



ARConnect

The Arkansas State Broadband Office

ARKANSAS DIGITAL SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITY PLAN

FEBRUARY 2024

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Key Notices

Funding

In 2021, the federal government passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which included the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program and the Digital Equity Act (DEA). Included in the DEA are three grant programs: the \$60 million State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program, the \$1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, and the \$1.25 billion Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. The DEA, its grant programs, and the BEAD program are all designed to function in a complimentary manner and support broadband efforts across the country. The development of this plan was funded through the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program. The proposed priorities, goals, and strategies set forth in this plan will be funded through the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program. ARConnect does not intend to use any state funds to accomplish the plan outlined in this document.

Covered Populations

The digital divide is indicative of a portion of the population not having access to, or lacking the skills to use and take advantage of, high-speed internet. The federal government has determined eight demographic groups that are, generally, most impacted by the digital divide. These groups are defined by the federal government and referred to as “covered populations” throughout this plan, and include:

1. Low-income households
2. Aging individuals (60+)
3. Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals
4. Veterans
5. Individuals with a language barrier
6. Individuals with physical or mental disabilities
7. Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
8. People living in rural areas

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) estimates that 87% of all Arkansans are likely to fall into at least one covered population and therefore are more likely to be negatively impacted by the digital divide. The largest covered population in Arkansas is our state’s rural residents, with over half of all Arkansans (55%) living in a rural area.

The federal definition of each covered population, as well as a link to an online, interactive version of an Arkansas covered population map, can be found in Section 3.1 of this document. As part of the federal requirements for creating a state digital equity plan, the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan evaluates

factors that may magnify the digital divide for covered populations in the state and proposes strategies and potential actions to mitigate those factors.

It is important to note that Arkansas' federal covered population evaluation of 87% does not indicate that 87% of the state's residents are directly impacted by the digital divide. The evaluation indicates that 87% of the state's residents fall into at least one federally-defined covered population and therefore, generally, are more likely to be impacted by the digital divide.

Timeline

The Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan was created to complement and build upon ARConnect's [BEAD Five-Year Action Plan](#) and [Initial Proposals](#), which are focused on building out the state's broadband infrastructure. This plan outlines various priorities, goals, and strategies, which are intended to continue throughout DEA and BEAD program implementation. An in-depth timeline can be found in Section 5.6 of this document.

1. Executive Summary

Nearly every aspect of modern life requires access to high-speed internet. From adults starting businesses to children finishing homework, patients using telemedicine, and employees working from home, internet access and the skills to use it are vital. We call this digital opportunity – access to high-speed internet, along with the ability to take advantage of it. Many Arkansans face challenges when it comes to digital opportunity. We call this the digital divide – where a portion of the population does not have access to, or the skills to adopt and use, high-speed internet.

The purpose of the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan is to outline an actionable path forward to make digital opportunity an economic benefit and reality for all Arkansans. This plan will position our state’s residents to pursue cross-sectoral economic growth through broadband-related, nondeployment activities and enhance workforce development as outlined in Arkansas’ BEAD Initial Proposal - Volume 2. It begins with Governor Sanders’ goal of achieving universal broadband access and builds on the efforts of members of the General Assembly and county and municipal leaders from around the state to make that goal a reality. The Arkansas State Broadband Office (ARConnect) partnered with an extensive array of public, private, and non-profit organizations to develop this plan. Leveraging these partnerships, in conjunction with 32 in-person focus groups, roundtable discussions in all 75 Arkansas counties, and a digital opportunity survey that elicited more than 12,000 responses, ARConnect developed a comprehensive digital skills and opportunity roadmap. Below is a high-level overview of this plan:

Vision

By 2030, every person, family, and community in Arkansas – regardless of location and income – will have access to:

- Affordable, reliable high-speed internet service in their homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions (i.e., libraries, schools, healthcare providers)
- The opportunity to enroll in basic computer skills training
- A computer, tablet, or mobile device

Every resident will be able to self-determine how they use digital tools and resources to safely and securely participate in education, healthcare, employment, and other important parts of our increasingly online society.

Key Obstacles

Based on community input gathered through a comprehensive digital opportunity survey and discussions during 32 in-person focus groups, ARConnect identified the following key obstacles to digital opportunity in Arkansas:

- Lack of reliable at-home broadband infrastructure across all parts of the state
- Reliance on mobile internet access and devices, which limits adoption
- Issues with service reliability and slow internet speeds in areas where infrastructure exists
- Perpetuation of the urban-rural divide

- High service costs, largely due to a lack of competition and affordable service options
- Low awareness of, and uptake in, the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which could increase access to affordable internet service
- Customer service challenges with internet service providers (ISPs)
- Limited opportunities for digital skills training, particularly courses offered in-person and in languages other than English

Goals

ARConnect identified five goals to guide future activities as Arkansas embarks on its journey to achieve digital opportunity:

1. Increase the Availability and Affordability of Internet Service in Arkansas
2. Improve Arkansans' Digital Skills by Implementing Digital Skills Training Opportunities for All Interested Arkansans
3. Leverage Existing State Agencies, Programs, and Organizations to Keep Arkansans Connected, Safe, and Healthy, and Prioritize Accessibility
4. Increase Access to Affordable Digital Devices
5. Engage All Interested Arkansans and Community Partners in Digital Opportunity Efforts

Additional details on how ARConnect proposes to achieve these goals, including strategies and measurable objectives, are provided in Section 5.

2. Introduction and Vision for Digital Opportunity

2.1 Introduction

Arkansas has a robust, diverse economy that blends a variety of industries. From global retailers and agriculture leaders to industrial manufacturers, logistics specialists and alternative energy providers, the state is home to a lucrative combination of resources, talent, and decision makers.

Despite the state’s economic advantages, many Arkansans face barriers to accessing information and opportunities emerging in an increasingly digital age. “Accessing” extends beyond the availability of broadband infrastructure. Arkansans need attainable service options and reliable digital devices to take advantage of high-speed internet. Further, some also need basic digital skills to take advantage of online resources and opportunities, such as navigating to Google, applying for a job, or searching for healthcare options.

Taken together, these challenges create the digital divide. This divide limits the opportunities and economic mobility available to some Arkansans. Access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet – and the digital skills to know how to use it – is necessary to fully participate in the 21st-century digital economy. As one focus group participant put it, ***“Computer literacy is the modern day reading and writing.”***

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) estimates that 87% of Arkansans are more likely than others to be impacted by the digital divide, meaning they fall into one or more categories called “covered populations.” These groups include low-income households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, those with physical or mental disabilities, racial or ethnic minorities, and rural residents.

To formulate a plan for addressing this potential divide, ARConnect embarked on a research and community engagement project to better understand the issues and unique challenges that exist in the state. ARConnect studied how Arkansans currently use the internet, what prevents someone from accessing the internet, existing digital skills gaps, and assessed how the state can use funding from the federal Digital Equity Act (DEA) and Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program to make a difference going forward.¹ ARConnect also analyzed how membership in a federally-defined covered population might exacerbate the challenges some Arkansans face. Through this work, ARConnect not only learned that barriers to digital opportunity exist in the state, but that those barriers are indeed exacerbated for some in the covered populations mentioned above.

Digital opportunity is the solution to those barriers, and this plan proposes an actionable path forward. Critically, this plan builds on Governor Sanders’ vision, and ARConnect’s mandate, to have universal broadband access in Arkansas and establish an era of efficient, next-generation opportunity, society, and government as outlined in Arkansas’ BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposals. It also builds on the efforts of members of the

¹ ARConnect does not intend to use state funding to support the implementation of this plan.

Arkansas General Assembly and municipal and county leaders from around the state to increase access to reliable high-speed internet in their communities.

2.2 Vision Statement

Building on the state’s investment in broadband infrastructure and the high-level vision outlined in the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan, ARConnect has a more detailed vision for achieving digital opportunity in Arkansas:

By 2030, every person, family, and community in Arkansas – regardless of location and income – will have access to:

- ***Affordable, reliable high-speed internet service in their homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions (i.e., libraries, schools, healthcare providers)***
- ***The opportunity to enroll in basic computer skills training***
- ***A computer, tablet, or mobile device***

Every resident will be able to self-determine how they use digital tools and resources to safely and securely participate in education, healthcare, employment, and other important parts of our increasingly online society.

Digital opportunity means all Arkansans – regardless of the community they call home – will be able to fully participate in the digital world. Reliable, affordable options for internet service and digital devices should be available to enable families to accomplish everyday tasks such as sending emails, attending telehealth appointments, or paying bills. In-person, multilingual digital skills training opportunities covering basic information and security practices should be available to anyone interested. Making digital opportunity the new normal will benefit all Arkansans by enhancing educational opportunities, increasing economic mobility, and expanding self determination.

ARConnect crafted this vision for digital opportunity in direct collaboration with Arkansans across the state. ARConnect shared a draft version of the vision statement and solicited feedback at county meetings, with focus groups, in listening sessions, and during outreach with other community partners. More detail on ARConnect’s community engagement is available in Section 3 of this document.

2.3 Mission Statement

The mission of the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan is to provide a comprehensive and detailed guide outlining what needs to be done to make digital opportunity a reality for those of whom it may be lacking.

This work will complement and build upon the state’s BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposals and ensure Arkansans are able to take full advantage of access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet.

2.4 Values

ARConnect centered the development of this plan around three key values:

- **Transparency:** Keep all residents, communities, and stakeholders informed of activities related to closing the digital divide and expanding digital opportunity.
- **Impactful Public-Private Partnerships:** Coordinate activities with business, nonprofit, and community partners to initiate and support sustainable programming. Leverage existing partnerships and prioritize development opportunities with individuals, organizations, and communities that appear to continually face barriers to broadband access.
- **Intra-Governmental Collaborations:** Continue to include and collaborate with state agencies by including partners from relevant offices in planning and soliciting feedback from agency experts.

These values will remain central to the state's digital opportunity efforts.

2.5 Goals

Based on this report's findings and stakeholder feedback, ARConnect has identified five goals to guide future activities as Arkansas embarks on its journey to achieve digital opportunity and the economic growth that accompanies it. Section 5 of this document describes these goals, and the strategies and measurable objectives necessary to make them a reality, in detail.

1. **Increase the Availability and Affordability of Internet Service in Arkansas:** In conjunction with the goals outlined in the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposals, ensure all Arkansans have access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet at their homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions.
2. **Improve Arkansans' Digital Skills by Implementing Digital Skills Training Opportunities for All Interested Arkansans:** Provide those interested with the opportunity to improve digital skills through core digital skills training courses offered at libraries, community organizations, and other community anchor institutions. Develop additional, specialized digital skills curriculum and training opportunities to support adoption of precision agriculture, telemedicine, and other digital tools that can aid in economic growth.
3. **Leverage Existing State Agencies, Programs, and Organizations to Keep Arkansans Connected, Safe, and Healthy, and Prioritize Accessibility:** Share tools and information that Arkansans need to protect themselves and their families online, take advantage of pre-existing state programs, and access

healthcare regardless of where they live.

- 4. Increase Access to Affordable Digital Devices:** To ensure the historic investments in broadband infrastructure are accessible for all Arkansas communities and residents, develop a device refurbishment program and distribute a combination of low-cost and free devices,² such as laptops and tablets, to members of covered populations who otherwise cannot afford them.³
- 5. Engage All Interested Arkansans and Community Partners in Digital Opportunity Efforts:** Throughout implementation of this plan, keep individuals, organizations serving covered populations, and Arkansas communities at the center of all activities. Regularly communicate and meet with all interested and impacted parties to affirm that digital opportunity is available to every Arkansan.

2.6 Planning Process Overview

To create this plan, ARConnect and its partners conducted significant outreach and engagement between February and August 2023. ARConnect visited all 75 counties in the state to meet with stakeholders and inform communities of ARConnect's efforts to make universal broadband access and digital opportunity a reality in Arkansas.

The office also initiated a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to better understand the state of the digital divide in Arkansas. The statewide Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Survey (ADSOS) collected over 12,500 responses between a combination of online and printed hard copy versions in English and Spanish. Additionally, the state held 32 in-person focus groups to directly engage with covered populations and organizations that serve or represent covered populations. ARConnect held additional briefings to inform community members of ongoing broadband planning efforts. Members of the [Arkansas Connectivity Coalition](#), who made up the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team, were key partners for both methods of information gathering.

ARConnect created the vision statement outlined in Section 2.2 in direct collaboration with community members across the state. ARConnect shared a draft version of the vision statement at county meetings, with focus groups, in listening sessions, and during outreach with other community partners. After soliciting feedback on a first draft of the vision, ARConnect further refined the vision statement.

Additionally, the barriers, assets, objectives, and implementation strategies discussed throughout the remainder of this plan were all directly informed by survey responses, focus group discussions, and community meetings ARConnect facilitated to support this project.

² Funding for refurbishment and device distribution programs will come from federal DEA funds.

³ While NTIA estimates that 87% of Arkansans fall into at least one covered population, it is not true that all of them will need assistance accessing a digital device, nor does ARConnect expect to provide all members of covered populations with a device.

As ARConnect moves forward with implementation, the office will continue to oversee activities related to digital opportunity in Arkansas. The office will simultaneously manage all broadband infrastructure projects in conjunction with the federal BEAD program.

3. Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Outreach Strategy

ARConnect contracted with Heartland Forward, a Bentonville, Arkansas-based non-profit organization, to support the development of this plan. Heartland Forward served as the lead subcontractor on this project and was funded through the federal State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program. At ARConnect’s direction, Heartland Forward assisted in coordinating stakeholder engagement efforts with the state’s counties, cities, community members, and other key stakeholders – such as members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition, including the University of Arkansas, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, Winrock International, Communities Unlimited, and the Arkansas Black Mayors Association. Additional stakeholder engagement activities include the following:

- **Statewide Tour:** From February through June 2023, ARConnect conducted a statewide tour, visiting *all 75 counties in Arkansas* to discuss broadband. The “Broadband Roadshow” spanned 81 business days and resulted in more than 5,900 miles driven and 878 direct interactions with local Arkansans.

Throughout the tour, ARConnect solicited feedback on local broadband barriers and prompted for potential solutions to those barriers. After presenting statewide and county-specific statistics on broadband access, affordability, and digital skills, as well as introducing the DEA and BEAD programs, ARConnect encouraged every county to form its own County Broadband Committee. As a result of this effort, 46 counties have formed local broadband committees, and these groups will be instrumental in supporting the goals of this plan.

- **Focus Groups:** ARConnect conducted 32 in-person focus groups to directly engage with the federally-defined covered populations listed below to learn more about their unique experiences as they relate to broadband access, affordability, and digital skills. Below is a list of the covered populations with which ARConnect engaged and the federal definitions used to clarify which individuals make up these groups:⁴
 - **Covered households:** Individuals living at or below 150% of the federal poverty level.
 - **Aging individuals:** Adults 60+ years old.
 - **Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals:** All individuals in state prisons, local jails, municipal incarceration facilities, and correctional facilities, not including individuals who are incarcerated in federal correctional facilities.
 - **Veterans:** Any person 18+ years old who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

⁴ A full list of the focus group conducted for this project is available in Appendix M.

- **Individuals with language barriers:** Individuals who are English learners and individuals who have low levels of literacy.
- **Individuals with disabilities:** Individuals with any physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individuals.
- **Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group:** Any individual who identifies as any race other than white alone or identifies as Hispanic or Latino of any race.
- **Individuals living in rural areas:** Rural areas include any area *other than* (a) a city or town that has a population of 50,000+ people, (b) any urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town that has a population of 50,000+ people, (c) in the case of a grant or direct loan, a city, town, or incorporated area that has a population of 20,000+ people.

To determine where to host focus groups, ARConnect consulted a variety of existing data sources, including the 2021 American Community Survey and Broadband Now’s survey, and mapped the results by census tract to learn which areas of the state had the highest concentration of people in each covered population group. From there, ARConnect used [NTIA’s Digital Equity Act Population Viewer](#) to allocate a roughly proportional number of focus groups to engage each covered population based on the number of Arkansans represented in each category. To finalize the focus group schedule, ARConnect plotted each planned community on a state map to ensure focus groups were planned in all regions of the state.

Figure 1 shows a combination of broadband availability and the rural covered population. An interactive version of the Arkansas covered population map, with layers for each covered population, is available [here](#).⁵

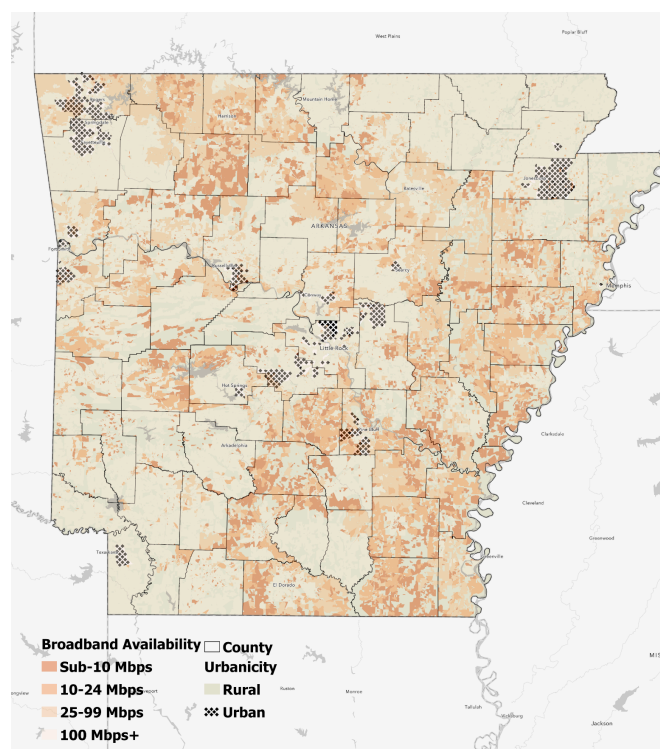


Figure 1: Arkansas Covered Population Map (Rural)

- **Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Survey:** In order to gain insight into the state’s digital divide, ARConnect developed a survey, measuring numerous variables related to Arkansas residents’ experience with broadband. The survey garnered 12,532 responses from 523 zip codes across a combination of online and paper surveys. The office also translated the survey into Spanish. Additionally, data collected through this survey directly informed the state’s BEAD Initial Proposal.⁶

⁵ A detailed breakdown of the data sources used to populate each layer of the map is available in Appendix B.

⁶ Full copies of the English and Spanish versions of the survey are available in Appendix C and Appendix D, respectively.

One of the primary tactics ARConnect used to increase the survey response rate was by promoting digital ads on social media to increase public awareness. While many Arkansans do not have reliable at-home broadband service, most people who ARConnect engaged with confirmed that they regularly access social media on their mobile devices.

The ad pictured in Figure 2 ran on Outbrain, which populates ads on websites like local online news sites, Meta (Instagram and Facebook), and LinkedIn, for 23 days during the survey period. Engagement with ad content was significant and led to thousands of visits to the online version of the ADSOS. ARConnect allocated more budget to Meta and LinkedIn ads as those two platforms generated a higher clickthrough rate and were a better return on investment for the state.⁷

ARConnect also shared the survey on its social media pages, at regional community listening sessions, at all 32 in-person focus groups, at stops along its statewide tour, and in one-on-one meetings and outreach with various community partners. Figure 3 shows an approximate geographic spread of responses to the ADSOS.⁸

- **Regional Community Meetings:**

ARConnect held six regional meetings, focused on identifying challenges to internet access and digital opportunities, as well as

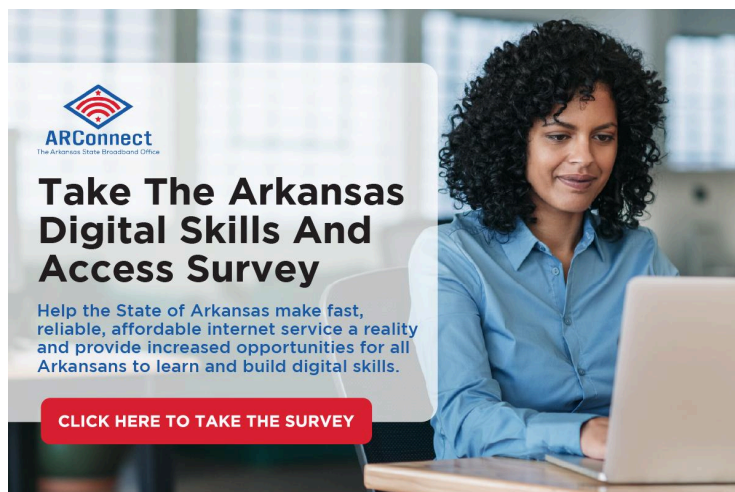


Figure 2: Digital Ad Promoting the ADSOS

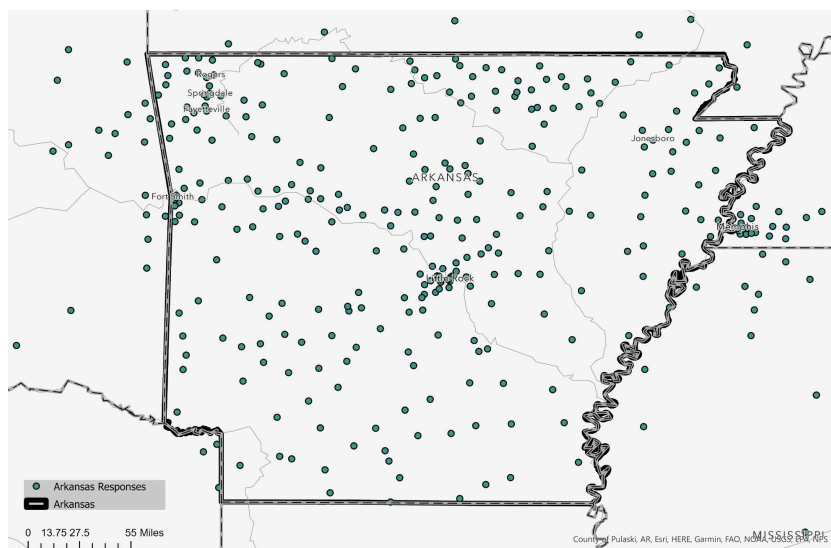


Figure 3: Distribution of ADSOS Responses

⁷ An overview of clickthrough rates for these digital ads is available in Appendix F.

⁸ The survey response map was generated based on respondents' IP addresses and reflects a general picture of responses across Arkansas. Some responses may appear to be from outside of Arkansas due to respondents taking the survey on mobile devices and/or the impreciseness of IP-based geolocation services. The ADSOS was only advertised to individuals in Arkansas and specified that the data being collected was specific to internet access and use within the state.

strengthening and supporting the state’s digital opportunity and BEAD planning efforts.⁹

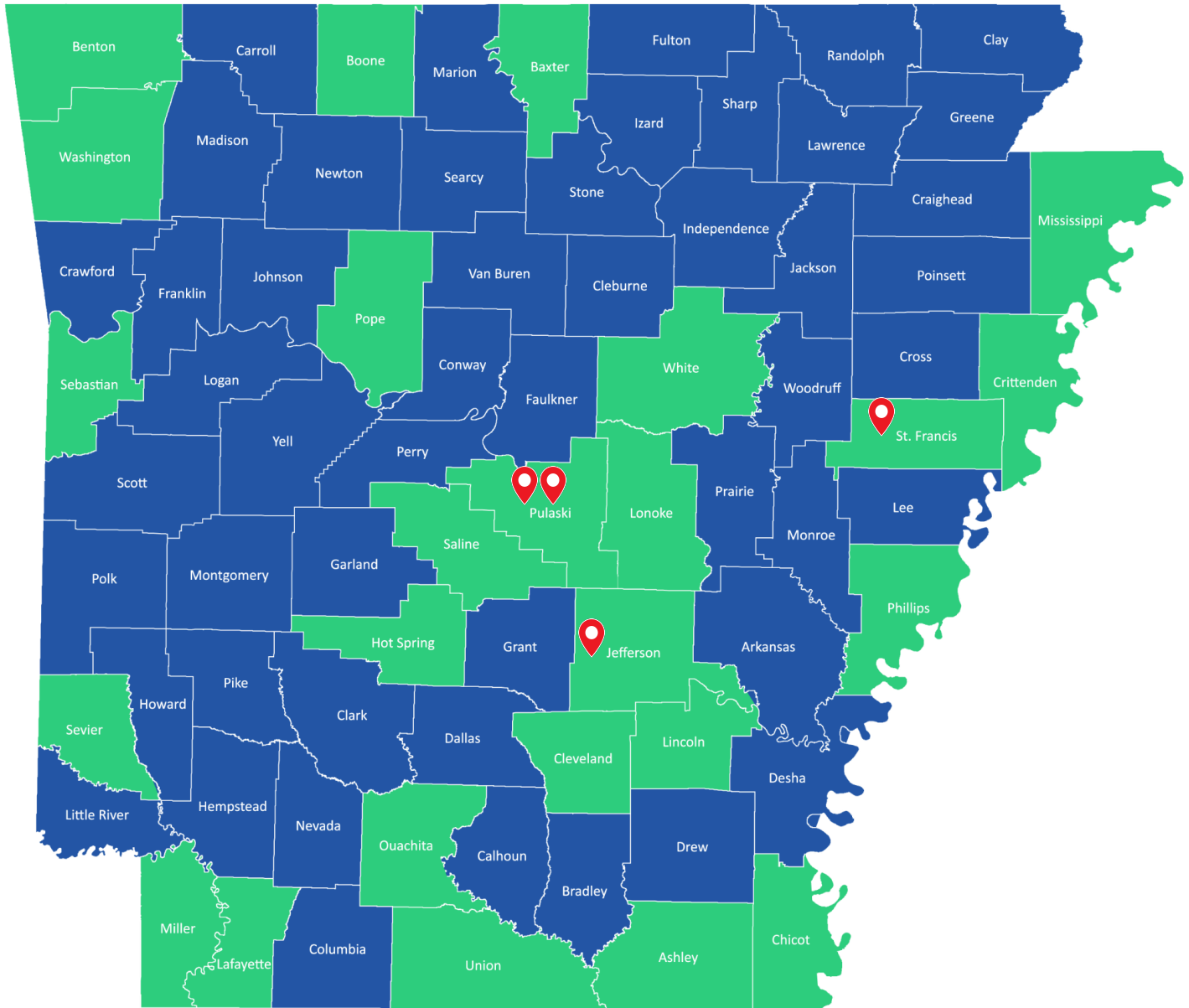
- **One-on-One Meetings and Outreach to Community Partners:** In addition to the regional meetings, focus groups, and statewide tour, ARConnect and members of the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team met with other relevant organizations. These organizations work with covered populations, are involved with broadband access projects in their communities, or are otherwise interested in enhancing digital opportunity for Arkansans. Additionally, members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition created a directory of more than 70 organizations working with covered populations that the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team then regularly updated. ARConnect also shared public information and updates with a list of more than 350 media contacts across the state.¹⁰
- **Meetings with County Broadband Committees:** In conjunction with the statewide tour, ARConnect encouraged every county in Arkansas to form its own County Broadband Committee. The County Broadband Committees have worked to determine local strategies supporting affordability program outreach and digital skills training, as well as establish other broadband priorities needed at the local level. The County Broadband Committees launched in the second half of 2023 and were a key resource for ARConnect to exchange information about the DEA and BEAD planning processes needed at the local level.
- **Meetings with the Arkansas Broadband Leaders Network (ABLN):** The Arkansas Broadband Leaders Network (ABLN) is a communications medium between ARConnect and the County Broadband Committees and other broadband stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and share information. The ABLN has 591 members and meets bi-weekly. Meetings alternate between scheduled broadband educational programming and open discussion sessions among members. The ABLN launched in the second half of 2023 and was a key resource for ARConnect to share information about the DEA and BEAD planning processes with stakeholders. Going forward, ARconnect will continue to leverage the network to keep stakeholders informed of ongoing activities, opportunities to apply for funding, bring broadband information and expertise to their communities, participate in pilot programs, and more.
- **Public Review and Feedback Period:** ARConnect released a draft of this document to the public to solicit comments and feedback. Starting on December 26, 2023 the report was available on ARConnect’s website (broadband.arkansas.gov) for individuals to review. The public comment period was open for 30 days and closed on January 25, 2024. ARConnect received 28 written comments and responded in writing to all commenters. In addition, ARConnect presented the report to stakeholders at four in-person public comment events and one virtual event in January 2024. To raise awareness about the public comment period and events, ARConnect published a [press release](#), shared information on its social media channels, publicized events in its newsletter, and put information on its website.¹¹

⁹ A full list of the regional sessions is available in Appendix M.

