protect individual customer data under LECAP?
  - a. To avoid the display of personally identifying information, LECAP assigns a unique identifying number to each LECAP applicant upon receipt of the application. Internet service providers may choose to also use this unique identifier when submitting documentation to further shield customer data.

6. Our organization wishes to pursue an exemption from materials requests under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA Exemption”) for some of the information required to be submitted from internet service providers. Is DHCD able to grant FOIA exemption across multiple LECAP approved applicants?
  - a. Internet service providers may request FOIA exemption for specific document(s) which will be submitted under LECAP. These FOIA exemption request(s) may seek to secure blanket exemption for specific document(s) submitted by an internet service provider under LECAP in regards to existing and future LECAP participants. DHCD will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis.
  
7. Are internet service providers solely responsible for securing the affidavit signed by the LECAP participant to confirm services?
  - a. While we do require a confirmation of the availability of service, the internet service provider is not solely responsible for acquiring the signed affidavit. If the internet service provider is unable to gain a signature on the affidavit, DHCD will work with LECAP participants to sign the affidavit. In the event that DHCD is unable to obtain the signed affidavit, please see the following FAQ below. .
  - b. If an internet service provider is not able to obtain a signature of the affidavit during installation, then DHCD will accept a completed installation work order as a substitute for the affidavit to process remittance payment. Please note DHCD will require the submission of all additional information listed on the affidavit..
  
8. LECAP guidelines establish that a signed affidavit from the LECAP participant indicating that service has been activated is a requirement for an internet service provider to receive payment from DHCD for construction costs. What if a LECAP participant doesn’t sign an affidavit offered by the ISP or DHCD?
  - a. In the event a LECAP participant is unable to sign an affidavit, DHCD will attempt to contact that participant to gain a signature. A completed installation work order from the internet service provider will also be accepted as proof of service activation. If a completed installation work order is not incorporated into an internet service provider’s standard new-connection practices, DHCD will accept a signed affidavit from an internet service provider affirming service has been activated at the LECAP participant’s location.
  
9. The LECAP guidelines set out a timeline for cost estimates and connections. Are any of these windows flexible?
  - a. Yes, however, an ISP must request an extension via email to the LECAP administrator, with justification of the extension request. DHCD will consider these extension requests on a case-by-case basis.
  
10. How does an internet service provider request an extension if construction cannot be completed within 90 days?
  - a. Send the LECAP administrator an email at [lecap@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:lecap@dhcd.virginia.gov) with a request for extension and justification for the request.

11. What level of documentation will be required for DHCD to cover costs more than those outlined in the guidelines (\$10 per linear foot for aerial and \$15 per linear foot for underground)?
  - a. DHCD requires internet service providers, when completing the Request for Interest (RFI), to provide an internet service provider's cost per linear foot beyond its standard drop length for aerial and underground construction, or other cost model as utilized by the internet service provider. If, during the process of developing a quote for a location as requested by DHCD, costs are expected to deviate from the cost per linear foot amounts outlined in the RFI, internet service providers must explain any increase in quoted cost, providing written justification explaining those factors which increased the quoted cost above the internet service provider's standard.