¹⁰ A full list of the 68 organizations ARConnect engaged with is available in Appendix M.

¹¹ A full list of the public comment events, as well as the public comment disclosure, is available in Appendix M.

ARConnect will continue to prioritize stakeholder communication and engagement as the state moves forward with the DEA and BEAD planning processes, implementing its digital opportunity and infrastructure plans, and other initiatives intended to assist in closing the digital divide.



■ ARConnect County Visit

■ ARConnect County Visit + Focus Group

📍 Regional Meeting Locations¹²

¹² ARConnect held six regional meetings total. Two meetings were held virtually and are not represented on the map.

There are no Federally Recognized Tribes in the state of Arkansas. For this reason, ARConnect did not engage in conversations or other stakeholder engagement activities with Tribal governments or Tribal stakeholders.

3.2 Partners on This Plan

Collaborators who supported the development of this plan include Governor Sanders, the governor's office, the Arkansas Department of Commerce, ARConnect staff, state agency partners, state legislators, municipal and county officials, members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition, organizations across the state that work with various covered population groups¹³, as well as local Arkansans who attended focus groups and participated in the Digital Skills and Opportunity Survey.

A combination of ARConnect staff and select Arkansas Connectivity Coalition members dedicated additional and significant time to this project through roles with the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team. Key members of the Planning Team include staff from Heartland Forward, the University of Arkansas, the Arkansas Black Mayors Association, Communities Unlimited, Winrock International, and University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension.¹⁴ The Planning Team provided insight, advised ARConnect regarding the barriers that covered populations face and potential solutions, and helped facilitate connections directly with those individuals and communities to inform the plan's development. The Planning Team met regularly after it was convened in October 2022.

The Arkansas Connectivity Coalition was a valuable and trusted partner for the development of the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan due to their strong working knowledge as to why digital opportunity is important and needed across the identified covered populations. ARConnect relied on such partners to assist in completing all of the necessary requirements associated with this plan.

Members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition supported ARConnect by hosting and facilitating focus groups, developing and disseminating the ADSOS, facilitating outreach to media and the organizations working with covered populations, analyzing results of the ADSOS, drafting the plan, supporting the public comment period, and more.

In June 2023, ARConnect convened the ABLN to regularly communicate with County Broadband Committees and other broadband stakeholders. ARConnect has also regularly shared updates with this group throughout the planning process and will continue to engage these local partners on digital opportunity efforts going forward.

ARConnect will maintain relationships with all these partners through implementation – particularly the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition, organizations that serve covered populations, and the individuals who attended focus groups and responded to the ADSOS. ARConnect plans to engage relevant partners identified during the

¹³ A full list of these organizations can be found in Section 4.

¹⁴ A detailed list of the partners that made up the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team is available in Appendix A.

planning phase as it develops future programs and initiatives, described in more detail in Section 5. Additionally, ARConnect has a list of all individuals who shared their contact information during listening sessions and in response to the ADSOS and will keep all residents who shared these details up to date on progress through written communications.

As an immediate follow up, ARConnect will directly send the draft of this plan to all partners from the planning process. After finalizing this plan, ARConnect will also follow up with County Broadband Committees and organizations serving covered populations to share relevant information on potential resources, such as the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and next steps regarding DEA and BEAD funding. This will be a key opportunity for ARConnect to build relationships with Arkansans – especially those who belong to covered population groups – before moving to the implementation phase of this project.

4. Assets and Obstacles

4.1 Asset Inventory

The first step toward understanding the current state of digital opportunity in Arkansas was to identify existing progress throughout the state. Unsurprisingly, there are already many passionate individuals, organizations, programs, agencies, coalitions, and projects addressing the digital divide. These assets are a critical component of Arkansas' existing digital opportunity infrastructure and will continue to be moving forward.

4.1.1 Digital Opportunity Assets in Arkansas

ARConnect developed a list of existing organizations, programs, and strategies across the state that can support digital opportunity efforts based on their current engagement in supporting the availability, affordability, and adoption of high-speed internet. ARConnect developed this list based on responses to the [Arkansas Digital Opportunity Assets Form](#), which was distributed to stakeholders and the public.

ARConnect used several strategies to engage partners and encourage organizations to fill out the form, including sharing it via email newsletter, socializing it with the ABLN, sharing it with the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition, and posting a link on its agency LinkedIn page.¹⁵ By targeting ISPs, stakeholders who work with various covered populations, and engaged community members, the Arkansas Digital Opportunity Assets Form helped ARConnect identify key partners involved in digital opportunity programming. Based on the responses and insights gathered, ARConnect's list of assets can be continuously updated, providing an ongoing and up-to-date inventory of digital opportunity assets across the state.

In addition to leveraging the Arkansas Digital Opportunity Assets Form, which is available in Appendix J, ARConnect identified other assets throughout the state well positioned to play a significant role in closing the digital divide.

In this section, the state's digital opportunity assets are aligned with the covered populations they support and organized into multiple asset categories. A summary of these assets, organized alphabetically, can be seen in Table 2.

ARConnect sorted these digital opportunity assets into six key categories:






- 1. Digital Skills Assets:** Digital skills training opportunities and classes will be a significant tool in achieving enhanced digital opportunity in Arkansas. An individual simply having access to high-speed internet does not mean they will know how to use it – or digital devices – so providing this kind of instruction is critical for true universal broadband adoption.

¹⁵ ARConnect's LinkedIn post saw 119 impressions, 14 engagements, and 6 clicks.

2. **Broadband Adoption Assets:** Across the state, there are a variety of programs, initiatives, and projects that have encouraged residents to subscribe to at-home internet plans, increased Arkansas’ at-home subscription rates, and provide opportunities for people to access the internet in their communities.
3. **Broadband Affordability Assets:** Ensuring there are affordable broadband service options is another critical step toward improving digital opportunity in Arkansas. The state has made considerable efforts to encourage competition among providers, connect Arkansans to available benefits, and support high-cost infrastructure build-outs.
4. **Broadband Accessibility Assets:** The state has an abundance of agency and public-sector partners that ARConnect can consult and partner with to ensure new programs developed to support digital opportunity are accessible to as many Arkansans as possible.
5. **Online Privacy and Cybersecurity Assets:** It is a priority for ARConnect to protect the safety of Arkansans online. There are already other state agency partners engaged in work to educate individuals on digital privacy.
6. **Covered Population Assets:** Some of the assets identified are included because of their close engagement with various covered populations. These state agencies, programs, organizations, and resources, even though they are not currently engaged in work that falls into one of the five other identified categories, can be key partners for ARConnect as it builds out its digital opportunity strategy.

For clarity and context, Table 1 includes a definition for each federally-established covered population category:

Table 1: Covered Population Definitions

Covered Population		Definition
 Covered Households		Individuals living at or below 150% of the federal poverty level
 Aging Individuals		Adults 60+ years old
 Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals		Individuals in, or formerly in, state prisons, local jails, municipal incarceration facilities, and correctional facilities, not including individuals who are incarcerated in federal correctional facilities
 Veterans		Any person 18+ years old who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable
 Individuals with Language Barriers		Individuals who are English learners and individuals who have low levels of literacy




 <p>Individuals with Disabilities</p>	<p>Individuals with any physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individuals</p>
 <p>Individuals who are Members of a Racial or Ethnic Minority Group</p>	<p>Any individual who identifies as any race other than white alone or identifies as Hispanic or Latino of any race</p>
 <p>Individuals Living in Rural Areas</p>	<p>Rural areas include any area <i>other than</i> (a) a city or town that has a population of 50,000+ people, (b) any urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town that has a population of 50,000+ people, (c) in the case of a grant or direct loan, a city, town, or incorporated area that has a population of 20,000+ people</p>

Table 2: Digital Opportunity Assets in Arkansas

Asset	Asset Category						Covered Populations Served							
	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
AARP Arkansas	X					X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Accelerate Arkansas		X												
Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas						X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Arkansas Access to Justice			X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Adult Education – Division of Workforce Services	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging						X	X	X		X	X			X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
Arkansas Association of Community Action Agencies						X	X	X					X	X
Arkansas Association of Counties						X								X
Arkansas Black Mayors Association						X	X						X	X
Arkansas Broadband Leaders Network (ABLN)	X	X	X			X								X
Arkansas Career and Technical Education and Community Colleges		X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association, Inc.	X	X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Community Foundation	X	X												
Arkansas Connectivity Coalition	X	X	X				X					X	X	X
Arkansas Department of Agriculture						X								X
Arkansas Department of Commerce	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Department of Corrections						X			X					

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
Arkansas Department of Corrections – Division of Community Correction						X			X					
Arkansas Department of Education						X	X				X	X	X	X
Arkansas Department of Health						X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Arkansas Department of Human Services		X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Department of Public Safety					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs						X		X		X				
Arkansas Digital Literacy Center – The Digital Empowerment Program	X						X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services		X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Economic Development Commission						X								X
Arkansas Fair Housing Commission						X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Farm Bureau						X								X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
Arkansas General Assembly						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Health Care Association						X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas High Cost Fund – Subsidized Broadband Development			X											
Arkansas Hospital Association						X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas Impact Philanthropy	X	X												
Arkansas Judiciary – Office of Court Interpreter Services				X		X	X					X	X	X
Arkansas K-12 Public Schools and School Districts	X	X				X	X				X	X	X	X
Arkansas Municipal League						X								X
Arkansas Office of Skills Development, Broadband Workforce Initiatives		X												
Arkansas Planning and Development Districts						X								X
Arkansas Public Libraries	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub	X						X	X		X		X	X	X
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas River Valley Action Council (ARVAC)			X			X	X						X	X
Arkansas Rural Connect (ARC) Grant Program		X	X											
Arkansas Rural Health Partnership						X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas School for the Deaf				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas Secretary of State						X								X
Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce						X								X
Arkansas State Library	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Arkansas Support Network				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
Arkansas United Community Coalition – Plaza Comunitaria						X	X	X				X	X	X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
Arkansas Veterans Association						X				X				
Benton Institute for Broadband & Society						X								X
Bethelone Missionary Baptist Church		X				X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Books from Bobby, Inc. – Digital Education	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boston Mountain Rural Health Center		X	X				X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Broadband Cost Survey			X											
Central Arkansas Development Council		X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Central Arkansas Planning and Development District						X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
City of Little Rock – Digital Literacy Classes: Empowering Little Rock Parents	X					X	X					X	X	
Communities Unlimited						X	X	X				X	X	X
Community Centers (Various)		X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
County Broadband Committees						X								X
DecARcerate						X	X		X				X	
Diamond State Networks						X								X
Digital Connector Program	X						X	X		X	X		X	X
Digital Literacy at the Central Arkansas Library System (CALs)	X						X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Digital Literacy Partners Working Group	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team	X	X												
Digitunity						X	X							
Disability Rights Arkansas						X		X			X			
Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
EducationSuper Highway		X												
El Zócalo Immigrant Resource Center						X	X					X	X	X
Emergency Broadband Benefit / ACP			X											
Forward Arkansas	X	X												
Goodwill Industries		X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
Grace & Blessings Digital Help	X						X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Heartland Forward	X	X	X											
Hometown Internet, LLC	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jack Williams Veterans Resource Center (Camp Jack)						X	X	X		X	X			X
Lead for America – American Connection Corps						X								X
Local Workforce Development Boards						X								X
Marshallese Education Initiative						X	X	X				X	X	X
Metropolitan Housing Alliance						X	X	X			X	X	X	
National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)	X													
Office of the Arkansas Attorney General					X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Pathfinder, Inc.				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
PCs for People		X												
Peace, Love, Understanding, Mercy (PLUM)			X			X	X							X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
River Valley Adult Learning Alliance	X						X	X				X	X	X
RootED Northwest Arkansas – Technology Learning Community	X						X					X	X	
Rural Community Alliance – Digital Engagement Initiative	X						X	X			X	X	X	X
Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SDHH)				X		X	X	X			X		X	X
University of Arkansas – Center for Communication Research	X	X												
University of Arkansas – Cossatot Community College	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
University of Arkansas – Public Wi-Fi Availability Map		X												
University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville	X						X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Asset	Digital Skills	Broadband Adoption	Broadband Affordability	Broadband Accessibility	Online Privacy / Cybersecurity	Covered Populations	Covered Households	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Veterans	Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a Language Barrier	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals Living in Rural Areas
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X
University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture 4-H Tech Changemakers Program	X						X	X	X			X	X	X
Various ISPs and Industry Partners		X												
Walnut Hill Communications – Connecting Communities	X						X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Winrock International		X				X	X					X	X	X
Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation		X				X	X						X	X

The entities listed in Table 2 above reflect organizations which completed the asset inventory form distributed by ARConnect and can support digital opportunity efforts based on their current engagement in supporting high-speed internet availability, affordability, and adoption. A description of each entity and its activities are included below:

AARP Arkansas

AARP is the nation's largest non-profit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to the more than 100 million Americans 50-plus and their families: health security, financial stability, and personal fulfillment.

AARP Arkansas has offices and representatives across the state helping aging Arkansans with basic digital skills training. The organization's Older Adult Training Services (OATS) program teaches skills like opening PDFs, navigating emails, and using digital devices to ensure a more connected, happier, healthier, and more secure financial life. Programming is available both in-person and virtually.

Accelerate Arkansas

As referenced in Section 3.1 and Section 3.2, the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition was formed to help support the state's and local communities' plans to secure the federal dollars needed to expand access and ensure high-speed internet is more accessible and affordable across the state. Convened by Heartland Forward, the coalition is made up of nonprofits, advocacy organizations, thought leaders, and philanthropies. The first major effort of the Coalition was the launch of Accelerate Arkansas, a 14-week planning and capacity-building program developed in partnership with the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society. Accelerate Arkansas was piloted in five communities – Cleveland County, the City of Elaine, the City of Hughes, the City of Keo, and the City of West Memphis – and offered structured community engagement to identify broadband goals, gather data, identify funding options, and target capital dollars to support implementation.¹⁶

Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas

With more than 80 member organizations representing over 12,000 affordable housing units around the state, the Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas is dedicated to the enhancement of multi-family housing through the promotion of professionalism of apartment management.

Arkansas Access to Justice

Arkansans can use Arkansas Access to Justice kiosks to access court records, print exhibits, find court forms and fact sheets, and apply for legal aid. Video explainers and FAQs are also available to make legal concepts easier to understand. Kiosks are located at various circuit and district courts across the state.

Arkansas Adult Education – Division of Workforce Services

Arkansas Adult Education has 37 local centers across Arkansas where adults with less than a high school education can access free programs and services to advance their workforce opportunities. Programs exist for job training opportunities, college preparation, and English-language literacy skills. Since the

¹⁶ A full list of organizations that make up the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition is available in Appendix L.

pandemic, Adult Education has prioritized providing digital skills training to its instructors and teachers so they can adequately help students navigate digital skills questions as they arise. Digital skills such as running word processing software, browsing the internet, saving and sharing documents, using email, and navigating virtual meeting software like Zoom are regularly included in programming. The organization also offers Chromebooks for students to check out for online learning.

Arkansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging

The Arkansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAAA) works to help the state's aging population lead better and more independent lives. They operate in all parts of Arkansas and have eight agencies to serve all 75 counties. AAAAA agencies offer programming ranging from home care services and meal delivery to transportation, veteran assistance, and family caregiver support. Notably, AAAAA operates Senior Activity Centers to give older Arkansans the opportunity to meet new friends, join health and wellness activities, receive hot meals, attend support groups, take advantage of educational programming, and more. During focus groups, these senior centers regularly came up as a place where aging individuals spend time and have earned a reputation for being a trustworthy hub of information and activities.

Arkansas Association of Community Action Agencies

The Arkansas Association of Community Action Agencies is a non-profit organization that serves as the hub for a network of 14 community-based private, non-profit organizations that provide assistance to low- and moderate-income individuals across the state.

Arkansas Association of Counties

The Arkansas Association of Counties provides a single source of cooperative support and information for all counties and county and district officials, with the focus of improving county government in Arkansas.

Arkansas Black Mayors Association

The Arkansas Black Mayors Association is made up of black mayors from towns and cities throughout the state. A small group of ABMA's close advisors helped ARConnect host focus groups, share the ADSOS with relevant stakeholders, and disseminate information related to this plan. The organization's advisors are also members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Arkansas Broadband Leaders Network (ABLN)

As described in Section 3.1, the ABLN is a communications medium between ARConnect and the County Broadband Committees and other broadband stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and share information. The ABLN meets regularly to discuss broadband educational topics.

Arkansas Career and Technical Education and Community Colleges

The state has 56 career education and community college locations providing public computer access. A full list containing the location names, addresses, and counties served is available in Appendix H.

Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association, Inc.

The Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association (ACAAA) serves as the hub for a historic network of 14 community-based private, non-profit organizations that provide assistance to low- to moderate-income individuals across the state. Community Action Agencies (CAAs) give people the chance to bring stability back into their lives while taking crucial steps towards self-sufficiency. CAAs enable participants to become engaged members of their community, and clients are encouraged to embrace more fulfilling, productive, and enriching paths. The role of ACAA is to offer support to the state's agencies, which includes continuing education through training and technical assistance to comply with state and federal regulations. Because a crucial element in the mission of community action is achieving substantive and measurable results, ACAA's efforts are fundamentally informed by a performance-based initiative known as "ROMA"— Results Oriented Management and Accountability. ACAA offers multiple professional development resources centered around building additional, specialized digital skills. It also has multiple offices with Wi-Fi access.

Arkansas Community Foundation

Since 1976, the Arkansas Community Foundation has provided more than \$393 million in grants and partnered with thousands of Arkansans to help improve neighborhoods, towns, cities, and the state. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Arkansas Connectivity Coalition

The Arkansas Connectivity Coalition is a group of 17 non-profit organizations with broadband interests working to prepare communities for establishing and implementing full-scale broadband connectivity visions. Organizations from the Connectivity Coalition served on the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team to support the development of this report.

Arkansas Department of Agriculture

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture works to grow Arkansas' largest industry by supporting Arkansas farmers and ranchers while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the residents of Arkansas, the nation, and around the world.

Arkansas Department of Commerce

The Arkansas Department of Commerce is the umbrella department for workforce and economic development drivers. Its divisions and regulatory boards include the Division of Aeronautics, Waterways Commission, Wine Producers Council, Division of Workforce Services, Office of Skills Development, State Bank Department, State Insurance Department, State Securities Department, Arkansas Economic

Development Commission, and Arkansas Development Finance Authority. ARConnect is also housed within the Arkansas Department of Commerce.

Arkansas Department of Corrections

The Arkansas Department of Corrections provides public safety by carrying out the mandate of the courts; provides a safe, humane environment for staff and inmates; strengthens work ethic through teaching of good habits; and provides opportunities for staff and inmates to improve spiritually, mentally, and physically. Future partnerships with the Arkansas Department of Corrections will need to take into account any restrictions to the internet and/or device access for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals.

Arkansas Department of Corrections – Division of Community Correction

The Division of Community Correction operates six Community Correction Centers across the state that were legislatively created to serve individuals who commit non-violent and non-sexual offenses and would otherwise be sentenced to traditional incarceration in the Arkansas Division of Correction. These Community Correction Centers are residential correctional facilities and provide individuals with treatment programs, life skills, and other services to deter future criminal behavior and reduce the need for longer-term incarceration. Future partnerships with the Community Correction Centers will need to take into account any restrictions to the internet and/or device access that govern residents' time at the centers.

Arkansas Department of Education

The Arkansas Department of Education aims to ensure that every Arkansan is prepared, supported, and inspired to succeed in school, career, community, and life.

Arkansas Department of Health

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is a unified health department, with a main office in Little Rock and 94 local health units in each of the state's 75 counties. Its mission is to protect and improve the health and well-being of all Arkansans.

Arkansas Department of Human Services

The Arkansas Department of Human Services operates 55 locations providing public computer access. A full list containing the location names, addresses, and counties served is available in Appendix H.

Arkansas Department of Public Safety

The Arkansas Department of Public Safety and local law enforcement agencies across the state are also experts in online safety and cybersecurity and regularly engage with communities on these issues. ARConnect intends to work with the department and local law enforcement agencies to leverage existing knowledge on digital safety as internet access becomes more widespread throughout the state through the implementation of the Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan and BEAD Five-Year Action Plan

and Initial Proposals. To further reach members of various covered populations that may not have high levels of trust with these organizations, ARConnect will also make this information available to community organizations serving covered populations across the state.

Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs

The Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs (ADVA) connects Arkansas veterans and their dependents to state and federal services. ADVA also operates two state veteran cemeteries, two state veteran nursing homes, and administers VA benefits assistance through the Veteran Service Officer network.

Arkansas Digital Literacy Center – The Digital Empowerment Program

The Digital Empowerment Program at the Arkansas Digital Literacy Center is designed to equip individuals with essential digital skills and knowledge, empowering them to thrive in today's tech-driven world. Through interactive workshops, hands-on training, and engaging online courses, participants gain proficiency in various digital tools and technologies, fostering digital literacy and inclusion. The Digital Empowerment Program at the Arkansas Digital Literacy Center offers comprehensive learning opportunities to individuals of all ages and backgrounds. From computer basics to advanced software usage, the program covers a wide range of topics, tailored to meet the diverse needs of participants. Through a combination of in-person and virtual sessions, their experienced instructors guide learners in developing practical tech skills, promoting personal growth, and enhancing employability in the digital age.

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) operates 35 locations providing public computer access. A full list containing the location names, addresses, and counties served is available in Appendix H. ADWS is responsible for providing job-related services to unemployed state residents, such as coordinating training and educational opportunities, processing unemployment insurance claims, and connecting job seekers with employment opportunities in the state.

Arkansas Economic Development Commission

The Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) works to create new economic opportunities for Arkansas, building a more prosperous future for everyone. AEDC is composed of 16 members appointed to four-year terms by the governor. These appointments are made with the advice and consent of the Arkansas Senate. At least three members are from each of the four congressional districts, and four members are appointed at large.

Arkansas Fair Housing Commission

The Arkansas Fair Housing Commission (AFHC) is a quasi-judicial, regulatory, and enforcement agency that works in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to enforce federal and state fair housing and fair lending laws throughout the state. AFHC's mission is to promote equal housing access and eliminate barriers to integrated communities within Arkansas and to provide a

statewide education outreach program to ensure access to fair housing information to providers, lenders, and the public at-large.

Arkansas Farm Bureau

Arkansas Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization that represents more than 190,000 families throughout the state by advocating for and promoting agriculture throughout Arkansas, the region, and the country. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Arkansas General Assembly

The General Assembly is Arkansas' state legislature. The legislature is made up of 35 senators and 100 representatives, many of whom are actively engaged on broadband-related topics and policy.

Arkansas Health Care Association

Established in 1951, the Arkansas Health Care Association (AHCA) is the state's largest organization of long-term care providers, representing more than 90% of the licensed long-term care facilities in Arkansas. Its responsibilities are to educate, inform, and represent members and member facilities before government agencies, other trade associations, and related industries. The organization provides training, education, and assistance to care facilities across the state, promoting high-quality care for patients and strict professional standards for staff. AHCA also strives to cooperate with the state legislature and state Office of Long-Term Care to improve the quality of life in Arkansas nursing homes.

Arkansas High Cost Fund – Subsidized Broadband Development

The Arkansas High Cost Fund (AHCF) is a state program that indirectly supports broadband deployment and affordability by helping to fund rural telecommunications providers. The AHCF, established by the Arkansas General Assembly in 2007, is the successor program to the Arkansas Universal Service Fund (AUSF), established in 1997, in the wake of the deregulatory nature of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. In general, universal service programs, funded by charges on all consumers' phone bills, supplement revenues of rural telecommunications providers, as they operate in less dense, more costly areas. The goal of universal service programs is to provide rural consumers with access to communications services of comparable quality and price to those of more urban consumers, even though rural consumers are generally more costly to serve.

Arkansas Hospital Association

The Arkansas Hospital Association works toward the betterment of hospitals by instituting programs in education, government relations, research, and communications.

Arkansas Impact Philanthropy

Arkansas Impact Philanthropy funders collaborate, influence, and invest for economic improvement throughout Arkansas. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Arkansas Judiciary – Office of Court Interpreter Services

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) provides interpreting services for individuals who have a limited ability to understand English, are deaf or hard of hearing, or are unable to speak. AOC maintains a registry of certified and registered court interpreters who are currently serving Arkansas state courts and has a network of interpreters who can translate from English into over 50 additional languages.

Arkansas K-12 Public Schools and School Districts

Primary and secondary institutions play an integral role in developing digital literacy skills for children and adolescents. There are a total of 259 school districts in Arkansas, with 1,056 public schools serving over 476,000 students. During the 2023 legislative session, Governor Sanders and the Arkansas General Assembly enacted the Arkansas LEARNS (Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, School Safety) Act, which emphasizes the need for all Arkansas public schools to prepare students for the demands of today's workforce and explicitly mentions the need for reliable broadband access to support educational and career opportunities. Digital opportunity plays a large part in this effort, and the next generation of Arkansans will learn how to use digital tools to solve problems and achieve goals in K-12 schools

Arkansas Municipal League

The Arkansas Municipal League was founded in 1934 and exists for a threefold purpose: to act as the official representative of Arkansas cities and towns before the state and federal governments; to provide a clearinghouse for information and answers; and to offer a forum for discussion and sharing of mutual concerns. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Arkansas Office of Skills Development – Broadband Workforce Initiatives

The Office of Skills Development (OSD), housed within the Arkansas Department of Commerce, invested \$3.3 million in 2022 to train new broadband and telecommunication industry workers to close the gap in the state's digital workforce. The Fiber Broadband and Telecommunications Working Group, a partnership of industry leaders, state government officials, and educators, worked collaboratively to make this goal a reality. In partnership with the Arkansas Association of Community Colleges (ACC), key broadband industry leaders, legislators, and educators selected three community colleges to develop and host non-credit training programs for broadband and telecommunications-related skills and offer one specialty program. The first part of the training is a foundational program, consisting of 10 courses covering core industry competencies. Once students have essential knowledge of safety standards and general knowledge of the broadband industry, they can choose from three specialty programs that cover specific aspects of broadband infrastructure deployment, including tower technicians, aerial lineman, and underground directional drilling technicians. Each college offers the foundational program and its own specialty program:

- Arkansas State University – Three Rivers: Offers a program for telecommunication tower technicians

- University of Arkansas – Cossatot Community College: Offers a program for aerial lineman training
- University of Arkansas – Community College of Morrilton: Offers a program for underground directional drilling technicians

Arkansas Planning and Development Districts

Arkansas is divided into eight planning and development districts. Each planning district covers six to twelve Arkansas counties which are bound together by common economic problems and opportunities. The planning districts provide many services including grant writing and administration for economic development projects in Arkansas.

Arkansas Public Libraries

Across the state, Arkansas has 228 public library locations, which are integral to supporting digital opportunity efforts. Notably, there is at least one public library in each of Arkansas' 75 counties. Arkansas public libraries commonly offer public computers and free wireless internet access (Wi-Fi), although the availability of these services and available technology may differ across locations. Arkansas has 214 public library system locations that provide access to public computers. Among these locations, 124 offer access to Wi-Fi. The overarching aim of all public libraries across Arkansas is to provide individuals with access to resources and information, both in physical and digital formats. For example, the Garland County Library offers one-on-one tech sessions for personalized tech support questions, ACP enrollment assistance, and computer literacy. Similarly, the Forrest City Public Library offers one-on-one instruction for digital skillbuilding, such as online banking and setting up an email account, and allows anyone with a library card and in good standing to check out a mobile hotspot for a three-week period. A full list containing the public library systems, branch names, locations, and Wi-Fi availability is available in Appendix H. The ADSOS confirmed that Arkansas Public Libraries are trusted places of information that can be easily accessed by many and should be leveraged for future digital opportunity related initiatives. When asked where they would feel most comfortable going for a free or inexpensive class to learn various digital skills, 61.5% of respondents selected libraries as an option – more than any other choice listed on the survey.

Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub

The Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of Arkansans by inspiring innovation and expanding opportunities. Since the Hub's opening in 2014, its state-of-the-art facilities have provided tools and training to entrepreneurs, students, and other makers, preparing them to join and grow Arkansas' economic ecosystem. The Innovation Hub envisions an Arkansas where, regardless of demographic identifiers or geographic location, Arkansans are generating and inspiring innovation in cutting-edge technology, business, and creative fields. The Innovation Hub uses tools, skills, and expertise to inspire innovators and entrepreneurs who expand the range of educational and economic opportunities for themselves, for their communities, in our state, and throughout the world. Low-cost memberships are available for all Arkansans and include access to free

high-speed internet, printers, co-working spaces, and more. The Innovation Hub's Best Buy Teen Tech Center is scheduled to open soon and is a place where teens can develop critical skills through hands-on activities that explore their interests in programming, filmmaking, music production, technology, art, and design. This Best Buy Teen Tech Center location will work to close the digital divide by giving youth access to tech education opportunities, relationships that help to build confidence, and a foundation for school and career success. Teens will have access to digital skills training, specialized equipment/devices, and high-speed internet.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)

ARS' mission is to prepare Arkansans with disabilities to work and lead productive and independent lives. To achieve its mission, ARS provides a variety of training and career preparation programs. ARS has 19 field offices across the state serving all 75 counties where individuals can receive assistance with accessibility and training needs that can lead to successful employment.

Arkansas River Valley Action Council (ARVAC)

Since its inception in 1965, ARVAC has been dedicated to building a diverse variety of services to meet the needs of low-income families in the region. ARVAC serves a nine-county area in the Arkansas River Valley, including Conway, Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Scott, Perry, Polk, Pope, and Yell counties. The organization also received an FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant.

Arkansas Rural Connect (ARC) Grant Program

On January 13, 2020, the ARC grant program was established to provide funding and incentivize ISPs to deploy or improve broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities across the state. To date, the program has funded three broadband infrastructure grant rounds, totaling nearly \$550 million in grants awarded across 185 projects that will connect nearly 130,000 homes and businesses. A map of all ARC program grants can be found in Appendix G. In addition to broadband infrastructure deployment, the ARC grant program also fosters competition and affordability. Through the application scoring process, points are awarded to those applications offering lower internet service package prices to consumers as a result of the project. In short, the lower the cost of internet service, the more points that are awarded. This process creates an environment of competition among providers (applicants), which then leads to more affordable prices for consumers.

Arkansas Rural Health Partnership

The Arkansas Rural Health Partnership is a non-profit healthcare network of 16 rural hospital members, 3 medical teaching institutions, and 2 federally qualified health centers across southern Arkansas.

Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired offers statewide quality educational programs and resources to students who are blind or visually impaired, from birth through age twenty-one,

enabling them to become productive and self-sufficient through the involvement of all students, staff, parents, and the community.

Arkansas School for the Deaf

The Arkansas School for the Deaf (ASD) was established in 1850 with support of the state. ASD has a strong legacy, based in Little Rock: it is the only school for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in Arkansas and serves as the center for deaf education throughout the state. ASD is not only one of the state's oldest schools, but the oldest school for the deaf west of the Mississippi River. ASD serves students from preschool through high school and beyond through a comprehensive post-secondary program focusing on career and college readiness. The school also provides support for deaf and hard of hearing students in mainstream programs throughout the state and serves families with deaf children from birth until school age through a home-visitation program.

Arkansas Secretary of State

The Arkansas Secretary of State provides a wide range of services to individuals and companies who conduct business within Arkansas. The Business and Commercial Services Division manages filings for all entities that do business in the state, including corporate registration, trademarks, notary public certifications, and other records. The Elections Division maintains the state's election records and assists county officials with conducting federal, state, and district elections; it also serves as a clearinghouse for campaign finance reports filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission. In addition to these divisions, the Secretary of State is responsible for the state's Business Office, Capitol Facilities Division, and Communications and Education Division.

Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce

The Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Arkansas and serves as the primary business advocate on all issues affecting Arkansas employers.

Arkansas State Library

The Arkansas State Library provides information and resources for state agencies, legislators, and legislative staff as well as coordinating with Arkansas' 228 public library locations.

Arkansas Support Network (ASN)

The Arkansas Support Network (ASN) is a non-profit organization that provides support and a wide variety of services – including supported living, personal care, vocational, autism, family support, educational, and advocacy services – to individuals and families with children with disabilities. ASN has offices in Springdale, Fort Smith, Camden, and Jonesboro.

Arkansas United Community Coalition – Plaza Comunitaria

Arkansas United (AU) is Arkansas' first and only statewide immigrant advocacy group, and operates regional Immigrant Resource Centers in Springdale, Fort Smith, and Little Rock. Since 2012, AU has been working to empower Arkansas immigrants to be change agents in building bridges with local, state, and

federal public officials and closing service gaps as community navigators in adult education, workforce development, health, and legal services so that all Arkansans can achieve a greater civic and economic potential. AU seeks to elevate immigrant voices from a base of over 25 counties and 800+ dues-paying members, who are predominantly first- and second- generation immigrants, unified in their identity as immigrant workers, largely from Mexico and Central American countries. AU is committed to collaboration with any community in Arkansas and is currently growing its programs and campaigns with Arkansas' Asian and Pacific Islander communities. AU envisions an Arkansas that is elevated to its full social, economic, and civic potential through the development of inclusive communities where all multiethnic groups, newcomers, and native-born Arkansans work together to enhance our collective quality of life.

Arkansas Veterans Association

The Arkansas Veterans Association is a state-based non-profit organization that represents and supports veterans.

Benton Institute for Broadband & Society

The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society is a national non-profit organization with a goal to bring open, affordable, high-performance broadband to all people in the U.S. to ensure a thriving democracy. The Benton Institute developed the curriculum for the Accelerate Arkansas program in conjunction with the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition and has launched similar versions of the programs in multiple other states to support local broadband planning efforts.

Bethelone Missionary Baptist Church

This church, located in Rison, Arkansas, provides individuals with FM broadcasts, Wi-Fi, live streaming, and audio visual services.

Books from Bobby, Inc. – Digital Education

Books From Bobby is a non-profit organization seeking to eliminate illiteracy in the world. The organization's mission in Arkansas is to provide Arkansans with access to technology, resources, classes, workshops, and programs aimed to develop critical skills needed to compete in a ThirdMillennium workforce that helps youth and adults build lasting relationships in a supportive environment.

Boston Mountain Rural Health Center

Established in 1994, Boston Mountain Rural Health Center (BMRHC) is a family and community health center with fifteen medical and three dental clinics in medically underserved areas of Northwest and North Central Arkansas. BMRHC offers a wide range of services for insured, uninsured, and underinsured patients. It is BMRHC's mission to provide high quality, accessible, affordable, patient-centered health care, which includes translation services for 36 languages and access to telemedicine services. Knowing this, BMRHC supports increasing access to reliable high-speed internet by working to promote and enroll eligible patients in the ACP. It also sponsors a Patient Education Library with a comprehensive list of

resources and educational materials to enlighten Arkansans about various medical conditions. Beyond these services, the BMRHC supports community outreach projects, participates in health fairs, provides free sports physicals for children in area schools, and more. The organization also received an FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant.

Broadband Cost Survey

A [2022 survey](#) of over 15,000 residents in Arkansas found that 58% of respondents were unwilling to pay more than \$50 per month for internet service, and 32% would be willing to pay up to \$100 per month for internet service. Although respondents were not asked to disclose the current cost of their internet service, 32% indicated that they considered the internet to be “affordable” if service costs less than \$100 per month, and 45% considered it “affordable” if service costs less than \$50 per month. These results indicate that most respondents would be willing to pay a competitive price for internet service. About 11% indicated that a service cost of less than \$25 per month would be considered “affordable.”

Central Arkansas Development Council

The Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC), a community-based organization, has 24 locations that provide public access to computers and Wi-Fi. A full list containing the location names, addresses, and counties served is available in Appendix H.

Central Arkansas Planning and Development District

The Central Arkansas Planning and Development District is a non-profit planning and development organization that serves the counties of Faulkner, Lonoke, Monroe, Prairie, Pulaski, and Saline. Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a federally financed initiative, this organization helps Arkansans find long-term, high-paying jobs. The Central Arkansas Planning and Development District’s objective is to expand the labor pipeline through training and educational opportunities in order to foster an environment where businesses thrive and people are able to find jobs at higher wages, improving their quality of life.

City of Little Rock – Digital Literacy Classes: Empowering Little Rock Parents

The City of Little Rock collaborated with the Regional Innovation Hub to provide four sessions of software and hardware classes taught in English and Spanish. Chicot Elementary is a Community Eligibility Provision School, and to remove barriers to attendance, the city offered childcare with Museum of Discovery staff and provided take-home family meals from local, minority-owned businesses. Guardians and parents signed up to take two classes, one focused on basic computer care and uses, and a secondary class on a software application that parents wanted to learn in addition to a school communication platform: class dojo or schoology.

Communities Unlimited

Communities Unlimited is a non-profit organization that serves Arkansas and six other states in the southern United States, connecting people to solutions through human connections and providing

technical assistance to communities on broadband-related topics. Members from CU's staff helped ARConnect host focus groups, share the ADSOS with relevant stakeholders, and disseminate information related to this plan. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Community Centers (Various)

Throughout Arkansas there are dozens of local community and recreation centers where residents can access recreational programming, educational opportunities, meeting rooms, and more. Some of these centers, such as the Eureka Springs Community Center, offer public access Wi-Fi for visitors to use.

County Broadband Committees

As described in Section 3.1 and in conjunction with the Broadband Roadshow, ARConnect encouraged every county in Arkansas to form its own County Broadband Committee. The County Broadband Committees are intended to determine local strategies supporting affordability program outreach and digital skills training, as well as establish other broadband priorities at the local level. The County Broadband Committees launched in the second half of 2023 and were a key resource for ARConnect to share information about the DEA and BEAD planning processes with local elected officials, stakeholders, and residents.

DecARcerate

DecARcerate is a state-based non-profit organization that works with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals and advocates for these individuals through public events and advocacy work.

Diamond State Networks

Diamond State Networks is a wholesale broadband provider that unites the fiber-optic networks of electric cooperatives throughout Arkansas. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Digital Connector Program

The Digital Connector Program will train up to seven community-based partners in the following ways:

- Cross-train direct service providers as Digital Connectors for user support, with a focus on assisting clients to become familiar with, and take advantage of, discounts with internet service providers, signing up for internet service, taking advantage of subsidies and other benefits, getting devices connected to the internet, basic troubleshooting of equipment problems, and understanding how to use digital platforms and applications such as telehealth and online banking.
- Provide access to resources and guidance to introduce Northstar Digital Literacy, helping clients learn skills for jobs, lives, and livelihoods.
- Purchase in-full or subsidize the cost of technology to support digital skill-building training and to support client access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet.

- Develop a custom local resource guide that identifies connectivity and other digital opportunity supports to aid clients.
- Support rural, community-based partners with high-value expert content and training. Content will include professional development resources to identify and leverage new funding to promote broadband and digital opportunity, increase collaborative partnerships, and build local capacity for community development.

Digital Literacy at the Central Arkansas Library System (CALs)

The Central Arkansas Library System provides CALs members with technology classes and one-on-one technical assistance across branch locations.

Digital Literacy Partners Working Group

In October 2023, ARConnect convened a small group of organizations to discuss next steps for expanding digital skills training opportunities across the state. This working group includes the Adult Learning Alliance of Arkansas, Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub, Arkansas State Library, EAST (Education accelerated by Service and Technology) Initiative, Heartland Forward, and University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service.

Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team

ARConnect worked with select members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition to support the creation of the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. These partners helped ARConnect engage with various covered population groups, hosted and facilitated digital opportunity focus groups, distributed the ADSOS, and helped ARConnect brainstorm next steps for implementation. Because these partners were closely involved in the creation of this plan, they will be helpful assets as the state moves forward with implementation. A full list of the organizations that made up the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team is available in Appendix A.

Digitunity

Digitunity is a national non-profit organization working to make sure that everyone who needs a computer has one. The organization is not actively involved in any initiatives in Arkansas, but is a national leader in affordable device access and could be a helpful partner for ARConnect in the future.

Disability Rights Arkansas

Disability Rights Arkansas is an independent, private, non-profit organization designated by the governor to implement federally funded and authorized Protection and Advocacy systems throughout the state.

Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)

DSB is dedicated to the independence of Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired and is committed to the principle that these individuals have the right to make informed choices regarding where they live, where they work, how they participate in the community, and how they interact with others.

EducationSuperHighway

EducationSuperHighway is a national non-profit organization with a mission to close the digital divide that provides consultation services to states and school districts to connect public schools and communities to high-speed internet. In 2021, Arkansas partnered with EducationSuperHighway and others to utilize federal resources and state funding to improve its statewide education network. The state has transformed from having some of the slowest K-12 internet connections to now having some of the fastest and serving as a national model. Arkansas was the first state in the country to meet the FCC's school broadband goal of 1 Mbps per student, providing enough bandwidth to make digital learning a reality in every classroom.¹⁷

El Zócalo Immigrant Resource Center

El Zócalo is a grassroots non-profit organization in central Arkansas with a mission to promote a dignified life for immigrants in Arkansas by connecting individuals and families with services and fostering community-wide understanding through education. The organization's name means "town square" in Spanish, and represents El Zócalo's work to provide opportunities for diverse people to come together, help each other, and share in one another's lives. The organization offers programming across various focus areas, including health, education, financial literacy, family planning, and civic engagement.

Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) / Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program was initiated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in June 2021 and utilized federal COVID-19 relief funding to provide eligible households with discounts of up to \$50 a month on home internet service. This funding aimed to make service more affordable and accessible for low-income families. In addition, the program offered a \$100 discount towards the purchase of a laptop, computer, or tablet from a participating provider. To ensure that qualifying Arkansans knew about the program, the state worked with Heartland Forward to launch a public awareness campaign, including paid media, and coordinated community outreach through state agencies and local organizations.

On December 31, 2021, the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program became the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP functions in much the same manner as the EBB program, except that the monthly benefit has been reduced from \$50 per month to \$30 per month. As of May 15, 2023, it is estimated that over 600,000 households in Arkansas are eligible for the ACP. Of these eligible households, 170,755 (28.5%) are enrolled in the program, representing a monthly economic impact of \$5.1 million.

To facilitate awareness and enrollment in the ACP among eligible households, the FCC created the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program. On March 10, 2023, the FCC announced that five Arkansas-based organizations secured a total of \$1.67 million via a competitive grant application process

¹⁷ EducationSuperHighway, "Arkansas Leads the Way in School Broadband" (2019), <https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/blog/arkansas-leads-in-school-broadband/>.

to promote the program. Over the course of the next two years, the following organizations will be engaged in community engagement efforts across the state to increase Arkansas’ enrollment in the ACP:

Table 3: FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program Winners from Arkansas

Organization Name	Location	Allocated Award
Peace, Love, Understanding, Mercy (PLUM)	West Memphis, AR	\$500,000.00
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)	Little Rock, AR	\$450,000.00
Heartland Forward	Bentonville, AR	\$400,000.00
Arkansas River Valley Action Council (ARVAC)	Russellville, AR	\$190,000.00
Boston Mountain Rural Health Center, Inc.	Marshall, AR	\$130,000.00

Forward Arkansas

Forward Arkansas is a public-private partnership established in 2014 by the Arkansas State Board of Education, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to increase student achievement and economic prosperity for Arkansas. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Goodwill Industries

Goodwill Industries operates 24 locations in Arkansas where the public can access computers. A full list containing the location names, addresses, and counties served is available in Appendix H.

Grace & Blessings Digital Help

Grace & Blessings is a non-profit organization that helps elderly people stay in their homes. The organization provides a variety of services, including simple home help, simple repairs, internet connectivity, and help and instruction for telehealth services. The group's goal is to help elderly people live independently and safely in their own homes.

Heartland Forward

Heartland Forward is a Bentonville-based think and do tank dedicated to being a resource for states and communities helping advance the economic opportunity in America’s heartland. Heartland Forward convened the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition, helped create the Accelerate Arkansas program, and was subcontracted by ARConnect to help the state develop the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. The organization also received an FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant.

Hometown Internet, LLC

Through its new subscriber orientation program, Hometown Internet delivers helpful education programs to the public to demonstrate various methods by which the Internet can enhance lives and improve connectivity.

Jack Williams Veterans Resource Center (Camp Jack)

Located in Harrison, Arkansas, Camp Jack was founded in October of 2020 to be a central location for all veteran resources in Arkansas. It was created by veterans for veterans and aims to provide a safe and welcoming environment for veterans and their families to find information on benefits, seek community with other veteran families, and provide additional community resources and programming. Camp Jack works in partnership with other veteran-serving organizations, such as the American Legion and Disabled American Veterans.

Lead for America – American Connection Corps

Lead for America is an AmeriCorps partner organization that connects fellows to rural places and emerging cities. Through the American Connection Corps program, fellows focus on closing the digital divide at their host sites. ARConnect, the City of Little Rock, and Forward Arkansas currently host fellows in partnership with the program.

Local Workforce Development Boards

The State of Arkansas is divided into 10 local workforce development areas based on common geographic and economic factors. Each area contains at least one comprehensive service center and many other affiliate service centers. The local Workforce Development Boards are overseen by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services.

Marshallese Education Initiative

The Marshallese Education Initiative was founded in July 2013 by non-Marshallese educators and Marshallese community members to raise awareness of Marshallese history and culture and facilitate dialogue by blending academic research with community outreach. The Initiative serves as a resource for members of the Marshallese community in Arkansas and offers a variety of services and programming specific to women, youth, and seniors, and the agencies that serve them, as well as programming in the arts and humanities.

Metropolitan Housing Alliance

The Metropolitan Housing Alliance is the Housing Authority of the City of Little Rock. It is the fourth oldest and largest housing authority in the state of Arkansas and has a long history of accomplishments and service to the Little Rock community. The Metropolitan Housing Alliance administers federal subsidized housing and housing assistance to low-income persons and families within the city of Little Rock. MHA is a public body exercising exclusively public and essential government functions, and having

all the powers necessary and/or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of the Housing Authorities Act.

National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)

NDIA is a national non-profit organization that advances digital opportunity by supporting community programs and equipping policymakers to act on issues related to the digital divide. The organization worked closely with ARConnect to provide guidance as the state developed the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan.

Office of the Arkansas Attorney General

The Office of the Arkansas Attorney General is the state's leading authority on internet safety and consumer cybersecurity initiatives. The Office of the Attorney General has published extensive information on [internet safety](#) on its website, including explicit resources for [parents](#) and [students](#). Individuals can order free physical [resources](#) on internet safety for their schools, youth groups, and families, and the office regularly presents to groups of educators, parents, senior citizens, and community/civic groups on the topics of internet safety and privacy.

Pathfinder, Inc.

Pathfinder is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development and implementation of individually designed strategies that enable people with developmental disabilities to pursue total access to community life. Pathfinder provides programs and services for individuals with developmental disabilities and behavioral health needs to help expand their growth opportunities. The organization's focus is to enrich the quality of life for the people it serves.

PCs for People

PCs for People is a national non-profit organization working to get low-cost quality computers and internet into the homes of individuals, families, and nonprofits with low income. By recycling and then refurbishing computers, PCs for People provides a valuable service to businesses, families, and the planet by keeping computers out of landfills and repurposing them to advance digital inclusion. The organization is not actively involved in any initiatives in Arkansas, but is a national leader in affordable device access and could be a helpful partner for ARConnect in the future.

Peace, Love, Understanding, Mercy (PLUM)

PLUM is a non-profit organization founded in 2006 and based in West Memphis, Arkansas, with a mission to uplift those less fortunate through a variety of programs, services, and education. The organization also received an FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant to increase awareness in the federal program.

River Valley Adult Learning Alliance

The River Valley Adult Learning Alliance's mission is to provide free, accessible, quality instruction and support to adults and families. The organization offers a hotspot lending program and one-on-one digital literacy training opportunities.

RootED Northwest Arkansas – Technology Learning Community

The Technological Learning Community is designed to bring together immigrant parents from diverse backgrounds to learn about and explore technology. The program aims to foster continuous learning, curiosity, and a sense of community among the participants. Through collaborative workshops, hands-on projects, and mentoring, the program will empower immigrants to develop technological skills, inspire innovation, and build a supportive ecosystem for ongoing growth. Program objectives include:

- Cultivate a community of immigrant learners who are curious and passionate about technology.
- Provide participants with opportunities to explore different areas of technology and acquire practical skills.
- Promote a sense of belonging and collaboration within the Technological Learning Community.
- Inspire participants to embrace continuous learning and ongoing exploration of technology.

Rural Community Alliance (RCA) – Digital Engagement Initiative

Through the RCA Digital Engagement Initiative, Rural Community Alliance trains staff for, and manages, a local digital inclusion program. The organization also purchases devices and/or internet access for youth members throughout rural Arkansas.

Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SDHH)

It is the mission of SDHH to provide high-quality, innovative services that result in employment opportunities, improved quality of life, and full inclusion in society for Arkansans who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and deaf-blind. The professional staff of SDHH is knowledgeable about the unique barriers faced by people with hearing loss and speech disabilities and is experienced in collaborating with both the person experiencing the barrier as well as the community at large to develop effective solutions.

University of Arkansas – Center for Communication Research

The University of Arkansas Center for Communication Research has conducted research to help small communities in Arkansas plan and implement broadband and helped the City of Fayetteville develop its local digital inclusion study. Members from the University of Arkansas' Center for Communication Research helped ARConnect develop the ADSOS and publish the survey to support this plan. The Center for Communication Research is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

University of Arkansas (UA) – Cossatot Community College

The UA Cossatot Educational Resource Center (ERC) is an academic resource and support center striving to enrich the lives of UA Cossatot students through active learning. Working directly with

Cossatot faculty, the ERC seeks to both promote higher education opportunities and help students achieve their maximum academic potential. There is an ERC at each UA Cossatot campus in De Queen, Nashville, and Ashdown with knowledgeable staff available to assist students during hours of operation. Whether you are looking for a college math tutor or need some extra help with an upcoming essay, free tutoring services are available at each ERC along with other college resources including:

- Several computer stations and a lounge area with comfortable seating
- Over 10,000 titles in print and multimedia formats.

University of Arkansas – Public Wi-Fi Availability Map

Using crowdsourced data collection, the University of Arkansas published a map of publicly available Wi-Fi locations throughout the state. According to the [map](#), which is also available in Appendix I, 131 public locations, excluding businesses, offer free Wi-Fi.

University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville

The UA Community College at Batesville offers digital skills training through a variety of areas on campus, including (1) Adult Basic Education, (2) Community Education, (3) Library Services, (4) Credit Programs, and (5) Custom/as needed.

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)

UAMS is a public health sciences university in Little Rock that operates a variety of institutes, research centers, community education centers, and the UAMS Medical Center to improve the health and healthcare of Arkansans. To support digital health access and innovation, UAMS opened five satellite training centers in Arkansas and Tennessee and hosts free trainings for patients, health care professionals, local businesses, home health agencies, educational groups, and more to connect patients to digital health technology. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition and received an FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant.

University of Arkansas. Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service

The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service is a division of the University of Arkansas System that leverages resources and purposeful action to assist in eliminating the digital divide in Arkansas, with a focus on digital skills. To support this work, Cooperative Extension convened the Digital Literacy Partners Working Group in partnership with ARConnect. Notably, Cooperative Extension has offices in all 75 counties across Arkansas. Members from the Cooperative Extension staff helped ARConnect host focus groups, share the ADSOS with relevant stakeholders, analyze ADSOS results, and disseminate information related to this plan. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture 4-H Tech Changemakers Program

The 4–H Tech Changemakers Program utilizes the technological expertise of 4-H members to teach digital skills to adults in their local communities. This program specifically focuses on improving employability skills and is active in 10 counties.

Various ISPs and Industry Partners

There are over 100 ISPs and broadband service providers operating in the state of Arkansas. These organizations have already worked closely with ARConnect to build out broadband infrastructure through the ARC grant program and will continue to be valuable assets through implementation of the state's BEAD plan.

Walnut Hill Communications – Connecting Communities

Walnut Hill Telephone Company was established April 26, 1901, and serves six exchanges across seven counties in the southwest corner of Arkansas. The commercial and plant offices are located in Lewisville. There is also a local business office in Foreman. Walnut Hill Communications serves a predominantly rural economic base centered on agriculture, timber, and oil production. In addition to offering service in parts of the state, Walnut Hill leverages its youth and youth programs to decrease the overall digital illiteracy for senior citizens and some families.

Winrock International

Winrock International is a non-profit organization that partners with governments, communities, and businesses to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity, and sustain natural resources. The organization sponsors various programs in Arkansas aimed at expanding broadband access and members from Winrock's staff helped ARConnect host focus groups, share the ADSOS with relevant stakeholders, and disseminate information related to this plan. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation is a private foundation that aims to help Arkansans get out of poverty and is active in improving educational, economic, social, ethnic and racial opportunity outcomes in the state. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition.

Despite these existing assets, there is still room for improvement when it comes to digital skills programming and curriculum in Arkansas. Notably, existing programs are overwhelmingly concentrated in high-population areas, and there is a need for training opportunities in rural parts of the state. Additionally, much of the existing digital skills curriculum in Arkansas is only available in English, and services would be more comprehensive if offered in additional languages – particularly Spanish and Marshallese. During focus groups, participants also stressed the need for more in-person training opportunities, accompanied with knowledgeable instructors who can answer questions as they arise, as opposed to digital modules and tutorials. Participants also stressed that

they would like to see regular digital skills courses offered at more locations that they regularly frequent, including senior centers, libraries, veteran centers, churches, community centers, and more.

4.1.2 Existing Local and Regional Digital Opportunity Plans

While organizations and agencies across the state are engaged in work to expand and promote digital skillbuilding, most action-oriented plans to-date have focused on increasing access to broadband infrastructure and are captured in Arkansas' BEAD Initial Proposals.

ARConnect asked all 75 counties about local planning efforts to-date during its statewide tour to determine if there were any local or regional digital opportunity plans. Partners from the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition and the Arkansas Municipal League also reached out to local and regional officials to ensure no local plans were excluded.

The only existing government-initiated plan was the City of Fayetteville's Digital Inclusion Task Force report titled *Digital Use and Internet Access in Fayetteville, Arkansas*, published in 2019. In partnership with the University of Arkansas Center for Communication Research, Fayetteville sponsored a survey to better understand how people use the internet and barriers to digital opportunity at the local level. Survey analysis revealed that primary barriers to internet access and building digital skills in Fayetteville included: financial resources and cost of service, lack of educational resources, lack of computer skills, and lack of basic literacy skills.

The City of Fayetteville's report was integrated into this plan as the methodology from this report, and the barriers identified were used to help develop the Digital Opportunity Survey. There were no explicit findings from that study that need to be specially integrated into the plan as they are not different from the barriers to all Arkansans outlined in Section 4.2. The full report is available for reference in Appendix K.

No regional government plans were discovered.

There are no Federally Recognized Tribes in the state of Arkansas. For this reason, there are no Tribal government plans related to digital opportunity or broadband infrastructure to incorporate into this plan. Additionally, there are no additional Tribal assets in Arkansas to capture within this plan.

4.1.3 Consumer Device Access and Affordability Assets

ARConnect did not identify any specific assets in the state that focus on consumer device access and affordability. While public libraries, K-12 schools, community colleges, state-sponsored adult education courses, nonprofits offering digital skills courses, and other organizations often provide computer access to individuals in need, the devices available to Arkansans through these programs are typically available on a loan-only basis or only available for use on-site.

To address this gap in the state’s ecosystem of assets, ARConnect will explore partnerships with state-based partners and national non-profit organizations to develop a comprehensive device access and refurbishment program to be funded by the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program as established by the federal DEA.

4.2 Needs Assessment

While the state has a considerable number of existing assets that work to strengthen its economy, existing barriers may hamper Arkansas' goal of eliminating the digital divide and achieving universal digital opportunity by 2030 if left unaddressed. This section outlines the barriers to digital opportunity for covered populations, as well as all Arkansans. We identified these barriers through responses to the ADSOS and feedback provided to ARConnect at focus groups held across the state during the spring and summer of 2023.

4.2.1 Barriers to Digital Opportunity for All Arkansans

Between 2017 and 2021, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that nearly 80% of households in Arkansas (79.7%) had an at-home broadband internet subscription.¹⁸ Specific to broadband infrastructure deployment, Arkansas is ahead of many of its peer states. According to the latest release of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) National Broadband Map from May 2023, there are approximately 190,000 unserved and underserved homes and businesses in Arkansas. This number is less than the number of unserved locations in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Missouri. This is due, in part, to the active nature of the Arkansas Rural Connect (ARC) grant program, as outlined in Section 4.1.1.

Even with this progress, connectivity challenges remain for the existing 190,000 unserved and underserved locations across the state. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the state's residents and communities to unlock their full potential in an increasing digital economy and society.

The ADSOS provided valuable insight from Arkansans on their first-hand experiences with the digital divide and understanding the barriers that prevent them from being online. Below are key obstacles to digital opportunity for all Arkansans:

- Lack of reliable at-home broadband infrastructure across all parts of the state
- Reliance on mobile internet access and devices, which limits adoption
- Issues with service reliability and slow internet speeds in areas where infrastructure exists
- Perpetuation of the urban-rural divide
- High service costs, largely due to a lack of competition, and a lack of affordable service options
- Low awareness of, and uptake in, the federal ACP, which could increase access to affordable internet service
- Customer service challenges with ISPs
- Limited opportunities for digital skills training, particularly courses offered in-person and in languages other than English

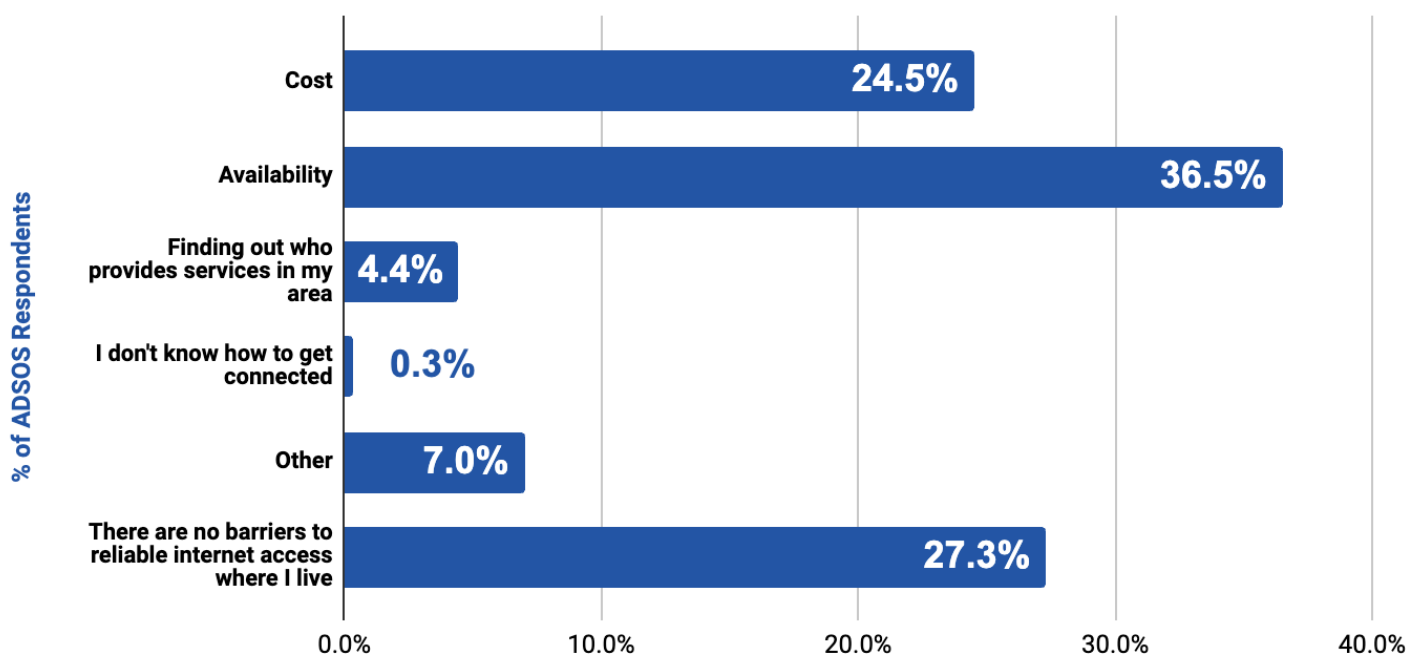
¹⁸ Census data does not define broadband service with a particular speed threshold. In the American Community Survey, broadband is defined as "(high speed) internet service such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL" and is a separate option from the following other types of internet service: cellular data plan for a smartphone or other mobile device, satellite, and dial-up.

Lack of Reliable At-Home Broadband Infrastructure

Overwhelmingly, ADSOS respondents think that the state’s largest barrier is a lack of reliable broadband infrastructure: 36.5% of respondents cited availability as the primary barrier to having reliable internet access where they live. A significant number of respondents (24.5%) also identified cost of service as the primary barrier to having access in their communities, while over a quarter of respondents (27.3%) suggested there are no barriers to sufficient and reliable access where they live. Notably, 13.4% of survey respondents indicated that they were not able to access the internet at home, work, a local business, school, public anchor institution, or public outdoor space. At focus groups across the state, participants echoed these findings. During these community listening sessions, participants regularly discussed a lack of infrastructure, lack of service reliability, and high service costs as the largest barriers to access.

One focus group participant from the Mountain Home area talked at length about how she is waiting for an internet service provider in the region to connect her home to its network, but in the interim, she drives to the library to use the computer, rents physical movies because she cannot stream at home, and is unable to video call with friends and family.

Primary Barrier to Reliable Internet Access for All Arkansans



Reliance on Mobile Service and Devices

Focus group participants also frequently shared that in areas without reliable broadband infrastructure, they regularly use their mobile phones to browse the web, send emails, access social media, and stream content for entertainment; 94.9% of ADSOS respondents shared that they have internet service on their mobile phones. While mobile service regularly provides Arkansans with stopgap access, it is not sufficient for tasks like applying for jobs – or reliable enough in many parts of the state – to be a viable long-term solution.

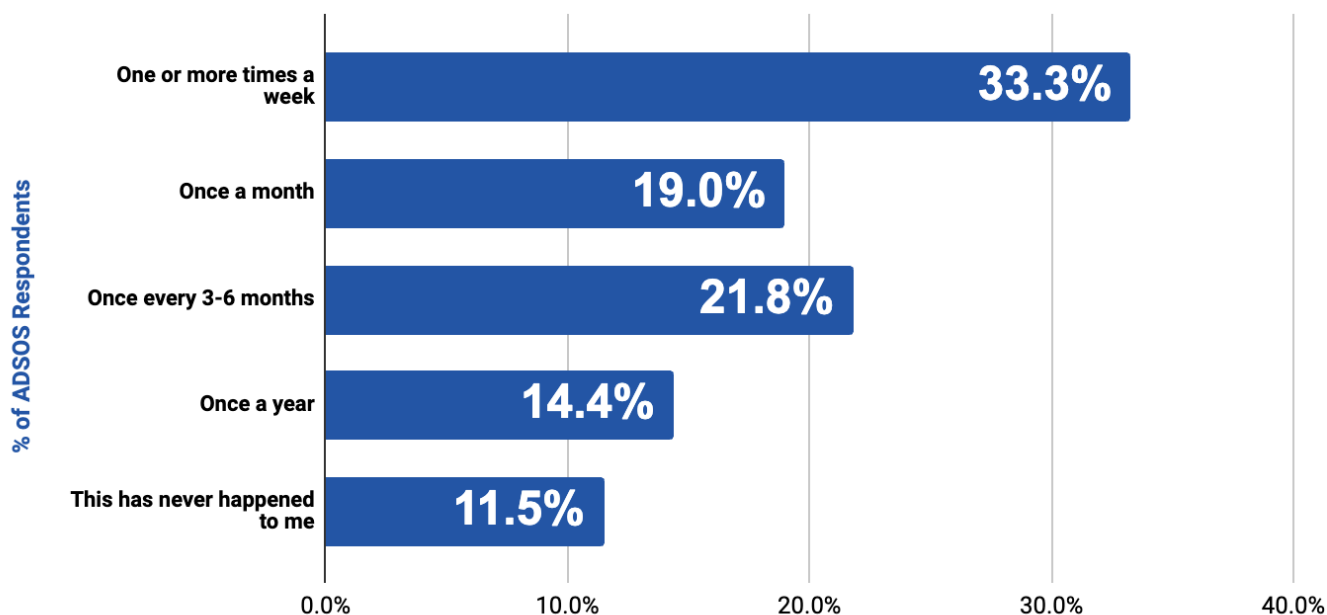
Issues with Service Reliability and Slow Internet Speeds

The focus groups gave ARConnect additional insight into the lack of service reliability that Arkansans are experiencing. Across the state – over various terrains and a combination of rural and urban locations – Arkansans regularly experience service interruptions and outages due to weather-related issues. As one participant noted, service is **“constantly crashing”** for them and other customers in their communities. When asked how often devices become inaccessible or unusable because of internet service interruptions, 33.3% of ADSOS respondents said they experience interruptions one or more times a week. An additional 19% of respondents shared that service interruptions make their devices inaccessible at least once a month, and an additional 21.8% said they experience this around once every 3 to 6 months.

Others noticed unreliable service during high volume times of the day, particularly in the evenings when they get home from work and their children get home from school. In other sessions, focus group participants shared that service interruptions impact more than just their at-home activities: **“The Dollar General – they won’t take our cards if the card reader is down, if the internet’s down. It’s cash only. And our bank is 10 miles up the road. You can’t process a check. You can’t use your EBT card. Nothing.”**

Stories of dissatisfaction with low upload and download speeds also emerged during the focus groups. At one session in the Little Rock area, 98% of the families interviewed shared that they were subscribed to at-home service, but many recounted regular issues with getting websites and educational content to load consistently and/or quickly. **“My internet is too slow. When all my children connect to it, it just buffers,”** one participant said.

Frequency of At-Home Internet Service Interruptions



This identified lack of widespread access to reliable, high-speed internet is also impacting Arkansas families. One focus group participant recounted that her grandson ended his visit to her home ahead of schedule because he could not get on the internet.

During focus groups, the interconnectedness between broadband access, public safety, and municipal operations also came up multiple times. During one listening session, a participant who works as a volunteer firefighter shared that when the internet goes out in his community, the station and the firefighters cannot receive any emergency calls. Another participant remarked that when service is interrupted, the water service office cannot take any consumer payments for water bills.

Perpetuation of the Urban-Rural Divide

Communities and small towns across the state are discouraged when thinking about their lack of economic opportunities without access to broadband service. One participant from a focus group in Ashley County shared that as long as the digital divide persists, so will the economic divide between Arkansas' urban centers and smaller communities: ***"I think [lacking internet access] cripples us as a community. There are several people in our area that work so hard to bring new businesses here, whether it be industry or a smaller business. They are not going to come here if quality of life is not there. The first question they ask is 'what is my family going to experience here.' If they cannot connect to the outside world, they are not coming. So, all of our efforts are in vain."***

High Service Costs due to Lack of Competition and Lack of Affordable Service Options

High internet service costs also came up regularly and is one of Arkansas' key barriers to digital opportunity. According to ADSOS responses, nearly all Arkansans (97.8%) with at-home internet service are paying over \$31 per month for that service. Survey data shows that 32.4% of respondents are paying between \$31 and \$60 per month, an additional 39.1% are paying between \$61 and \$90 per month, and that over a quarter of Arkansans (26.3%) are paying over \$91 per month for at-home internet service.

In many of ARConnect's focus groups, cost emerged as the primary barrier to reliable, at-home internet service. Many individuals attribute high service costs to the lack of providers competing for market share in their areas: ***"We need some competition – competition always drives down prices. Our [bill] is I think \$100 per month, and that was the most affordable."*** Another participant said that without ISPs in the area, they've been forced to find other alternatives to get online – but that it comes at a high cost: ***"I had to beef up my [cell phone] plan so that we could use our hotspots. We pay \$400 a month for our cell phones so that we can have internet, so that would change for us. That's more grocery money."*** Other participants shared that their monthly costs are regularly over \$100 per month, but that it is a modern necessity. ***"Internet used to be an optional cost; now it's mandatory,"*** one person remarked.

For others, high costs are the reason they are not able to get online: ***"I can't access the internet because I don't have sufficient income,"*** one person said directly. Additional participants living on fixed incomes said that

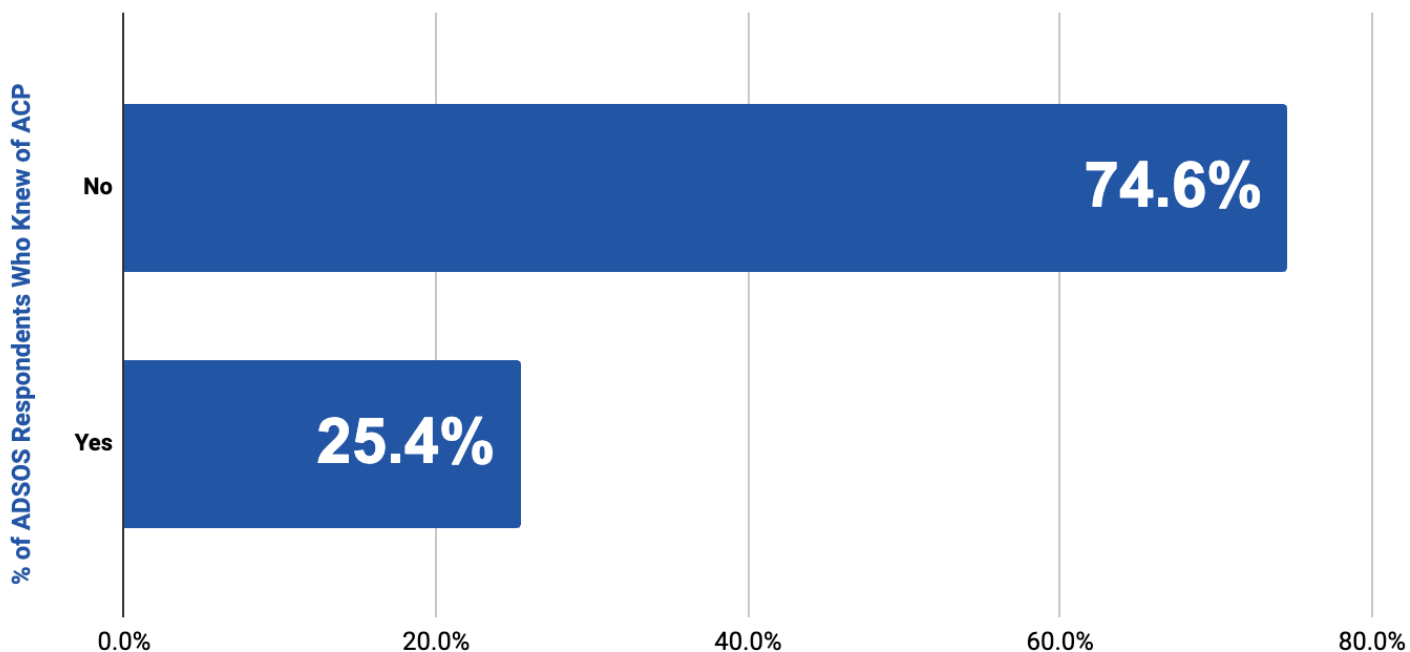
they do not have internet access simply because it is too expensive, and there are other, more pressing needs in their budgets, such as food and medications.

Low Awareness and Uptake of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Another barrier that emerged both in the ADSOS results and during focus group sessions was the widespread lack of awareness of and enrollment in the federal ACP. Nearly three quarters of survey respondents (74.6%) said they had not heard of the program, and almost no respondents (94.1%) were enrolled. When focus group facilitators introduced the ACP during listening sessions, the same theme emerged – most people had not heard of the program and were not familiar with the \$30 per month internet service discount that many households are eligible to receive. Among the people who had heard of the program, there was concern about getting information to eligible individuals. As one person at a focus group in Camden said: *“There is a huge percentage of our town and county that were going to qualify for free internet because of the criteria for qualifications. The main problem we have is getting it to them, so they can qualify for free. That’s the big obstacle right now.”*

Focus group respondents also shared that the ACP application process is lengthy and complicated, which has discouraged many who had heard about it from sharing information regarding the program with their friends and families. One participant in Gould said that they have had issues with ISPs adding on hidden fees and costs, such as a \$200 out-of-pocket expense for the purchase of a modem when they sign up for service through ACP. Other participants said that ISPs have been denying families access to the ACP benefit due to past overdue bills.

Awareness of the Federal ACP



Customer Service Challenges with ISPs

Consumer concerns with ISPs are not exclusive to the ACP and emerged as another barrier for some Arkansans. Many focus group participants complained about the lack of helpful customer service they received from various companies – with one person noting it is the *“worst thing ever when you have to call”* with questions or to simply get more information about service outages. Another shared that they are regularly told to expect to wait between 15 and 30 days for service-related issues to get resolved. Others noted local providers have not been transparent and honest about service costs and fees, sending out monthly bills with higher totals than what companies promised during conversations with residents.

Limited Opportunities for Digital Skills Training

Finally, focus group participants regularly expressed their desire to learn more about how to use the internet and build their digital skills. Participants expressed interest in learning how to set up an email account, utilize telemedicine, have video calls with friends and family, and more. Participants noted that digital skills classes and trainings are not available in their communities, or if they are available, are not well-advertised or easy to attend. While some organizations across the state are already offering these kinds of training opportunities, focus group participants expressed their desire for more widespread programming throughout the state – particularly at libraries, senior centers, veteran centers, and churches.

4.2.2 Broadband Adoption Needs

In Arkansas, enhancing digital opportunity and closing the digital divide rests on ensuring every single home, business, and community anchor institution has access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet options. As articulated earlier, according to the latest release in May 2023 of the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) National Broadband Map, there are 110,000 unserved homes and businesses in Arkansas and an additional 80,000 underserved locations where current internet access does not support the high speeds necessary for 21st-century demands like video calling, streaming, and smart home devices. Without access to broadband, digital opportunity is not possible. As a result, getting broadband access to underserved and unserved areas of the state is ARConnect’s number one priority.

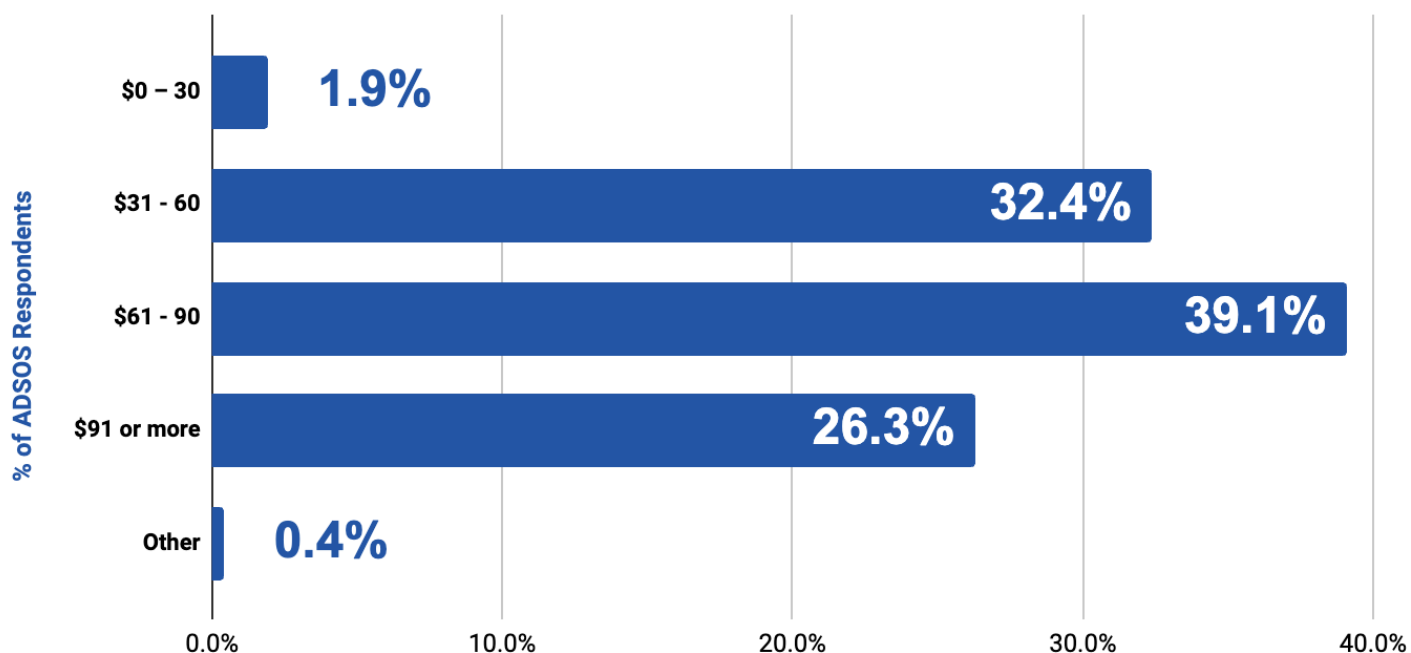
Additional needs – including digital skills training, the accessibility of online government programs, the affordability of existing service, online safety, and access to affordable devices – are broadband adoption needs and are discussed in further detail below.

4.2.3 Broadband Affordability Needs

As outlined in Section 4.2.1, high service costs are a significant barrier to digital opportunity for some in Arkansas. According to ADSOS results, 96.6% of respondents agree that paying a price over \$31 per month for service is unaffordable, but interestingly, nearly all respondents (97.8%) have monthly service costs that exceed this threshold. To close the digital divide and enhance digital opportunity, the cost of monthly internet service will need to become more affordable for many.

The federal ACP, which provides for up to a \$30 per month discount on internet bills, is among the state’s most effective tools for bringing costs down for those households that qualify. To date, only 28.5% of eligible Arkansas households have enrolled in the program, leaving significant opportunity for ARConnect and other state agency partners to share information and help eligible households enroll in the program. In addition to ARConnect’s plans to increase awareness of the ACP through partnerships with community organizations around the state (described in more detail in Section 5), the five FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program awardees mentioned in Section 4.1.1 will contribute significantly to outreach and enrollment efforts, ultimately helping to make service more affordable for qualifying families¹⁹.

What Arkansans Pay for At-Home Internet Service



Lack of competition in the marketplace is another barrier to service affordability, but one that ARConnect is well positioned to address through its future broadband infrastructure grant program that will be funded through BEAD. As additional broadband infrastructure is deployed across the state and more ISPs offer service, monthly service costs should become more affordable for many.

The mechanics of the BEAD program will also provide for more affordable service options for those households that qualify for the federal ACP program. As outlined in the state’s BEAD Initial Proposal, Arkansas will adopt a formula-based approach, tied to the state’s household income data, to create a low-cost plan that will be available for households that qualify for the federal ACP program, as required by NTIA. Arkansas’ low-cost plan will be determined by the following formula:

¹⁹ ACP is a federally funded program and does not use state funds.

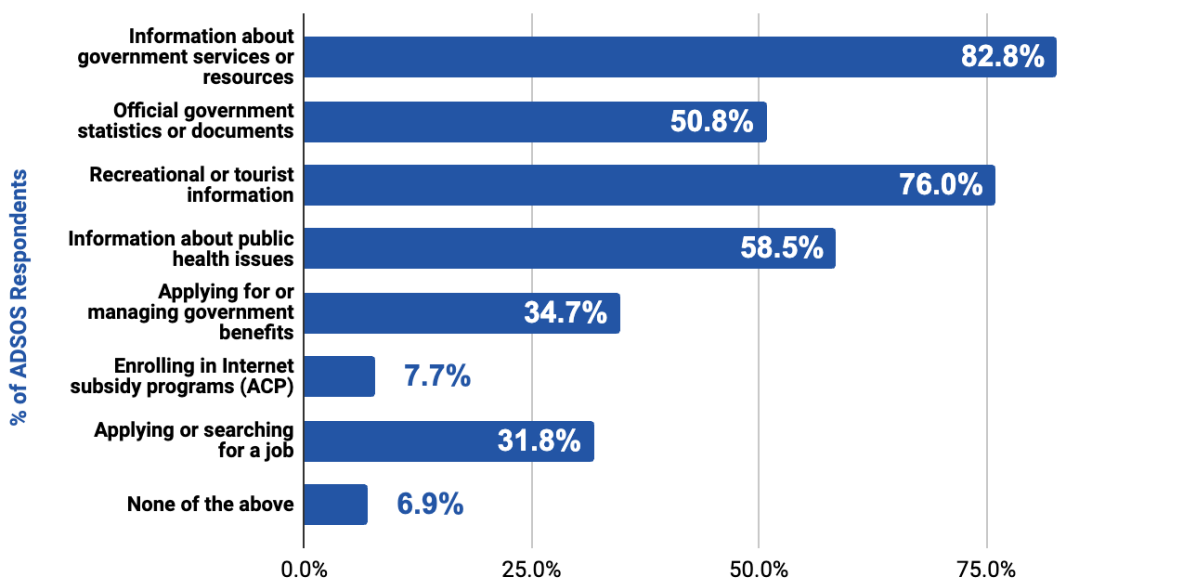
$$\text{State monthly max. LPC price} = (\text{upper limit of state bottom quintile household income} * 2\%) \div 12$$

The above formula stipulates that the annual cost of the state’s low-cost plan should not exceed 2% of the state’s bottom-quintile household income (the upper limit). This value is then divided by 12 to determine the monthly price for the state’s low-cost plan. In short, this enables Arkansas’ future low-cost plan to account for evolving macro factors such as inflation and growing income levels and be tailored to state-specific context. More detailed information on the low-cost plan requirements are available in the [BEAD Initial Proposal](#).

4.2.4 Broadband Accessibility Needs

A critical component of realizing the efficient, next-generation state government that Governor Sanders has outlined for Arkansas is ensuring that public-facing government services are accessible to citizens. According to ADSOS data, Arkansans regularly use the internet to search for various types of public services. In the past year, 82.8% of respondents indicated they used the internet to search for information about government services (i.e., voter registration, motor vehicle tag renewal, property information and building permits). Furthermore, 76% of respondents looked for recreational and/or tourist information online, more than half (50.8%) used the internet to search for official government statistics or documents, and more than one-third (34.7%) of respondents reported using the internet to apply for or manage government benefits.

Government Resources Arkansans Searched for Online in the Past Year



While most Arkansans regularly use the internet to connect with municipal and state government, there are opportunities to make these experiences more accessible. Of those who reported searching for one or more types of government services in the past year, only 35.2% said that their search met their needs “very well.” During focus group conversations, participants noted that government information and corresponding online content is often not accessible to non-English speakers. Additionally, English speaking individuals with low levels

of literacy often find the language and jargon used throughout government materials to be complicated and confusing. Beyond these concerns, websites are often not optimized for individuals with disabilities, particularly those who are deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired.

4.2.5 Digital Skills Needs

ARConnect estimates that 274,000 Arkansans in the traditional working age group of 18-64 may lack basic digital skills. As outlined in Section 2.1, basic digital skills include such things as the ability to use a web browser, send and receive emails, download files, pay bills online, and apply for a job.

According to ADSOS responses, Arkansans are generally confident in using the internet and digital devices for basic functions, such as those listed above.²⁰ However, respondents were not as confident when considering more advanced functions. Nearly a quarter of respondents (23.5%) indicated that they were not confident using a video application (i.e., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth. Additionally, 16.3% of respondents said they were not confident using the internet to take a course or training to improve their job skills, and 13.1% of respondents said they were not confident using the internet to search or apply for jobs. Lastly, 19.7% of respondents said they were not confident on how to use internet-based services to communicate with their children's child-care provider or school.

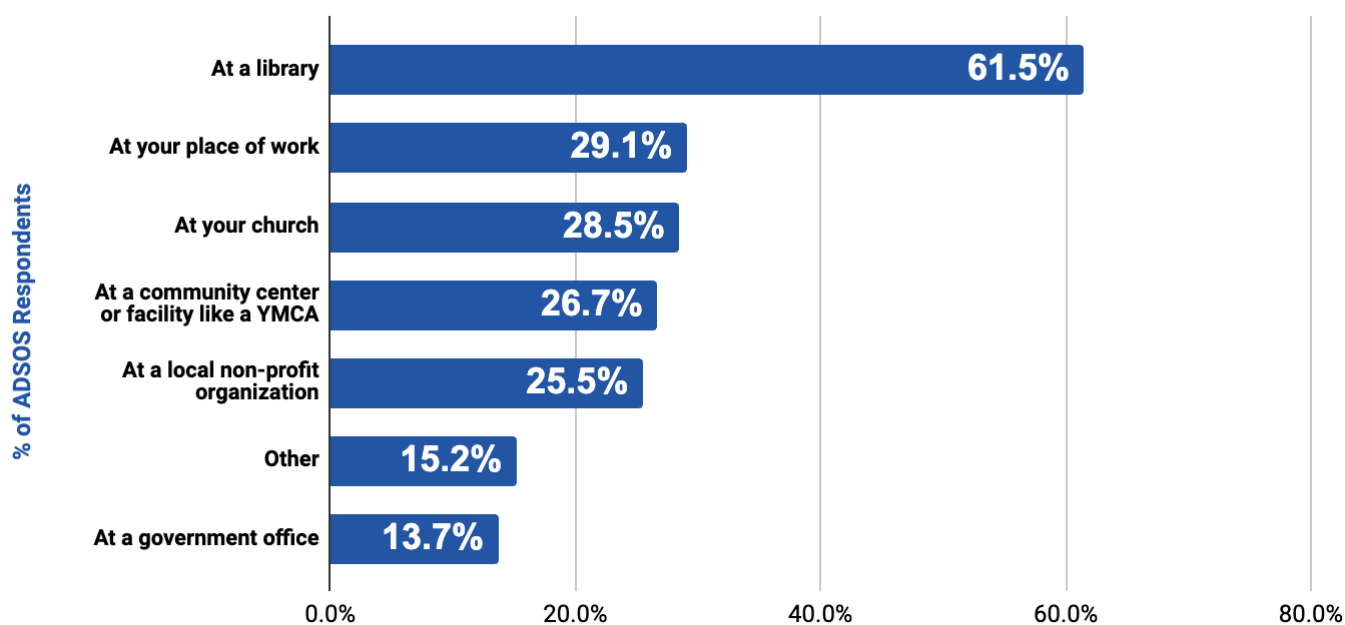
During focus groups, individuals who might not be as confident using the internet and digital devices regularly, expressed interest in having access to free or low-cost digital skills training to make up for the knowledge gaps identified above (using a video application, taking a course, applying for jobs). For some, a focus on extremely basic digital skills – including how to use a word processing program, how to send an email, how to use Google to search for information, and so on – would be most helpful. Across focus group sessions, there was also a strong desire for classes to learn more about how to protect personal information online and avoid online scams. Seniors and aging individuals overwhelmingly commented that in-person instruction would be the most effective and desired method for future trainings. Additionally, individuals from Hispanic and Marshallese backgrounds whose first language is not English made it clear that offering classes in languages other than English would be particularly helpful. Furthermore, people said classes would be most accessible and helpful if offered at a variety of times – emphasizing that classes held outside of traditional business hours would be beneficial for those who work during the day.

ADSOS respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they would feel comfortable going to free or low-cost digital skills classes at libraries (61.5% of respondents). There was also interest in attending classes at places of work (29.1% of respondents), churches (28.5% of respondents), community centers (26.7% of respondents), and at local non-profit organizations (25.5% of respondents). During focus groups, participants similarly brought up libraries as a place where they would like to go for digital skills training opportunities, but also mentioned senior centers and veteran centers.

²⁰ Confidence determined by respondents selecting either “very confident” or “somewhat confident” on the survey.

While there are some organizations already offering digital skills training in parts of the state, the efforts are not coordinated in partnership with ARConnect and outcomes and activities are not being tracked at the state level. Offering these kinds of courses, and making them accessible throughout the state for all Arkansans, regardless of geographic location and socioeconomic background, is a clear need on the path to enhancing digital opportunity. ARConnect believes that implementing this kind of digital education on a larger scale will decrease the total number of Arkansans who lack basic digital skills.

Where Arkansans Want Digital Skills Courses Offered

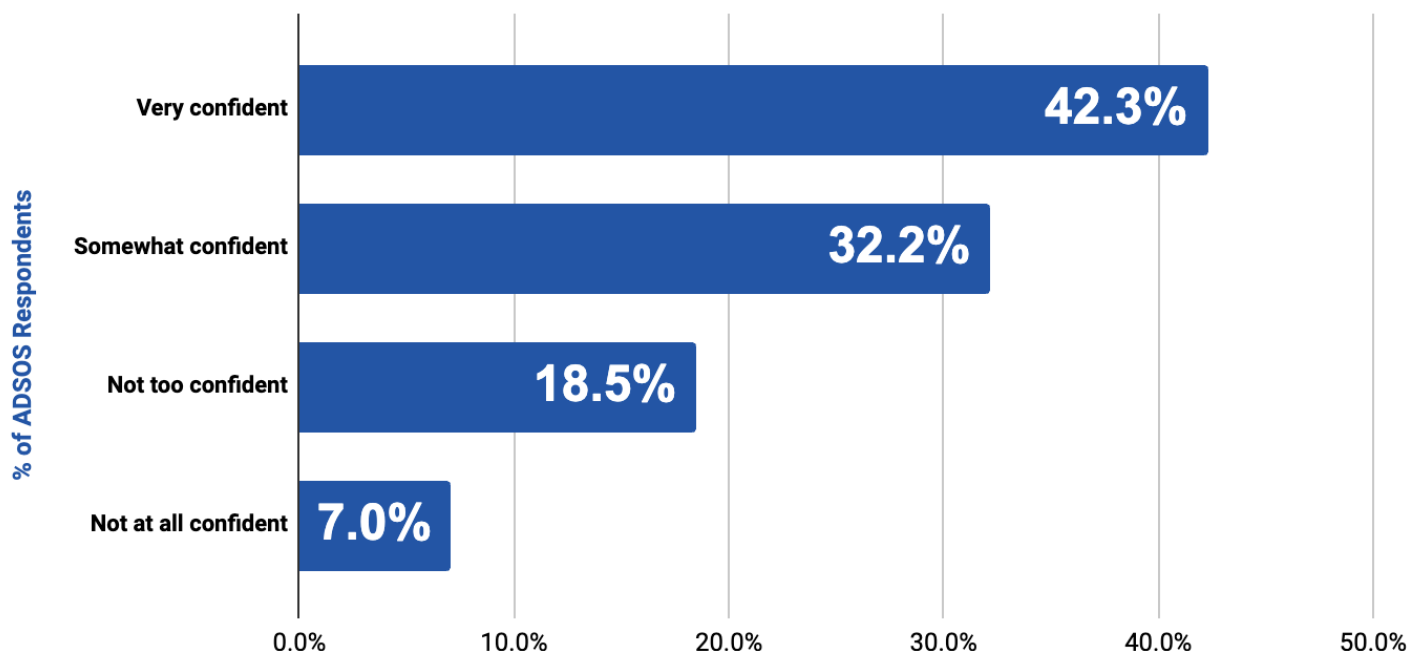


4.2.6 Privacy/Cybersecurity Needs

As ARConnect gets closer to its goal of connecting all homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions to reliable high-speed internet, there will be more opportunities for phishing attempts, online scams, personal data breaches, and more. Governor Sanders has set a mission that all Arkansans should have the education and information necessary to safely access the internet and protect their privacy online. Members of the Arkansas General Assembly, as well as other municipal and county-level leaders, have also expressed to ARConnect the importance of protecting Arkansans' personal safety online.

When asked about their confidence levels in completing various tasks using the internet and digital devices, ADSOS respondents were overwhelmingly the least confident with cybersecurity measures. Over 1 in 4 Arkansans reported they were either “not too confident” or “not at all confident” finding proper online tools to protect the privacy of their personal data.

Arkansans' Confidence Finding Tools to Protect Personal Data



This issue not only came up in survey responses, but was also discussed during focus group sessions. Participants brought up concerns related to digital fraud, how to avoid phishing and online scams, protecting personal data online, and digital privacy. One participant noted the need for cybersecurity training: *“The library might seem like a good place to go to access the internet, but people leave their personal information open and are actually more vulnerable to scams and identity theft by using the public places. People need to be trained on how to protect themselves and their personal information while using public internet.”*

While the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General and the Arkansas Department of Public Safety have already created programs to help residents with online safety, there is clearly a need for more consumer education focused on internet privacy measures. ARConnect believes that integrating this type of training into the digital skills courses described above is an important consideration.

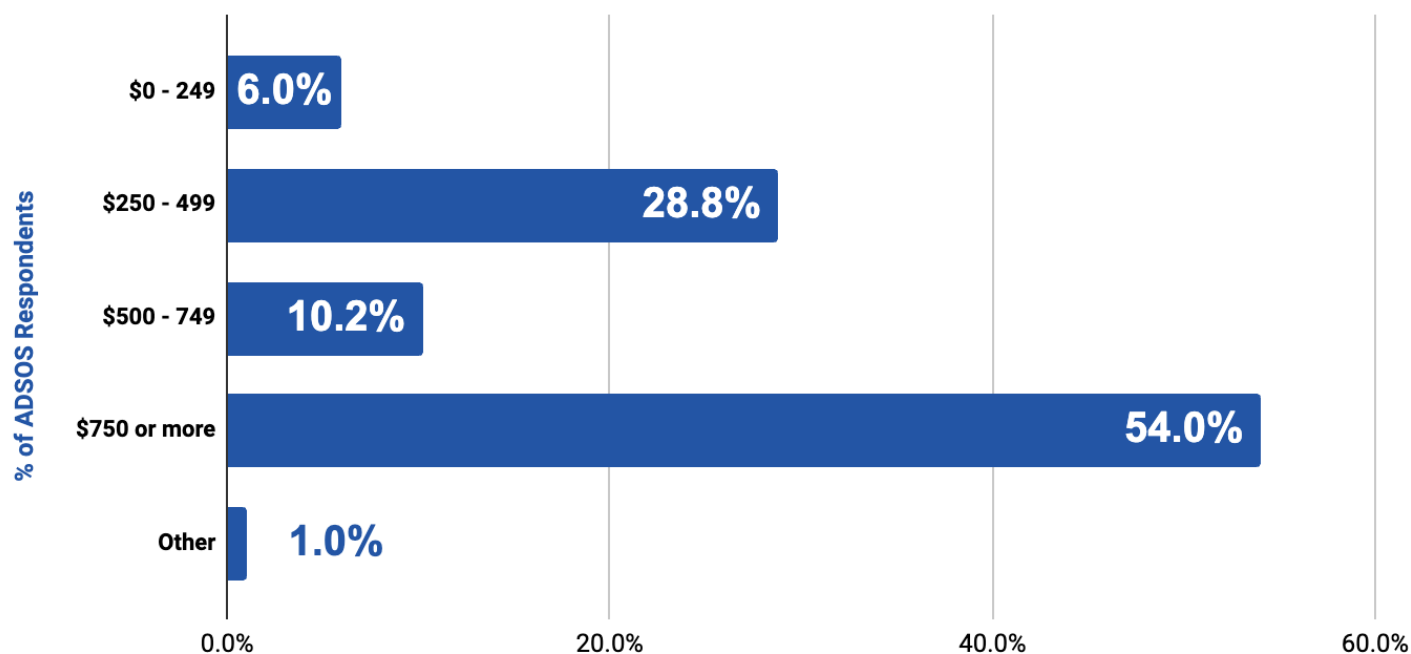
4.2.7 Consumer Device Access/Affordability Needs

Lack of access to reliable digital devices – and services to keep up with maintenance and repairs – was another theme that emerged in both the ADSOS and focus groups. Only 10.8% of respondents indicated that their households did not have enough devices to meet the needs of everyone living in the home, but respondents indicated they regularly had issues with their devices functioning properly. When asked which devices failed to function properly in the past 6 months, most had issues with their cell phones (39.2%), laptops (28.2%), tablets (20.5%), and desktop computers (16.1%). When asked how they fixed the problems they encountered, over one in five respondents (21.8%) could not fix one or more devices. During focus groups, many respondents with

school-aged children noted that their local school districts provide devices to children, but that the laptops and tablets are often slow and do not work well.

Responses to the ADSOS also highlighted that costs associated with purchasing a desktop or laptop computer are prohibitive for many Arkansans. When asked what price would be considered too expensive, 24.3% of respondents simply responded “I cannot afford to buy a computer.” Nearly all respondents indicated that if they were thinking about purchasing a desktop or laptop computer, any price above \$750 would be too expensive, while 28.8% of respondents indicated that a range of \$250 to \$499 would be too expensive, and 10.2% said a range of \$500 to \$749 would be too expensive.

Price that would be Too Expensive for Arkansans to Purchase a Computer



In focus group conversations, participants regularly voiced the need for devices outside of mobile phones, but many said that trying to afford a computer in addition to monthly service costs was too much of a financial burden. Participants remarked that having at-home devices is necessary for children to complete schoolwork, as well as other daily activities like paying bills and accessing email because library hours and corresponding public computer access is often limited to working hours, when they are unavailable or otherwise unable to take advantage of existing resources.

Access to reliable devices – at affordable price options – is another key piece to Arkansas’ digital opportunity puzzle. Without functioning computers and tablets in homes, universal broadband access will have a limited effect on the state’s economic growth and quality of life.

4.2.8 Barriers to Digital Opportunity by Covered Population

Beyond the barriers to digital opportunity described above that impact all Arkansans, the ADSOS and ARConnect’s focus groups collected demographic data to better understand how the digital divide impacts the covered populations defined by the federal government (outlined in Table 1 in Section 4.1.1).

For the purposes of this report, ARConnect categorized survey and focus group findings by each covered population, but ARConnect engaged with dozens of Arkansans who experienced a unique set of challenges because they belong to two or more covered population groups. This includes aging individuals who are living in poverty, veterans who identify as disabled, individuals who are members of racial or ethnic minority groups that are also living in poverty, individuals living in poverty in rural areas, and more. Oftentimes, membership in multiple covered population groups exacerbates the digital divide.

An overview of the methodology used to analyze ADSOS results among various covered population groups is available in Appendix E. Additionally, a summary of findings by covered population is available below.

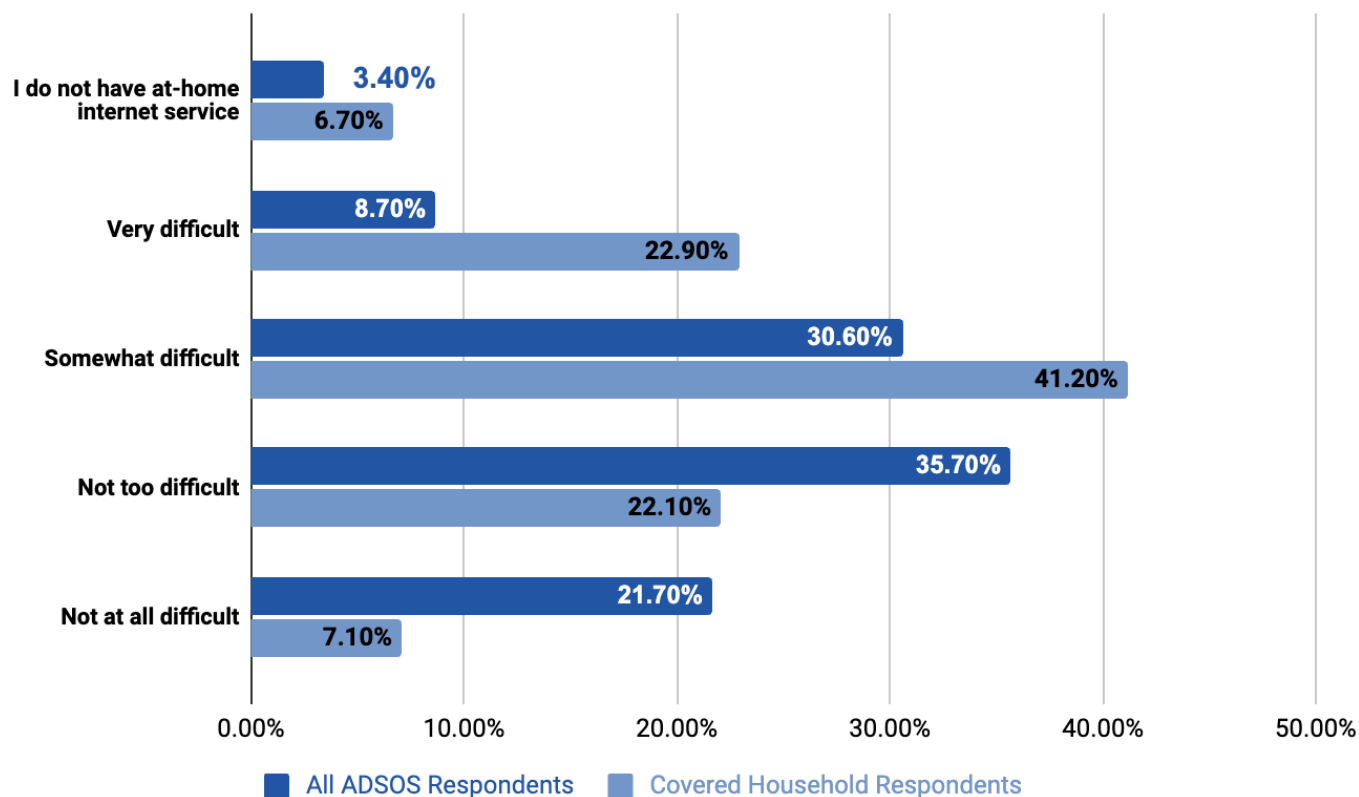
Covered Households

Based on ADSOS results, covered households – defined as individuals living at or below 150% of the federal poverty level – differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

- Covered households reported experiencing regular service interruptions at a higher rate than the general population. While 33.3% of all respondents noted that they encounter service interruptions one or more times each week, this number was significantly higher (42.2%) among respondents belonging to a covered household.
- Unsurprisingly, covered households indicated that they have a harder time affording their internet service bills. A total of 39.3% of all survey respondents said fitting a monthly internet bill into their household budget was either somewhat difficult or very difficult. But when evaluating covered households specifically, this percentage increases: 64.1% of covered household respondents said it was either somewhat difficult or very difficult to fit a monthly internet bill into their household budget.
- Covered households generally have fewer devices. Less than 10% of all survey respondents (9.4%) indicated that they only had 1 or 2 devices in their household, while 16.2% of covered household respondents selected this choice. Additionally, while 62.7% of all respondents reported owning 5 or more devices, only 52.6% of covered household respondents indicated the same.
- When assessing the devices that are owned, covered households generally have fewer laptops, desktops, and tablets. Compared to all survey respondents, 9.7% fewer covered household respondents own a laptop computer, 8.3% fewer own a desktop computer, and 8.4% fewer own a tablet.
- Covered household respondents also shared that it would take significantly longer – or not be possible – for them to replace a computer if it was lost or damaged beyond repair. Only 14.2% of all respondents indicated that they would not be able to replace their device in the foreseeable future in this kind of scenario, but 36.5% of covered household respondents selected this answer.

- When asked about their internet searching habits, 10.5% more covered household respondents indicated that they had used the internet to apply or search for a job in the past year, compared with the general population.

Difficulty Fitting Internet Costs into Monthly Budget for Covered Households



During focus group conversations, individuals from covered households regularly said that they were interested in having basic digital skills classes available to them. As mentioned above, they emphasized that in-person instruction would be particularly helpful and commonly cited online privacy and cybersecurity as topics they would like to learn more about. Given their limited incomes, they stated that lower monthly prices would also make internet service more accessible for their families. After getting additional information about the ACP during these sessions, they also expressed an interest in ARConnect sharing promotional materials at certain locations, including libraries, government offices, fire departments, hospitals, homeless centers, and various retail stores like Walmart and Dollar General. Within this population, participants noted that it is particularly difficult for individuals experiencing homelessness – and their children – to find places to access the internet. Some suggested that expanding free public Wi-Fi access in various locations could help solve this problem.

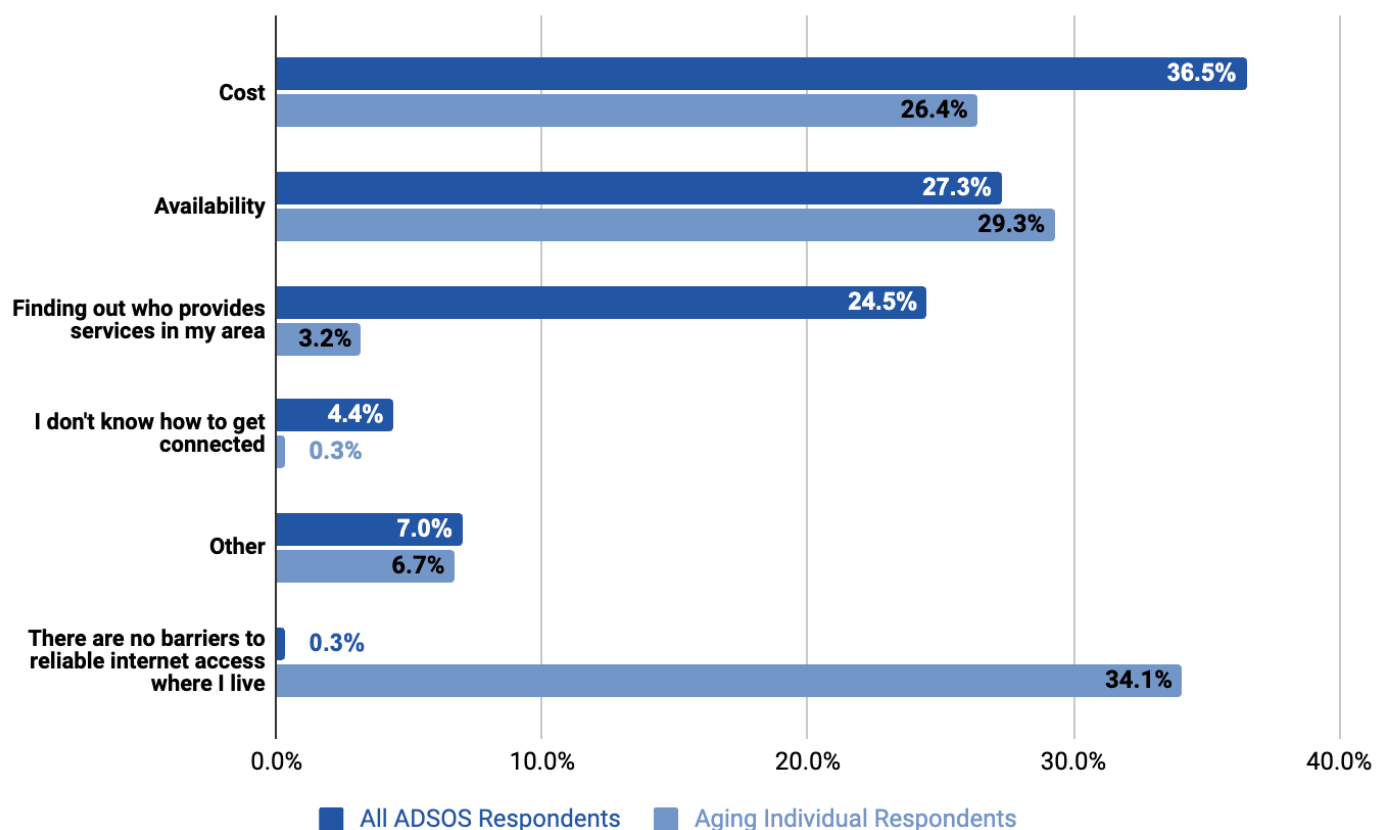
Aging Individuals

Based on ADSOS results, aging individuals – defined as individuals 60 years or older – differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

- Aging individuals are more likely to have older devices in their homes. While 14.4% of all survey respondents said the average age of their device was between 5 and 9 years, this figure was higher (20.1%) among aging individual respondents.
- While their devices are generally older than those in the average Arkansas household, aging individuals were more likely to report that if their computer was lost or damaged beyond repair that they would be able to replace it more quickly. Roughly half of all respondents (51.3%) said they would be able to replace their computer within one to seven days, while this number was 10.1% higher (61.4%) among aging individual respondents.
- Interestingly, aging individuals were also more likely to indicate that there were no barriers to sufficient and reliable internet access where they live. Just over a quarter of all respondents (27.3%) selected this option when asked about their primary barrier to having reliable internet access at home, while 34.1% of aging individual respondents indicated the same.
- Aging individuals are also more likely to have their home internet service bundled with other telecommunication services, such as telephone or television services. While 35.6% of all respondents indicated that their home internet service is bundled, almost half (46.6%) of aging individual respondents reported having bundled service.
- This segment of the population is also more likely than the general population to use the internet to search for information about government benefits, such as social security. Just over a third of all respondents (34.7%) indicated that they have used the internet to apply for or manage their government benefits in the past year, while 46.5% of aging individual respondents reported doing so.
- When asked about their confidence with basic digital skills, aging individuals reported lower confidence levels using a video application, such as Zoom. Among the general population, 76.5% of respondents indicated that they were either somewhat confident or very confident using a video application, while only 70.4% of aging individual respondents selected one of the same two choices.

Aging individuals were active participants at various focus groups and also emphasized the importance of digital skills courses and training opportunities. At multiple focus group sessions, participants stated that they would like to see digital skills training offered at senior centers where they already spend time. They also shared that many of the senior centers where they spend time do not currently offer free Wi-Fi and that having internet access at these locations would help alleviate their broadband access and affordability challenges. Some participants were also adamant that in-person instruction is the only reliable way for them to learn how to use digital devices, stating they have attempted to take online courses through YouTube and other platforms but have found them confusing and hard to follow. They emphasized that helpful courses would walk them through online safety measures and teach basic skills, including how to use web browsers, setting up and managing passwords, navigating email, and so forth. Because many aging individuals are living on fixed incomes and find current broadband service to be unaffordable, they noted that having free internet available at senior centers would make technology more accessible.

Primary Barrier to Reliable Internet Access for Aging Individuals



Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

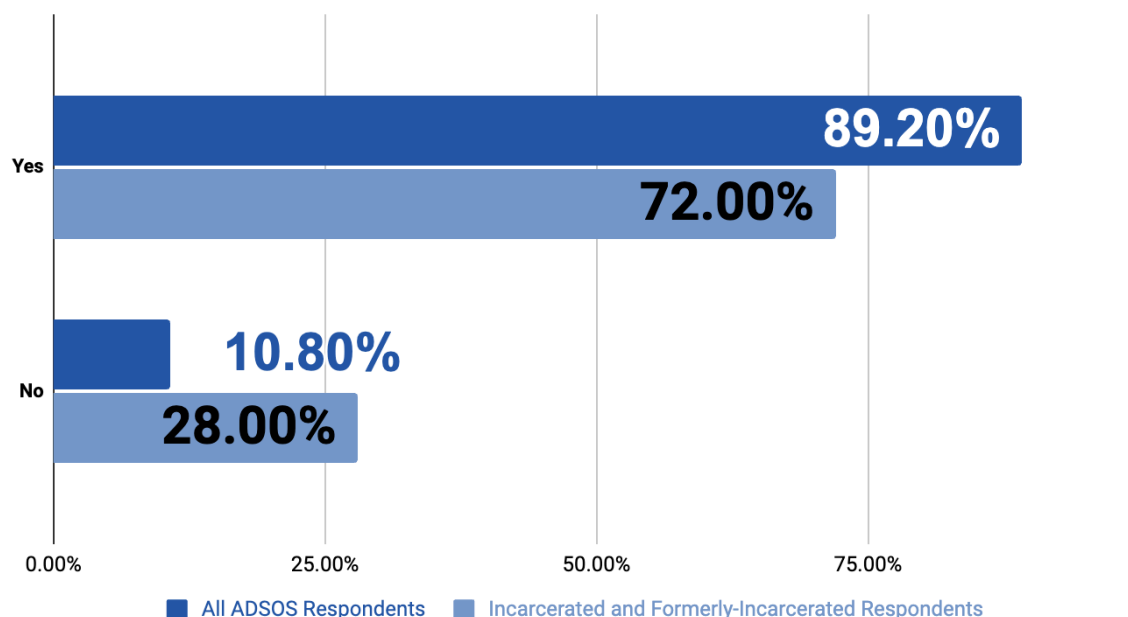
Based on ADSOS results, formerly incarcerated individuals differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways: ²¹

- The cost of at-home internet service tends to disproportionately impact incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals. When asked how much they pay for monthly internet service, only 2.6% of all survey respondents indicated that they cannot afford to pay for service and do not have at-home broadband access. However, 11.8% of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals selected this option on the survey. Additionally, when asked how difficult it is to fit monthly internet service costs into their budgets, 7.3% more of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated respondents (16.0%) indicated that it is “very difficult,” compared with general population respondents (8.7%).
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals also generally have fewer devices in their households. While 62.7% of all respondents reported owning 5 or more devices, only 52.4% of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated respondents indicated the same.

²¹ ARConnect was not able to survey currently incarcerated individuals because of research ethics and other restrictions, so this data reflects the barriers for formerly incarcerated individuals.

- The devices that incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals tend to have in their households are also generally older than those of the general population. While 14.4% of all survey respondents said the average age of their devices was between 5 and 9 years, this figure was higher (20.7%) among incarcerated and formerly incarcerated respondents.
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated respondents also shared that it would not be possible for them to replace a computer if it was lost or damaged beyond repair at higher rates than the general population. Only 14.2% of all respondents indicated that they would not be able to replace their device in the foreseeable future in this kind of scenario, but 19.8% of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated respondents indicated this response.
- Furthermore, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals are less likely to have enough devices in their homes. When asked if their households have enough computer devices for their needs, 28.0% of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated respondents answered “no,” compared with 10.8% of the general population.

Respondents Who Report Having Enough Digital Devices for their Household Needs



In focus groups, stakeholders shared that there is a significant informational gap between currently incarcerated individuals and other Arkansans because societal and economic change occurs rapidly during incarceration. During focus groups, these stakeholders explained that there is a lack of access to job training opportunities while individuals are in prison. They expressed interest in the state exploring ways that currently incarcerated individuals could engage with digital skills training while they are held in correctional facilities but also emphasized the need for this training to be available upon reentry, so released individuals can accumulate the digital skills needed for jobs in the 21st century and have a better chance at becoming productive, successful members of society. To help with device access issues among the incarcerated community, stakeholders

outlined the need for devices to be made available in conjunction with any future digital skills courses that the state may offer.

During the asset mapping process recapped in Section 4.1, ARConnect also learned that there is a significant lack of digital opportunity assets for current and formerly incarcerated individuals. Given this gap in assets, ARConnect’s implementation plan includes strategies specific to addressing this population’s barriers.

Veterans

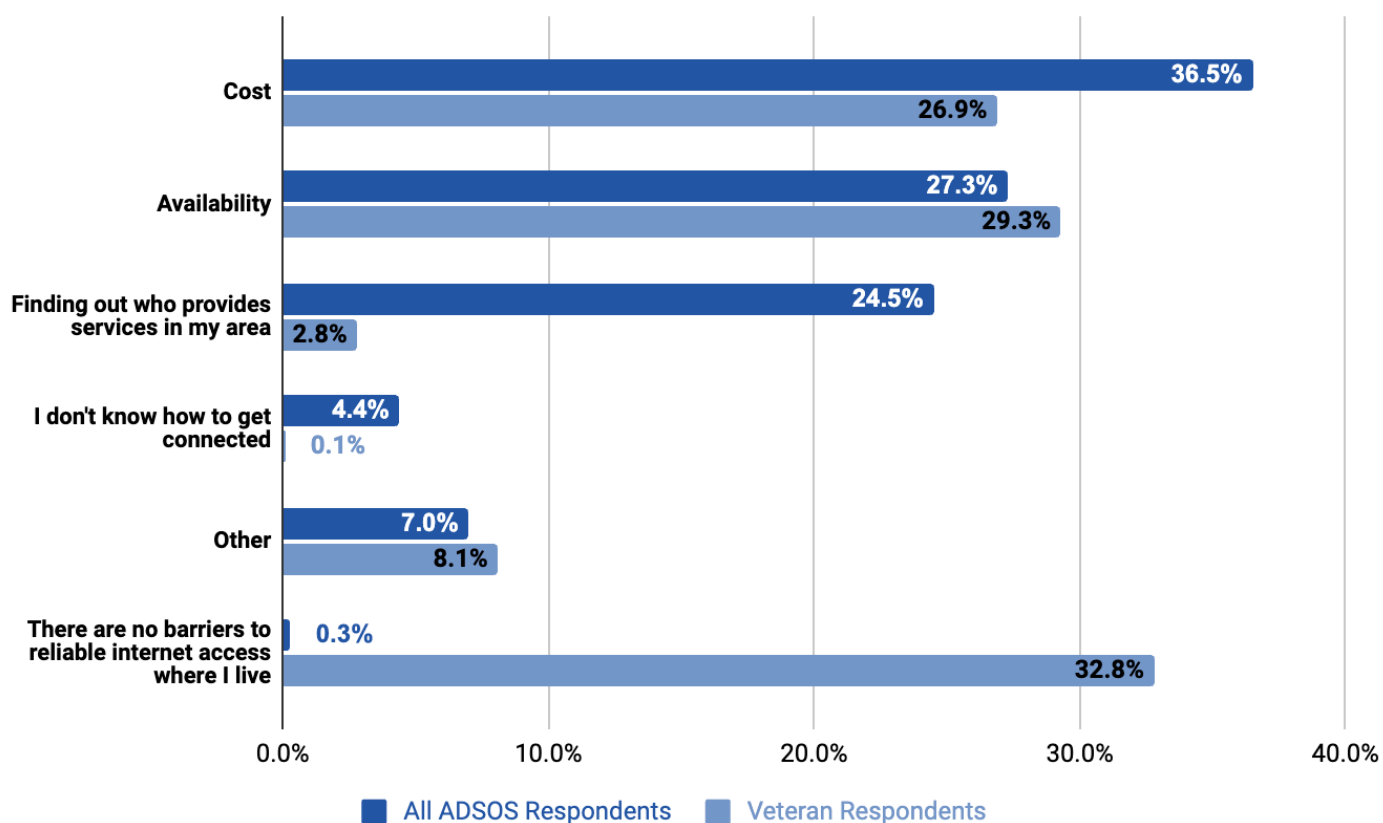
Based on ADSOS results, veterans differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

- Veterans tend not to have mobile access to the internet at the same rates that the general population reported. While 69.2% of all survey respondents indicated that they or someone in their household accesses the internet via a cellular data plan on a mobile device, the percentage of veterans who indicated having a mobile service plan goes down 6.1%.
- While nearly all of the other covered population groups identified internet service cost as the top barrier to having reliable high-speed internet at home, veterans identified service availability as their top barrier to internet access.
- Following logically from the above result, the veteran population tends to have an easier time affording monthly internet service. Only 21.7% of the general population indicated that it is “not at all difficult” to pay for at-home internet access, while slightly less than a third of veteran respondents (29.1%) selected this option.
- Veterans are also more likely to have their home internet service bundled with other telecommunication services, such as telephone or television services. While 35.6% of all respondents indicated that their home internet service is bundled, just under half (44.7%) of veteran respondents reported the same.
- Additionally, veterans reported using the internet to search for information related to their government benefits at higher rates than the average Arkansan. Just over a third of all respondents (34.7%) indicated that they have used the internet to apply for or manage their government benefits in the past year, while 44.3% of veteran respondents reported doing so.

While participating in focus group sessions like other covered populations, veteran participants expressed interest in having access to free or low-cost digital skills training opportunities across the state. They indicated that beyond basic digital skills mentioned by others, they need specific help learning how to navigate telemedicine platforms as the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is transitioning toward telehealth-based medicine and many of them do not know how to use online health platforms or digital devices. Stakeholders also mentioned that for veterans, staying connected with one another through existing “buddy check” phone call programs could be enhanced if more veterans learned how to use email and had the digital skills to use video call features. Like the aging individual population, veterans and organizations who serve them emphasized during focus groups that in-person training would be most helpful. To support future digital skills training opportunities and increase their access to the internet, many participants shared that free Wi-Fi at veterans centers would also help solve their broadband access and affordability challenges. They also said

digital skills training would be most accessible and helpful if offered at veterans centers – such as Camp Jack in Harrison, Arkansas – where they already visit for a variety of activities, benefits, and resources.

Primary Barrier to Reliable Internet Access for Veterans



Individuals with Language Barriers

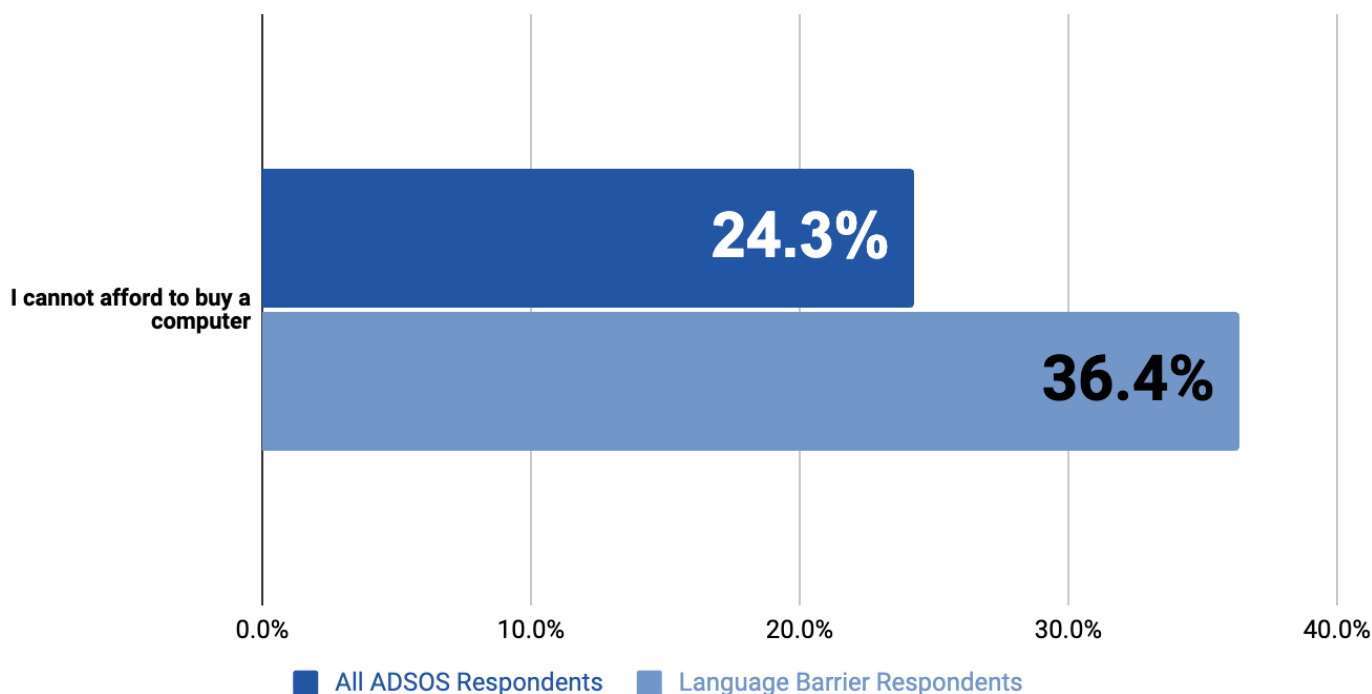
Based on ADSOS results, individuals with language barriers differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

- More so than the average respondent, individuals with language barriers reported cost as their primary barrier to having reliable internet access at home. Roughly a quarter of all respondents indicated cost as their top obstacle to having broadband access, whereas 36.5% of respondents with a language barrier selected this option.
- This population was more familiar with the ACP and respondents with language barriers were slightly more likely to report already being enrolled in the program than the general population, but awareness and enrollment rates are still low. Only one in four Arkansans (25.4%) said they had heard of the program, while 30.8% of respondents with a language barrier indicated they were aware of the ACP. Only 5.9% of all survey respondents reported current participation in the ACP, while 12.0% of respondents with a language barrier reported the same.

- Individuals with language barriers also reported that their households tend to have older devices compared to all Arkansans. While 7.6% of all respondents indicated that the average age of the internet devices in their home was 10+ years, 13.0% of respondents who identified as individuals with language barriers reported having devices with an average age of 10+ years.
- Respondents with language barriers also shared that it would take significantly longer – or not be possible – for them to replace a computer if it was lost or damaged beyond repair. Only 14.2% of all respondents indicated that they would not be able to replace their device in the foreseeable future in this kind of scenario, but 24.1% of respondents with a language barrier selected this answer.
- Additionally, respondents with a language barrier shared that they cannot afford to purchase a desktop or laptop at higher rates than the general population. Roughly a quarter (24.3%) of all respondents indicated that they would not be able to afford a computer, while 36.4% of respondents with a language barrier selected this answer.
- When asked about their internet searching habits, 5.4% more respondents with a language barrier indicated that they had used the internet to apply or search for a job in the past year, compared with the general population.

To address the state’s population of individuals with language barriers, ARConnect and its partners hosted focus groups with the Spanish-speaking population, Marshallese-speaking population, and with English-speaking residents with low levels of literacy. During these conversations, participants emphasized an interest in digital skills training and were eager to learn more about and enroll in the ACP, but said existing courses and information are typically only available in English, which can make it difficult for them to access. English-speaking residents with low literacy levels said that the language used for government programs often confuses and discourages them. They recommended offering digital skills training not only at libraries, but also at churches, community centers, and through other non-profit organizations that their communities regularly engage with, such as the Marshallese Education Initiative and El Zócalo, the immigrant resource center in central Arkansas. Like members of other covered population groups, they also shared that having free Wi-Fi at these community gathering spaces would help address their broadband affordability and access challenges. Arkansans who do not speak English as their first language reported challenges with language barriers during interactions with ISPs, as well. Above all, focus group participants from this covered population stressed that cost is a significant barrier to their families having reliable, high-speed internet access and that free access at more public places would make a significant difference in their lives.

Arkansans Unable to Afford a Desktop or Laptop Computer



Individuals with Disabilities

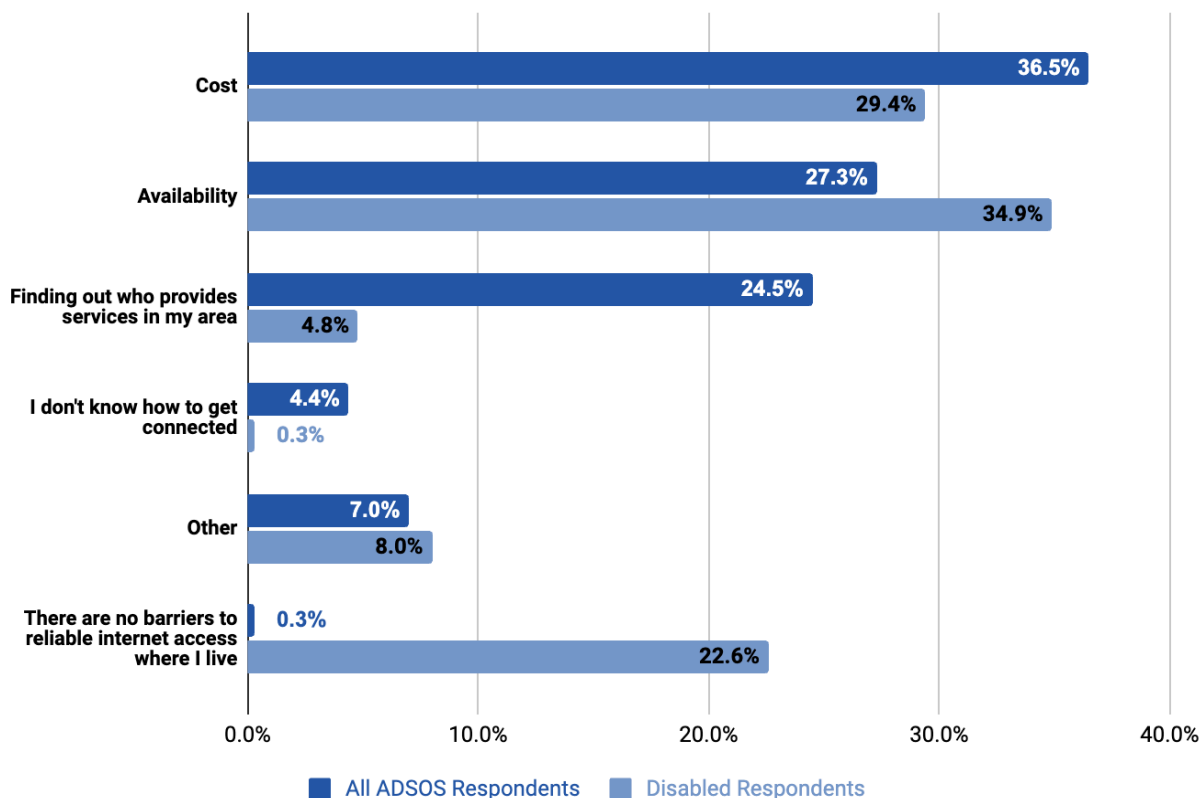
Based on ADSOS results, individuals with disabilities – defined as people with any physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of their major life activities – differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

- While nearly all of the other covered population groups identified internet service cost as the top barrier to having reliable, high-speed internet at home, individuals with disabilities identified service availability as their top barrier to internet access.
- Even though service availability was identified as the top obstacle, cost is also still a large barrier. Only 39.3% of all survey respondents indicated that fitting their monthly service bill into their household budget is either “somewhat difficult” or “very difficult,” but over half (51.5%) of respondents with a disability selected one of the same two options.
- Additionally, while most respondents (72.2%) said that they access the internet at work at least monthly, respondents with disabilities were much less likely to report accessing the internet at work. Over a third of respondents with a disability (35.0%) said they never access the internet at work.
- Respondents with disabilities are less likely to have enough devices in their homes. When asked if their households have enough computer devices for their needs, 16.3% of respondents with a disability answered “no,” compared to 10.8% of the general population.
- Furthermore, respondents with disabilities also shared that it would not be possible for them to replace a computer if it was lost or damaged beyond repair at higher rates than the general population. Only 14.2%

of all respondents indicated that they would not be able to replace their device in the foreseeable future in this kind of scenario, but 20.0% of respondents with disabilities selected this answer.

During focus group discussions, individuals with disabilities also reiterated a desire for basic digital skills training opportunities across the state. Overwhelmingly, this group mentioned libraries as trusted community hubs and suggested libraries would be good locations for these trainings to be conducted. Like participants from other covered population groups, individuals with disabilities emphasized that in-person digital skills training would be most helpful and accessible to the largest number of people. They were also eager to learn more about the ACP, but some participants shared that they had tried to enroll in the program in the past and had difficulties with the application process. There was significant overlap between this group and the aging individual population, made obvious by the fact that many of the participants from this group also requested internet access, device access, and digital skills training at senior centers across the state.

Primary Barrier to Reliable Internet Access for Individuals with a Disability



Individuals who are Members of a Racial or Ethnic Minority Group

Based on ADSOS results, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

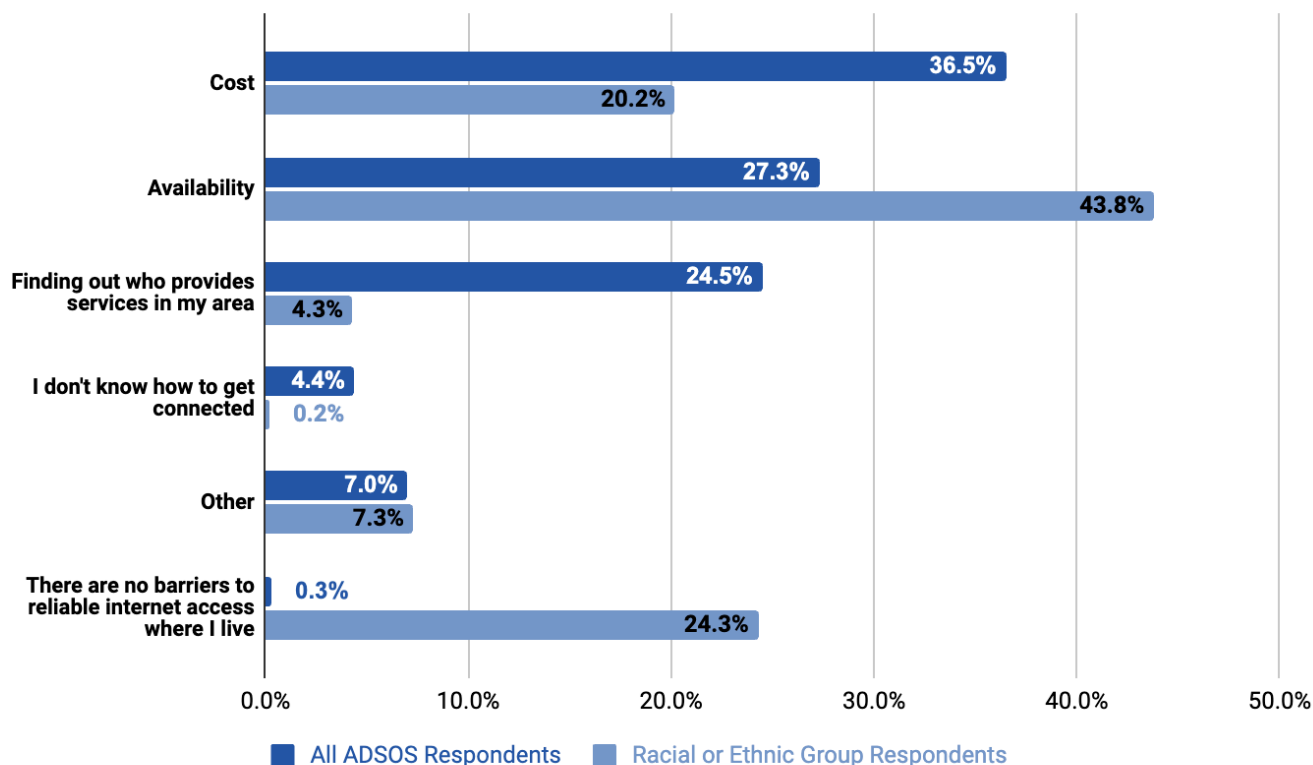
- The cost of at-home internet service tends to disproportionately impact individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group. While almost a quarter of the general population (24.5%) identified cost

as the primary barrier to having reliable internet access where they live, 31.5% of respondents who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group identified cost as their primary barrier to having high-speed internet access at home.

- Furthermore, individuals who are members of this covered population have a more difficult time fitting their monthly internet service bills into their household budgets. Only 8.7% of the total population reported affording internet service as “very difficult,” while 14.3% of respondents who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group selected this option.
- Individuals in this group tend to be less satisfied with the quality of their at-home internet service, as well. More than 4 in 10 members of the general population (41.2%) reported being “very satisfied” with the quality of their broadband service, while only 35.2% of respondents who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group indicated the same level of satisfaction.
- This population was more familiar with the ACP, but awareness rates are still low. Only one in four Arkansans (25.4%) said they had heard of the program, but 30.7% of respondents who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group indicated they were aware of the ACP.
- Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group are more likely to have older devices in their homes. While 73.1% of all survey respondents said the average age of their devices was between 1 and 4 years, this figure was lower (63.9%) among respondents who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group.
- When asked about their internet searching habits, 10.0% more respondents who belong to a racial or ethnic minority group indicated that they had used the internet to apply or search for a job in the past year compared with the general population.

Similar to other covered population groups, and Arkansans as a whole, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group and participated in in-person focus group sessions spent much of the time discussing the need for additional broadband infrastructure and more competition among providers to help drive down service costs. Across rural and urban areas alike, participants from this segment of the population shared that their communities need reliable service where they live so they can fully take advantage of technology, upcoming digital skills training, and other economic opportunities. They shared a similar desire for basic digital skills training and more information about how to stay safe and protect their personal information while online. Like individuals with language barriers, participants also noted that existing trainings are often only offered in English or during business hours, which makes them inaccessible for many of the individuals who are interested in attending. Like members of other covered population groups, they also shared that having free Wi-Fi at community centers and other gathering spaces would help address their broadband affordability and access challenges. Some individuals learned about the County Broadband Committee structure ARConnect has been implementing over the past year during these listening sessions and expressed a desire to get involved with their local committees to represent their communities of color within the county.

Primary Barrier to Reliable Internet Access for Members of a Racial or Ethnic Group



Individuals Living in Rural Areas

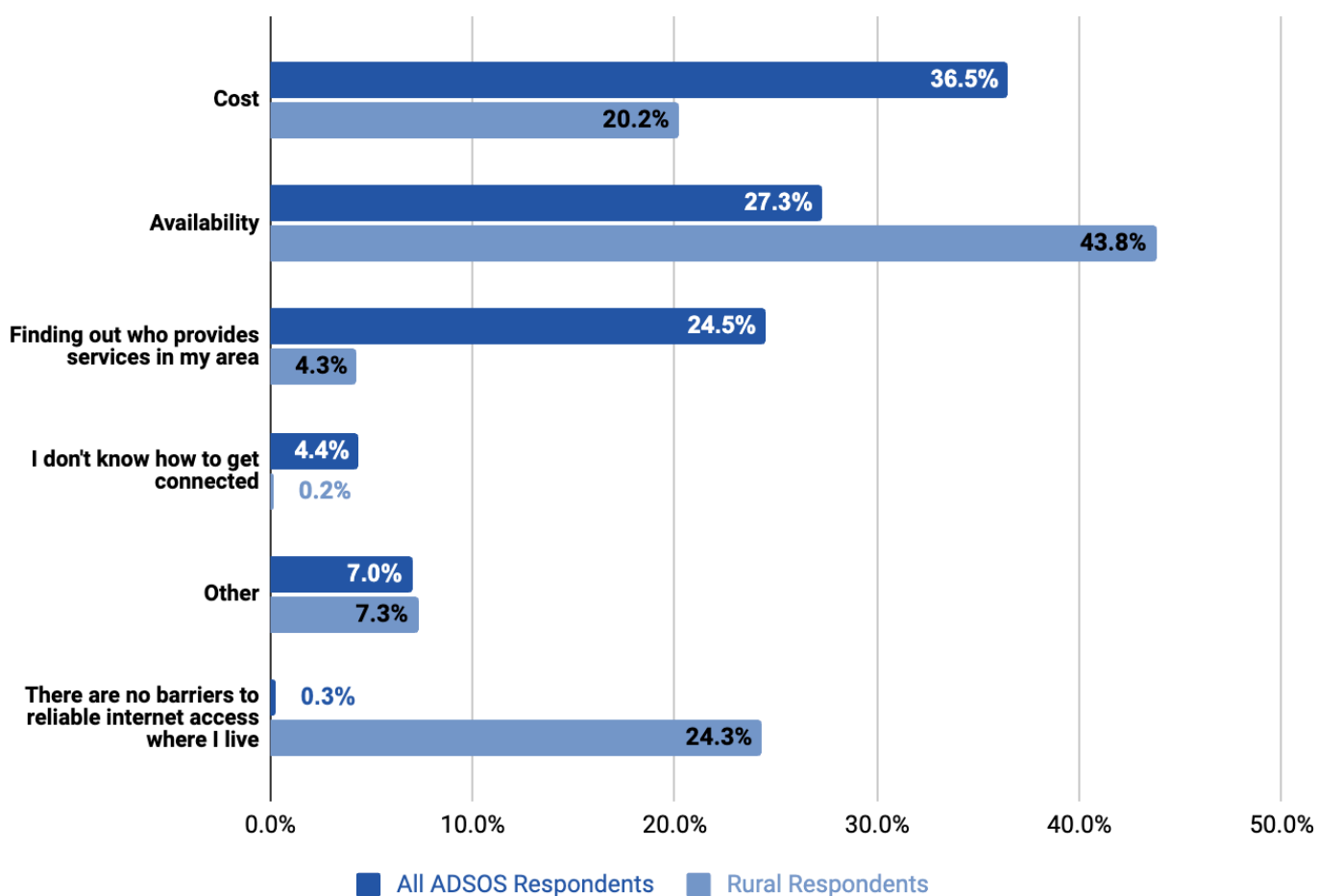
Based on ADSOS results, individuals living in rural areas differ from the general population across barriers to access in the following ways:

- While broadband availability was the top primary barrier that the general population identified, respondents from rural areas overwhelmingly identified lack of available service as their primary barrier to broadband access. Just over a third of all survey respondents (36.5%) indicated service availability as their primary barrier to access, while 43.8% of respondents from rural areas selected this option.
- According to the [NTIA Covered Population Viewer](#), over half of Arkansas' population (55.3%) is made up of individuals living in rural areas. As a result, other ADSOS findings were not significantly different between the general population and individuals living in rural areas because this population makes up a majority of the state's population.

As outlined above, the lack of broadband infrastructure in rural areas of the state was one of the most common discussion topics during focus groups with this covered population. As with other segments of the population, individuals living in rural areas reported high service costs due to a lack of competition among providers and the necessity to pay higher fees for broadband access via mobile hotspots. Participants noted that in areas where

service offerings are available, the lack of competition and high prices can make service prohibitive for many. They also shared that the ACP has not been well-promoted in rural communities, but that it is a program that could help make access more affordable for many families. Participants suggested disseminating information through local school districts, social media, and putting informational flyers in grocery stores. Like others, there was a desire for digital skills training opportunities, and people were enthusiastic about the opportunity to build their knowledge in cybersecurity, namely related to how to avoid online hacking and scams.

Primary Barrier to Reliable Internet Access for Individuals Living in Rural Areas



5. Strategies, Measurable Objectives, and Implementation

5.1 Goals and Strategies for Advancing Digital Opportunity

Based on the barriers to digital opportunity outlined in Section 4.2, ARConnect has developed strategies to close the digital divide in Arkansas. These strategies complement the infrastructure-focused goals and objectives outlined in the state’s BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposal. **To fund and achieve these goals, ARConnect will apply for and leverage federal funding from the DEA and BEAD programs.** ARConnect does not intend to use state funding to accomplish these priorities.

As identified in Section 4.2.8, it is common for individuals in Arkansas to belong to more than one covered population group, and oftentimes, membership in multiple covered populations exacerbates the digital divide. ARConnect acknowledges this fact and further recognizes that, because all Arkansas families and communities are unique, there is no “one size fits all” solution for enhancing digital opportunity in Arkansas. The goals and strategies outlined below were intentionally designed to work in tandem and be inclusive of all Arkansans – including all eight covered population groups – to push the state closer to Governor Sanders’ vision of achieving digital opportunity for all Arkansans by 2030.

Table 4: Goals for Achieving Digital Opportunity in Arkansas

Goal	Strategies	
Goal 1: Increase the Availability and Affordability of Internet Service in Arkansas. ²²	1.1	Connect 100% of broadband serviceable locations with access to reliable, high-speed internet and enhance broadband access at community anchor institutions.
	1.2	Continue to advertise and expand enrollment in the ACP.
	1.3	Explore partnerships with municipal housing authorities and nonprofit developers of affordable housing to include affordable at-home internet service at multi-unit dwellings.
	1.4	Create a temporary, community mini grant program to support the expansion of free Wi-Fi access at organizations and institutions that serve covered populations.
Goal 2: Improve Arkansans’ Digital Skills by Implementing Digital Skills Training Opportunities for	2.1	Invest in a core digital skills curriculum that can be adopted across all state libraries and other community anchor institutions.
	2.2	Create a temporary, community mini grant program to support the expansion of existing digital skills programs at organizations and

²² NTIA Statutory Requirement 2: Broadband Availability and Affordability.

Goal	Strategies	
All Interested Arkansans. ²³		institutions that serve covered populations.
	2.3	Work with industry partners to create and implement an agriculture-specific digital skills curriculum.
	2.4	Explore the creation of specialized digital skills curricula for healthcare and small business applications.
Goal 3: Leverage Existing State Agencies, Programs, and Organizations to Keep Arkansans Connected, Safe, and Healthy, and Prioritize Accessibility. ²⁴	3.1	Coordinate with state agencies and other partners to highlight existing state programs or encourage the development of novel programs to train residents on how to use online government programs available to them.
Goal 4: Increase Access to Affordable Digital Devices. ²⁵	4.1	Establish a device refurbishment campaign with corporate, philanthropic, and workforce partners across the state.
	4.2	Foster programs that distribute low-cost and free devices to those included in covered populations across the state.
	4.3	To incentivize participation in digital skills training opportunities, tie affordable device distribution to completion of one or more courses.
Goal 5: Engage All Interested Arkansans and Community Partners in Digital Opportunity Efforts.	5.1	Continue to regularly convene the ABLN and expand ARConnect’s outreach to broadband stakeholders throughout Arkansas and integrate additional partners into the ABLN.
	5.2	Publicize success stories of new connectivity and where digital skills training is making an impact across the state.
	5.3	House an AmeriCorps digital navigator in the ARConnect office for the duration of implementation to support this project.
	5.4	Create and regularly update a digital resource guide for members of the public.
	5.5	Ensure ARConnect applies for subsequent rounds of federal DEA and BEAD funding.
	5.6	Facilitate education with ISPs to improve customer service.

²³ NTIA Statutory Requirement 2: Digital Literacy.

²⁴ NTIA Statutory Requirement 2: Online Privacy and Cybersecurity, Online Accessibility and Inclusivity.

²⁵ NTIA Statutory Requirement 2: Device Availability and Affordability.

These strategies directly align with Governor Sanders' and the state's broader goals to have universal broadband access in Arkansas close the digital divide by 2030, and establish an era of efficient, next-generation opportunity, society, and government. They are also responsive to priorities articulated by members of the Arkansas General Assembly and municipal and county leaders from across the state.

5.2 Implementation Plan and Measurable Objectives

The goals and strategies outlined in Table 4 will be ARConnect's roadmap for implementing the Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. This section builds on the framework from Table 4 and includes a detailed and measurable implementation plan, including key performance indicators (KPIs), potential actions, and potential partners for each strategy. These measurable objectives directly impact and align with Arkansas' broader economic, workforce, educational, healthcare, and agricultural goals, which are defined in more detail in Section 5.4. ARConnect will provide technical assistance and awareness for potential programs outlined in these goals and measurable objectives. Additionally, ARConnect will evaluate and update this plan on an annual basis based upon awardee/participant reporting. ARConnect will facilitate online reporting mechanisms (both quantitative and qualitative data) to update and adjust plans as needed. Underperforming programs will receive recommendations for improvement. ARConnect will encourage all awardees/participants to participate in program evaluation from state colleges and universities, particularly graduate level public policy programs.

ARConnect already partners with numerous public, private, non-profit, and philanthropic organizations and is eager to work with additional partners to implement this plan. ARConnect convenes the ABLN to keep digital skills partners informed and to work to incorporate partners' existing activities into ARConnect's strategy. To ensure ARConnect takes advantage of existing assets across the state, the potential partners listed under each strategy correspond with the organizations, programs, and initiatives identified in the asset inventory in Section 4.1. **In addition to the organizations listed as potential partners, ARConnect is eager to work with all local and county officials, philanthropic organizations, and other institutions that support and engage with covered populations.**²⁶ ARConnect welcomes the opportunity to partner with a wide variety of stakeholders motivated to close the digital divide and enhance digital opportunity. Once this plan is finalized, ARConnect will share the final version with all stakeholders and encourage all partners interested in the various implementation activities outlined in Section 5 to participate in the ABLN.

Nearly all of the goals and strategies outlined in this section will impact members of all eight covered population groups, as well as Arkansans who do not fit into any of the covered population categories. While Section 4.2.8 outlines the differing barriers to opportunity for each covered population group, ARConnect found that many

²⁶ The entities listed as potential partners throughout this section are suggestions for future partnerships, but are not ARConnect's guaranteed partners for future activities. ARConnect has not made monetary, or other, commitments to any potential partners listed throughout this plan. ARConnect will partner with state agencies, state-based organizations, and other stakeholders under the direction of the Governor and the Department of Commerce and will comply with all state laws related to procurement and contracting for future activities outlined in this section.

Arkansans fit into multiple covered population categories. For example, more than half of Arkansans fall into the rural population category. As a result, residents across covered population groups are experiencing similar, consistent challenges when it comes to connectivity and digital skills.²⁷ The 32 focus groups that ARConnect conducted confirmed that there are not significant differences among these covered population groups that would require different goals and strategies to address the needs and barriers outlined throughout Section 4. As a result, this implementation plan was designed to include all Arkansans and provides a holistic strategy for the state to increase digital opportunity in all 75 counties by 2030.

5.2.1 Goal 1: Increase the Availability and Affordability of Internet Service in Arkansas

The largest barriers to digital opportunity that ARConnect identified throughout its statewide tour, focus group sessions, and in analyzing the ADSOS were lack of internet availability, lack of reliable broadband service, and high service costs. During focus groups, participants shared that this lack of access was preventing economic growth in their communities and limiting their access to education, healthcare, jobs, and more. People regularly said that they used mobile service to access the internet, and many said that internet service was too expensive to fit into their monthly budgets. Municipal employees expressed concerns about basic infrastructure – such as traffic lights and 911 dispatch centers – not being able to operate without reliable broadband service. This goal builds on these barriers and the infrastructure buildout plans outlined in the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposals.

Strategy 1.1: Connect 100% of broadband serviceable locations in Arkansas with access to reliable, high-speed internet and enhance broadband access at community anchor institutions across the state by December 31, 2028. Build out the state’s broadband infrastructure to support competition among providers, bring down service costs for consumers, and improve reliability.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objectives:**
 - **KPI:** Number homes and businesses with access to reliable, high-speed internet
 - **Baseline:** Approximately 160,000 BEAD-eligible locations before the BEAD challenge process
 - **Target:** 100% of homes and businesses by December 31, 2028

²⁷ For the purposes of Section 4.2.8, differences between covered population groups were identified by using variances of +5% or -5% of the survey dataset. However, the results among covered population groups do not reflect major differences from the survey dataset at-large, and conversations at focus groups made it clear that many individuals who belong to differing covered population groups experience similar barriers to digital opportunity. More information on the survey methodology is available in Appendix E.

KPI: Number of community anchor institutions with enhanced broadband access

- **Baseline:** Approximately 1,300 BEAD-eligible community anchor institutions before the BEAD-challenge process
- **Target:** 100% of community anchor institutions by December 31, 2028

● **Potential Actions:**

- Initiate and facilitate the state mapping challenge process to determine a list of eligible locations for federal broadband infrastructure funding, as outlined in the BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume 1.
- Launch Infrastructure Grant Application program, as outlined in the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan.
- Track and support grantees throughout the infrastructure implementation process, which will run through December 31, 2028.

● **Potential Partners:**

- ISPs and industry partners

Strategy 1.2: Continue to advertise and expand enrollment in the ACP by coordinating with state agency partners, community partners, and supporting FCC ACP Outreach Grant awardees serving Arkansas.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.

● **Measurable Objective:**

- **KPI:** Number of eligible state residents enrolled in the ACP
 - **Baseline:** 170,755 residents
 - **Near-term Target:** 25% increase in enrollment among eligible Arkansans
 - **Long-term Target:** 85% increase in enrollment among eligible Arkansans

● **Potential Actions:**

- In partnership with state-based partners and national non-profit organizations, implement a cohort strategy to further support digital opportunity and broadband affordability. The cohort will unite trusted stakeholders that have existing relationships with ACP-eligible households and equip them with tools to overcome barriers to ACP adoption.²⁸
 - ARConnect can use this cohort to share information on ACP through social media and in communities across Arkansas in locations such as local libraries, grocery stores, school newsletters, hospitals, homeless shelters, fire departments, government offices, and more.

²⁸ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

- Explore partnerships with other state agencies to include ACP enrollment information with sign-ups for other benefit programs, such as free and reduced lunch, SNAP, Medicaid, and TANF.
- Share ACP information with County Broadband Committees and the ABLN to distribute to local businesses, libraries, hospitals, schools, and more.
- Share ACP information with various organizations working with covered populations across the state.²⁹
- Host quarterly meetings with FCC ACP Outreach Grant awardees in Arkansas to track progress, help publicize in-person enrollment events, and ensure outreach is being done to all covered population groups in all regions of the state.
 - Where relevant, connect FCC ACP Outreach Grant awardees with County Broadband Committees in the areas where they are planning programming.
 - Encourage awardees to work directly with covered population groups in their target areas and, where possible, facilitate connections with organizations serving covered populations in their target areas.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - AARP Arkansas
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging
 - Arkansas Association of Community Action Agencies
 - Arkansas Black Mayors Association
 - Arkansas Community Colleges
 - Arkansas Connectivity Coalition
 - Arkansas Department of Corrections – Division of Community Corrections
 - Arkansas Department of Education
 - Arkansas Department of Human Services
 - Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs
 - Arkansas Digital Literacy Center
 - Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, including:
 - Arkansas Adult Education
 - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
 - Division of Services for the Blind
 - Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - Arkansas Economic Development Commission
 - Arkansas Farm Bureau
 - Arkansas Hospital Association
 - Arkansas K-12 public schools (various)

²⁹ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect’s planned partners.

- Arkansas Rural Health Partnership
- Arkansas Planning and Development Districts
 - Central Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - East Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District
 - Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District
 - Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - Western Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - White River Planning and Development District
- Arkansas State Library
- Arkansas United
- ARVAC
- Arkansas Veterans Association
- Boston Mountain Rural Health Center
- Camp Jack
- Communities Unlimited
- County Broadband Committees
- DecARcerate
- Digital Literacy Partners Working Group
- Disability Rights Arkansas
- EducationSuperHighway
- El Zócalo
- Forward Arkansas
- Heartland Forward
- Local Workforce Development Boards
 - Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - City of Little Rock Local Workforce Development Board
 - Eastern Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - North Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Northeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Southeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Southwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - West Central Local Workforce Development Board
 - Western Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- Marshallese Education Initiative
- Peace, Love, Understanding, Mercy (PLUM)
- River Valley Adult Learning Alliance

- University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service
- Various nonprofits and community partners
- Winrock International

Strategy 1.3: Explore partnerships with municipal housing authorities and nonprofit developers of affordable housing to promote affordable at-home internet service at multi-unit dwellings.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of partnerships developed
 - **Baseline:** 115 established partnerships: 50 county broadband committees, 50 ISPs (ARC Grant awardees), 15 Arkansas Connectivity Coalition members
 - **Near-term Target:** 130 partnerships by December 31, 2028
 - **Long-term Target:** 200 partnerships by December 31, 2030
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Meet with municipal partners across the state to learn more about their local housing authorities and gauge interest in a partnership with ARConnect.
 - Engage partners that work closely with municipalities, such as the Arkansas Association of Counties and Arkansas Municipal League, where relevant.
 - Meet with nonprofit developers of affordable housing across the state to learn more about their work and gauge interest in a partnership with ARConnect.
 - Work with select municipalities and nonprofit developers of affordable housing to develop a pilot program that would include at-home internet service in affordable housing units.
 - Convene other housing partners, such as the Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas, Arkansas Fair Housing Commission, and the Metropolitan Housing Alliance, to get additional feedback on the draft pilot program.
 - As necessary, engage members of the Arkansas General Assembly throughout the process.
 - Implement the pilot program in select municipalities.
 - After two years, evaluate program effectiveness and develop best practices that can be adopted by other municipalities.
 - Share best practices from the pilot program with other municipalities.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas

- Arkansas Association of Counties
- Arkansas Fair Housing Commission
- Arkansas Municipal League
- Members of the Arkansas General Assembly
- Metropolitan Housing Alliance

Strategy 1.4: Using funds provided by the federal DEA allocation through the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, create a temporary, community mini grant program to support the expansion of free Wi-Fi access at organizations and institutions that serve covered populations, including community centers, senior centers, schools, veteran centers, churches, and libraries, and awareness of Wi-Fi access at those organizations. This mini grant program and funding are separate from the state’s BEAD implementation plan, which already includes expanding access at anchor institutions.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Prioritizing areas with lower broadband access, the number of locations awarded to expand access to free Wi-Fi
 - **Near-Term Target:** 20 locations by December 31, 2026.³⁰
 - **Long-Term Target:** 100 locations by December 31, 2028.³¹
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Develop guidelines, requirements, and application for community mini grant program, including minimum/maximum award amounts, eligibility criteria, application questions, reporting requirements, and competitive scoring rubric.
 - Specify that mini grants can be used to expand free Wi-Fi access at non-profit organizations, community organizations, and for institutions that serve covered populations.
 - Post guidelines on ARConnect website and share via email with the ABLN, ARConnect’s list of community partners, and community anchor institutions across the state.
 - To further publicize the grant program, write and publish a press release with a program description, types of projects the grants can fund, details on eligibility, where the application can be found, and application due dates.

³⁰ For the purposes of this measurable objective, a location constitutes a physical space that serves members of one or more covered populations, including but not limited to: community centers, senior centers, schools, veteran centers, churches, and libraries.

³¹ See footnote above for clarification on what constitutes a location for the purpose of this measurable objective.

- Monitor the first round of mini grant awards and collect information from awardees on progress made.
- Facilitate additional rounds of mini grant awards until all funds allocated to the program have been used.

- **Potential Partners:**

- ABLN
- Arkansas Community Foundation
- Arkansas Connectivity Coalition
- Arkansas Impact Philanthropy
- Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation
- Various nonprofits and community partners

5.2.2 Goal 2: Improve Arkansans' Digital Skills by Implementing Digital Skills Training Opportunities for All Interested Arkansans

ARConnect estimates that nearly 274,000 Arkansans in the working age bracket of 18-64 may lack basic digital skills. Additionally, there are thousands of aging individuals and members of other covered population groups who do not have the skills or confidence necessary to navigate the internet, a mobile phone, or other new technologies. During focus groups, participants regularly expressed an interest in digital skills training opportunities that can equip them with these kinds of skills. This goal builds on findings from the ADSOS to leverage institutions and organizations that Arkansans already trust – like libraries, community centers, churches, and local non-profit organizations – to host these kinds of trainings and expand local programs that are already offering digital skills training opportunities. This goal is also designed so that as curricula and courses are developed, they are made accessible to members of all covered population groups and advance the state's goals around healthcare, agriculture, small business, and education.

Strategy 2.1: Invest in a core digital skills curriculum that can be adopted across all state libraries and other community anchor institution partners. Make this curriculum available to other entities that service covered populations, including senior centers, veteran centers, schools, correctional facilities, community centers, churches, and more. Customize the curriculum to include the following considerations:

- A. Offer opportunities for Arkansans to access digital skills training in languages other than English.
- B. Make digital skills training opportunities available outside of traditional business hours.
- C. Provide in-person training opportunities with experts who can answer questions and provide more tailored support.³²
- D. Include basic internet safety and cybersecurity education in core digital skills curriculum.

³² To make this a reality, ARConnect will work with workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

- E. Partner with organizations serving covered populations to customize digital skill trainings so they are accessible for all intended audiences, such as audio/visual modifications.³³
 - F. Ensure all training programs are free for any interested Arkansan.
- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
 - **Measurable Objectives:**
 - **KPI:** Number of people who participate in or graduate from core digital skills training programs as tracked by ARConnect or tracked and reported to ARConnect by participating entities administering the digital skills curriculum
 - **Near-term Target:** 10,000 people by December 31, 2027
 - **Long-term Target:** 50,000 people by December 31, 2030
 - **KPI:** Number of libraries that adopt core digital skills training programs
 - **Near-term Target:** 30 libraries by December 31, 2026
 - **Long-term Target:** 100 libraries by December 31, 2030
 - **KPI:** Number of additional community anchor institutions and community partners that adopt core digital skills training programs
 - **Near-term Target:** 5 partners by December 31, 2026
 - **Long-term Target:** 15 partners December 31, 2030
 - **KPI:** Percentage of participants who achieve basic digital skills after completing core digital skills training program
 - **Near-term Target:** 60% of participants
 - **Long-term Target:** 90% of participants
 - **Potential Actions:**
 - Survey existing digital skills training services to identify the service that has the best curriculum for the state to use as a guide for its core digital skills training program.
 - Contract with the identified digital skills training curriculum to make trainings available at all interested public libraries in Arkansas in partnership with the Arkansas State Library. Launch digital skills training courses at all interested public library locations.
 - Identify additional community anchor institutions, community groups, and non-profit partners that work with covered population groups and are interested in adopting the digital skills training as

³³This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect’s planned partners.

part of their program offerings. Launch digital skills training courses in partnership with additional community organizations.³⁴

- Partner with at least one group that serves each covered population to make core digital skills training programs available at locations that these covered populations frequent, aside from public libraries.
 - Launch an online core digital skills training program for any interested Arkansan to complete at home or on their own time.
 - Work with the higher education institutions, community partners, organizations serving covered populations, and state agency partners to create add-on programming needs to fill gaps in core digital skills training.³⁵
 - Work with the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General and Arkansas Department of Public Safety to synthesize current state programs related to internet safety and cybersecurity and integrate into the digital skills training program. As necessary, create additional educational materials to include information on new initiatives and state laws, such as the Social Media Safety Act. In these materials, emphasize how online content impacts both the physical and mental health of children and other vulnerable populations.
 - Recruit, hire, and train individuals who can provide in-person assistance for Arkansans completing digital skills training, including answering questions, providing training in languages other than English, and offering training outside of normal business hours.³⁶
 - Create and implement self-assessments for the core digital skills training course to track and measure participant progress, including successful achievement of basic digital skills.
 - Ensure ARConnect and other participating entities that administer digital skills courses track and report the number of participants and graduates of the program to ARConnect for program evaluation.
 - Arrange for wrap-around services such as meals and childcare.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - AARP Arkansas
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging
 - Arkansas Association of Community Action Agencies
 - Arkansas Black Mayors Association
 - Arkansas Community Colleges
 - Arkansas Connectivity Coalition

³⁴ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

³⁵ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

³⁶ Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned workforce partners for this initiative.

- Arkansas Department of Corrections
- Arkansas Department of Corrections – Division of Community Corrections
- Arkansas Department of Education
- Arkansas Department of Human Services
- Arkansas Department of Public Safety
- Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs
- Arkansas Digital Literacy Center
- Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, including:
 - Arkansas Adult Education
 - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
 - Division of Services for the Blind
 - Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Arkansas Farm Bureau
- Arkansas Hospital Association
- Arkansas K-12 public schools (various)
- Arkansas Office of Skills Development
- Arkansas Planning and Development Districts
 - Central Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - East Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District
 - Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District
 - Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - Western Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - White River Planning and Development District
- Arkansas State Library
- Arkansas United
- Arkansas Veterans Association
- Camp Jack
- Communities Unlimited
- DecARcerate
- Digital Literacy Partners Working Group
- Disability Rights Arkansas
- El Zócalo
- Forward Arkansas
- Goodwill Industries of Arkansas
- Local Workforce Development Boards
 - Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - City of Little Rock Local Workforce Development Board

- Eastern Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- North Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- Northeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- Southeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- Southwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- West Central Local Workforce Development Board
- Western Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
- Marshallese Education Initiative
- National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)
- Office of the Arkansas Attorney General
- River Valley Adult Learning Alliance
- University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service
- Various nonprofits and community partners
- Winrock International

Strategy 2.2: Using funds provided by the federal DEA allocation through the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, create a temporary, community mini grant program to support the expansion of existing digital skills programs at organizations and institutions that serve covered populations, including community centers, correctional facilities, senior centers, schools, veteran centers, churches, and libraries, and awareness of digital skills programs at those organizations.³⁷

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of people who participate in or graduate from existing digital skills training programs as tracked by ARConnect or tracked and reported to ARConnect by participating entities administering the digital skills training
 - **Near-term Target:** 5,000 people by December 31, 2027
 - **Long-term Target:** 25,000 people by December 31, 2030
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Develop guidelines, requirements, and application for community mini grant program, including minimum/maximum award amounts, eligibility criteria, application questions, reporting requirements, and competitive scoring rubric.

³⁷ This program may be coordinated and developed in conjunction with the program described in Strategy 1.5. An overview of how these strategies will work together to create one program that supports affordability, digital skills training, and community engagement is accounted for in Strategy 5.1.

- Specify that mini grants can be used to expand existing digital skills programs at organizations and institutions that serve covered populations.
 - Post applications on the ARConnect website and share via email with the ABLN, ARConnect’s list of community partners, and community anchor institutions across the state.³⁸
 - To further publicize the grant program, write and publish a press release with a program description, types of projects the grants can fund, details on eligibility, where the application can be found, and application due dates.
 - Monitor the first round of mini grant awards and collect information from awardees on progress made.
 - Facilitate additional rounds of mini grant awards until all funds allocated to the program have been used.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas Community Foundation
 - Arkansas Connectivity Coalition
 - Arkansas Impact Philanthropy
 - Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation
 - Various nonprofits and community partners

Strategy 2.3: Work with industry partners to assess the need for an agriculture-specific digital skills curriculum focused on crop and field mapping, inventory management, and other key industry-specific needs enhanced by precision agriculture methods and technology.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objectives:**
 - **KPI:** Complete needs assessment for agriculture-specific digital skills training program
 - **Near-term Target:** Communicate with 15 industry partners by December 31, 2028
 - **Long-term Target:** Communicate with 30 industry partners by December 31, 2030
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Convene key agricultural partners, such as the Arkansas Department of Agriculture and Arkansas Farm Bureau, to determine what industry-specific skills should be included in the agriculture-specific digital skills curriculum.

³⁸ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect’s planned partners.

- Work with the University of Arkansas system, community partners, organizations serving covered populations, and state agency partners to create add-on programming specific to the key agriculture digital skills identified by industry.³⁹
 - Partner with select public libraries and community anchor institutions in regions of the state with high concentrations of individuals working in the agriculture sector.
 - Launch the new agriculture-specific digital skills curriculum online for any interested Arkansan to complete at home or on their own time.
 - Advertise new agriculture-specific digital skills training with the ABLN, County Broadband Committees, and other community partners.
 - Implement self-assessments for the agriculture digital skills course to track and measure participant progress, including achievement of specialized digital skills.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas Department of Agriculture
 - Arkansas Digital Literacy Center
 - Arkansas Farm Bureau
 - Digital Literacy Partners Working Group
 - NDIA
 - University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service

Strategy 2.4: Explore the creation of specialized digital skills curricula for digital healthcare and small business applications. The digital curriculum would show patients how to use various online healthcare portals, join a telehealth appointment, message their doctor online, and request prescriptions electronically.⁴⁰ The small business curriculum would walk entrepreneurs through useful digital skills such as how to create a website, utilize social media to promote a business, keep digital records, register a new business with the state, and more.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objectives:**
 - **KPI:** Number of people who participate in healthcare-specific digital skills training
 - **Near-term Target:** 2,500 people by December 31, 2027

³⁹ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations, and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

⁴⁰ ARConnect would develop resources specific to accessing healthcare through the VA for veterans to close the gap identified in Section 4.2.8.

- **Long-term Target:** 5,000 people by December 31, 2028
- **KPI:** Percentage of participants who achieve specialized digital skills after completing healthcare-specific digital skills training
 - **Near-term Target:** 60% of participants
 - **Long-term Target:** 90% of participants
- **KPI:** Number of people who participate in small business-specific digital skills training
 - **Near-term Target:** 1,000 people by December 31, 2026
 - **Long-term Target:** 2,000 people by December 31, 2028
- **KPI:** Percentage of participants who achieve specialized digital skills after completing small business-specific digital skills training
 - **Near-term Target:** 60% of participants
 - **Long-term Target:** 90% of participants
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Convene key healthcare partners, such as the Arkansas Department of Health, UAMS, the Arkansas Hospital Association, and the Arkansas Health Care Association, to determine what industry-specific skills should be included in the healthcare-specific digital skills curriculum.⁴¹
 - Convene key business partners, such as the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Arkansas Secretary of State, to determine what industry-specific skills should be included in the small business-specific digital skills curriculum.
 - Work with higher education institutions, community partners, organizations serving covered populations, and state agency partners to create add-on programming specific to the key healthcare and small business-specific digital skills identified by industry partners.
 - Partner with select public libraries and community anchor institutions in rural regions of the state, where hospital access is most limited, to launch the digital healthcare course for patients.
 - Partner with organizations such as the Arkansas Planning and Development Districts and local Workforce Development Boards to launch the small business course for interested entrepreneurs.
 - Launch the new healthcare and small business-specific digital skills curricula online for any interested Arkansan to complete at home or on their own time.
 - Advertise new healthcare and small business-specific digital skills courses with the ABLN, County Broadband Committees, and other community partners.

⁴¹ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations, and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

- Implement self-assessments to track and measure participant progress, including achievement of specialized digital skills.

- **Potential Partners:**
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
 - Arkansas Department of Commerce
 - Arkansas Department of Health
 - Arkansas Digital Literacy Center
 - Arkansas Health Care Association
 - Arkansas Hospital Association
 - Arkansas Planning and Development Districts
 - Central Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - East Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District
 - Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District
 - Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - Western Arkansas Planning and Development District
 - White River Planning and Development District
 - Arkansas Secretary of State
 - Digital Literacy Partners Working Group
 - Local Workforce Development Boards
 - Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - City of Little Rock Local Workforce Development Board
 - Eastern Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - North Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Northeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Southeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Southwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - West Central Local Workforce Development Board
 - Western Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - NDIA

5.2.3 Goal 3: Leverage Existing State Agencies, Programs, and Organizations to Keep Arkansans Connected, Safe, and Healthy, and Prioritize Accessibility

During focus groups, participants regularly shared that they do not have all the skills or knowledge to take advantage of existing online resources, including state programs and informational content. As internet access

and technology become more prevalent in the state throughout the implementation of this project and the state's infrastructure-focused BEAD plan, equipping Arkansans with information about how to access government services and programs is a top priority for ARConnect. This goal paves a way forward for the state to educate residents, as well as make online government programs accessible for all covered populations.

Strategy 3.1: Coordinate with state agencies and other partners to highlight existing state programs or encourage the development of novel programs to train residents on how to use online government programs available to them, such as benefit programs like SNAP, access to quality child-care and pre-K, in-home care for seniors, requesting a voter registration application, and more.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of Arkansans trained on how to use online state-managed programs
 - **Near-term Target:** 2,500 people by December 31, 2027
 - **Long-term Target:** 10,000 people by June 30, 2029
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Develop a comprehensive list of online state programs available to Arkansans from various state agencies, including but not limited to the Arkansas Department of Corrections, Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Health, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, and Arkansas Secretary of State.
 - As ARC grant projects are completed, host events within 60 days of service being activated and invite other state agencies to instruct and assist residents with accessing various online tools and information.
 - After the challenge process described in the BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 1 plan has been completed, develop a schedule to visit any counties where there are not any anticipated new ARC grant construction projects.
 - Identify individuals from key agency partners – including the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Human Services, and Arkansas Secretary of State – that can help ARConnect with community outreach regarding online tools.
 - Create a presentation that can be adopted for each county that ARConnect visits to share these materials. If relevant, develop handouts and printed materials to share with attendees about the online benefits described during the presentation.
 - Schedule and coordinate visits with all 75 counties via the ABLN and County Broadband Committees.

- Create a working group of agency and private sector partners that serve all covered populations and focus on accessibility concerns. Use this working group to evaluate ways in which the state could develop online programs and make information more accessible in a variety of ways, such as making materials available in different languages, updating translations, optimizing websites for audio/visual improvements, and more.
- Develop public-private partnerships with a variety of community partners to make the identified updates to Arkansas' online government programs and information.

● **Potential Partners:**

- ABLN
- Arkansas Department of Commerce
- Arkansas Department of Corrections
- Arkansas Department of Education
- Arkansas Department of Health
- Arkansas Department of Human Services
- Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs
- Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, including:
 - Arkansas Adult Education
 - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
 - Division of Services for the Blind
 - Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Arkansas Judiciary – Office of Court Interpreter Services
- Arkansas Secretary of State
- Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Arkansas School for the Deaf
- Arkansas Support Network
- Arkansas United
- County Broadband Committees
- Disability Rights Arkansas
- Marshallese Education Initiative
- Various nonprofits and community partners

5.2.4 Goal 4: Increase Access to Affordable Digital Devices

In addition to high service costs, many focus group participants and ADSOS respondents indicated that the high cost of digital devices, including desktop computers, laptop computers, and tablets, is another barrier to accessing the internet at home. Arkansans regularly told ARConnect that they can only afford a mobile device – which limits what they can do online – or that they would not be able to replace their existing computers if they stopped working. Many individuals from covered populations also reported having old computers and tablets that likely will not be functional in only a few years. There is currently no widespread device refurbishment and

distribution program in Arkansas, and this goal outlines strategies and next steps to create such a program utilizing federal DEA funding to increase access to low-cost and free devices for the people who need them.

Strategy 4.1: In partnership with state-based partners and national non-profit organizations, establish a device campaign with corporate, philanthropic, and workforce partners across the state, encouraging device donation for refurbishment and redistribution to support access to reliable digital devices.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objectives:**
 - **KPI:** Number of business partner participants in affordable device campaign
 - **Near-term Target:** 5 businesses by December 31, 2026
 - **Long-term Target:** 10 businesses by December 31, 2030
 - **KPI:** Number of devices donated from businesses, state agency partners, and other institutions across the state
 - **Near-term Target:** 30,000 devices by June 30, 2027
 - **Long-term Target:** 75,000 devices by December 31, 2030
 - **KPI:** Percentage of donated devices successfully refurbished
 - **Near-term Target:** 75% of devices
 - **Long-term Target:** 90% of devices
- **Potential Actions:**
 - ARConnect did not identify any in-state partners currently working to refurbish, collect, or distribute free/low-cost devices. To address this gap, explore working with national partners already engaged in device access work to learn more about what a sustainable device refurbishment and distribution program requires and what kinds of partners can be leveraged to make such a program work.⁴²
 - Create a presentation highlighting the need for affordable, reliable devices in Arkansas. Leverage statistics from the ADSOS and anecdotes from focus groups to make the case that device access is a key part of enhancing digital opportunity.
 - Set up meetings with large companies headquartered in Arkansas to present the findings mentioned above and make the case for a digital device refurbishment program. Gauge corporate interest in working with ARConnect to donate devices that can be refurbished.

⁴² This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

- Engage philanthropic organizations to secure additional support for a large-scale device access project.
- Work with workforce development partners to determine organizations that can help with physical device refurbishment. Leverage learnings from national partners and other state broadband offices to provide workforce partners with best practices and tangible next steps.⁴³
- Continue outreach and work with corporate and philanthropic partners across the state to secure devices that can be refurbished, raise funds to purchase new digital devices for members of covered populations who cannot afford them, and support the ongoing activities associated with running this program.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - Arkansas Community Foundation
 - Arkansas Department of Commerce
 - Arkansas Economic Development Commission
 - Arkansas Impact Philanthropy
 - Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
 - Local Workforce Development Boards
 - Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - City of Little Rock Local Workforce Development Board
 - Eastern Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - North Central Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Northeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Southeast Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Southwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - West Central Local Workforce Development Board
 - Western Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board
 - Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

Given that there are no identified technical assistance assets within the state to help with this strategy, AR Connect will identify and survey relevant out of state organizations in the device refurbishment space that could offer insight and guidance on best practices for device refurbishment.

ARConnect will work to ensure that efforts and all device efforts happening at the local level through the counties are communicated and incorporated into the states network. The ABLN exists to ensure local efforts are communicated to ARConnect and ARConnect will continue to use the ABLN as a space to

⁴³ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

stay informed about what counties and regions are doing and adjust the state's plan around activities at the local level.

Strategy 4.2: Foster programs that distribute low-cost and/or free devices to those included in covered populations across the state.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of free or low-cost devices (combination of free and refurbished) that meet users' needs distributed to members of covered populations
 - **Near-term Target:** 20,000 devices
 - **Long-term Target:** 65,000 devices
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Create an inventory management system for all refurbished devices to keep track of how many units are available to be distributed at any given time.
 - Partner with community anchor institutions, state agencies and local community action organizations to host device distribution days across the state.⁴⁴
 - Ahead of events, work with the ABLN, County Broadband Committees, and organizations serving covered populations to advertise these events and determine the kinds of devices that expected attendees need.
 - Write and publish press releases to publicize these events.
 - Work with local community action organizations to determine other items that covered populations may need to take full advantage of their devices, such as headphones, power/connecting cables, and cybersecurity software. Communicate these needs to the philanthropic community across the state and explore ways to provide these items alongside digital devices to covered populations.
 - Create a short, anonymous demographic survey to track distributions. At device distribution events, ask individuals receiving digital devices to fill out the survey before they leave with a computer or tablet.
 - Demographic questions on the survey will correspond to the eight covered population groups ARConnect is serving throughout implementation of the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan.

⁴⁴ This list of partners will include workforce and community organizations and institutions of higher learning. Please see the Potential Partners list for a more detailed overview of ARConnect's planned partners.

- The survey will also note what kind of digital device the individual received and if the device was free to them or they paid a small sum for the device.

- **Potential Partners:**

- ABLN
- Arkansas Adult Education
- Arkansas Department of Commerce
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission
- Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
- Arkansas State Library
- County Broadband Committees
- Various local community action agencies
- Various nonprofits and community partners

Strategy 4.3: To incentivize participation in digital skills training opportunities, tie affordable device distribution to completion of one or more digital skills training courses.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.

- **Measurable Objective:**

- **KPI:** Percentage of free and low-cost devices distributed by ARConnect to individuals who have completed at least one digital skills training course
 - **Near-term Target:** 35% of all devices
 - **Long-term Target:** 50% of all devices

- **Potential Actions:**

- Create an inventory management system for all refurbished devices to keep track of how many units are available to be distributed at any given time.
- Develop informational collateral on free and low-cost device options that digital skills training programs can share with individuals at the end of each course they complete.
- Explore methods to give priority for device distribution to individuals who have completed one or more digital skills training courses certified by ARConnect.
- Create a short, anonymous demographic survey to track distributions. At device distribution events, ask individuals receiving digital devices to fill out the survey before they leave with a computer or tablet.
 - In addition to the considerations described in Strategy 5.2, the survey will include a field that asks if the individual receiving a device has completed an ARConnect-certified digital

skills course to help further track distributions and support future reporting.

- **Potential Partners:**

- Arkansas Department of Commerce
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission
- Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
- Arkansas State Library
- Various non-profits and community partners

5.2.5 Goal 5: Engage All Interested Arkansans and Community Partners in Digital Opportunity Efforts

To develop this plan, ARConnect conducted extensive community engagement activities: the office traveled to all 75 counties in Arkansas, engaged with members of all eight covered populations, met with industry partners, talked with community organizations, and held listening sessions with other Arkansans passionate about closing the digital divide across the state. Going forward into the implementation phase of this project, ARConnect intends to continue prioritizing this kind of community engagement. This goal outlines a path forward for ARConnect to engage and build trust with covered populations and communities across Arkansas, share relevant information with interested stakeholders, and set the state up for success as it navigates the implementation phase of this project. It also outlines ways for ARConnect to support work that community partners are already doing and keep relevant stakeholders updated on project activities. Above all, this goal affirms that digital opportunity includes every Arkansan.

Strategy 5.1: Continue to regularly convene the ABLN and expand ARConnect’s outreach to broadband stakeholders throughout Arkansas and integrate new partners into the ABLN throughout the implementation of DEA and BEAD. Within the ABLN, create a new Digital Skills and Opportunity Network. This subgroup of stakeholders can work with ARConnect to serve as a collaborative body for digital skills needs assessments, strategy, outreach, and program implementation. Use the ABLN to communicate all relevant information to County Broadband Committees and other interested stakeholders.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objectives:**
 - **KPI:** Number of ABLN meetings hosted
 - **Near-term Target:** 1 meeting per month
 - **Long-term Target:** 2 meetings per month
 - **KPI:** Number of in-person ABLN meetings
 - **Near-term Target:** 1 meeting per year

- **Long-term Target:** 2 meetings per year
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of partners added to ABLN.
 - **Near-term Target:** 10 partners by December 31, 2026
 - **Long-term Target:** 30 partners by December 31, 2030
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Continue to regularly convene the ABLN.
 - In addition to virtual meetings, schedule and facilitate occasional in-person meetings for members of the ABLN to share best practices and build relationships with other community level stakeholders.
 - Work with Heartland Forward, the organization that manages and convenes the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition, to integrate the Coalition into the ABLN and create the new Digital Skills and Opportunity Network. The Digital Skills and Opportunity Network will be a subgroup of the existing ABLN that will include organizations and individuals already working on digital opportunity efforts – including, but not limited to, members of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition – and be convened by ARConnect rather than a third-party organization. This will streamline the state’s stakeholder engagement processes going forward.⁴⁵
 - Continue to invite all County Broadband Committees to participate in the ABLN.
 - Extend invitations for interested individuals and organizations to join the Digital Skills and Opportunity Network as it is created.
 - Develop a schedule for ARConnect to travel to communities across Arkansas for continued engagement with County Broadband Committees, municipal governments, non-profit and industry partners, and engaged citizens.
 - Host public meetings and release written updates to update stakeholders on progress with implementing the Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan and BEAD plan.
 - As more information is made available from NTIA, host information sessions about the competitive federal Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, which state-based organizations will be eligible to apply for to fund their own digital skills projects to support ARConnect’s implementation of the Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas Community Foundation
 - Arkansas Connectivity Coalition
 - Arkansas Impact Philanthropy
 - County Broadband Committees

⁴⁵ For clarification, there is no monetary commitment for working with Heartland Forward or ARConnect on this action.

- Digital Literacy Partners Working Group
- Heartland Forward
- Individual community members, including members of all covered population groups
- Office of the Governor
- Members of the Arkansas General Assembly
- Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation
- Various nonprofits and community partners
- ISPs and industry partners

Strategy 5.2: Publicize success stories of new connectivity and where digital skills training is making an impact across the state. Collect community impact stories as access becomes more affordable and reliable through infrastructure build-outs.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of community success stories published annually
 - **Near-term Target:** 5 stories per year
 - **Long-term Target:** 10 stories per year
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Create a portal that ABLN members, County Broadband Committees, ISPs, industry partners, and citizens can use to share broadband success stories with ARConnect. Check the portal for new updates at least monthly and create a running archive of positive broadband news in Arkansas.
 - In the portal, ask individuals who submit success stories to provide photos, quotes that can be used in news releases, and contact information so ARConnect can reach out with additional questions.
 - When ARConnect travels across the state for various community engagement opportunities, take notes on standout stories and add those to the archive of positive broadband news.
 - As relevant, share highlights from the portal and ARConnect's notes in ARConnect's Weekly Review email newsletters, annual project reports, and on ARConnect's social media accounts.
 - Work with the Arkansas Department of Commerce's Marketing and Communications team to share highlight stories with reporters at news publications across the state.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - Arkansas Department of Commerce
 - ABLN
 - County Broadband Committees

- Individual community members, including members of all covered population groups
- ISPs and industry partners

Strategy 5.3: Leverage ARConnect’s existing partnership with AmeriCorps’ Lead for America - American Connection Corps program and federal DEA funding to plan and budget for a digital navigator to be housed in the ARConnect office for the duration of implementation to support this project. ARConnect currently has an American Connection Corps fellow on staff and this strategy will further the office’s goal to continue the partnership going forward.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of months without an American Connection Corps fellow in ARConnect office through 2030
 - **Near-term Target:** 2 months per year
 - **Long-term Target:** 0 months per year
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Meet with Lead for America’s American Connection Corps team at least bi-annually to review requirements and resource availability.
 - Conduct interviews with potential new fellows to determine the best candidate to support ARConnect activities.
 - Work with Lead for America and the Arkansas Department of Commerce to determine all necessary onboarding processes for the new fellow each time there is personnel turnover.
 - Create and update training materials for the new fellow each time there is personnel turnover.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - Arkansas Department of Commerce
 - AmeriCorps’ Lead for America – American Connection Corps

Strategy 5.4: Create and regularly update a digital resource guide for members of the public by reviewing and updating the digital opportunity asset inventory annually as new programs and initiatives are built out.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objectives:**

- **KPI:** Number of updates made to asset inventory
 - **Target:** 1 update per year

- **KPI:** Number of digital resource guides distributed to community anchor institutions, agency partners, and municipal governments
 - **Near-term Target:** 50 guides distributed by December 30, 2025
 - **Long-term Target:** 200 guides distributed by December 31, 2030

- **Potential Actions:**
 - Update the digital opportunity asset inventory at least annually to catalog all new programs, organizations, and initiatives related to closing the digital divide.
 - Develop a public-facing interactive version of the asset inventory that Arkansans can use to connect with community partners, take advantage of public Wi-Fi and computer access, find digital skills training programs, and more.
 - Create a downloadable and printable version of the interactive resource guide that can be distributed to libraries, hospitals, community colleges, state agency partners, municipal governments, and other anchor institutions.
 - Translate the interactive and printable asset inventories into additional languages so they are an accessible resource for individuals who do not primarily speak English.

- **Potential Partners:**
 - ABLN
 - Arkansas Association of Counties
 - Arkansas State Library
 - Arkansas Department of Education
 - Arkansas Department of Health
 - Arkansas Department of Human Services
 - Arkansas Hospital Association
 - Arkansas Municipal League
 - Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team

Strategy 5.5: Ensure ARConnect applies for subsequent rounds of federal DEA and BEAD funding and engage with communities throughout the implementation process for both programs.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.

- **Measurable Objective:**

- **KPI:** Percentage of grant applications for federal broadband funding submitted by posted due date
 - **Target:** 100% of applications
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Hire a Digital Opportunity Manager.
 - Develop internal procedures to ensure individuals responsible for writing and submitting applications have appropriate bandwidth and time to complete all necessary work.
 - As questions arise or when ARConnect could benefit from outside opinions, meet and work closely with members of the Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team who helped develop the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - Arkansas Department of Commerce
 - Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team

Strategy 5.6: Facilitate education with ISPs to improve customer service and satisfaction when Arkansans have questions about their at-home internet plans. Use this time to share best practices and brainstorm strategies to address consumer frustrations with long wait times during calls, difficulties with accessibility for non-English speakers, and information around service pricing and fees.

- **Covered Populations Impacted:** Covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with language barriers, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals living in rural areas.
- **Measurable Objective:**
 - **KPI:** Number of ISPs that participate in ARConnect customer service education programming
 - **Near-term Target:** 20% of ISPs by December 31, 2025
 - **Long-term Target:** 100% ISPs by December 31, 2030
- **Potential Actions:**
 - Consolidate consumer feedback from focus groups and the ADSOS about interactions with ISPs to share with providers during sessions.
 - Create meeting agendas to ensure education sessions address multiple topics and share with all ISPs so they understand the motive behind this programming is to help them better serve their customers across the state. Encourage ISPs to come prepared with best practices they have implemented and questions for the group about areas where they would like to improve their offerings.
 - Schedule and facilitate multiple education sessions. Encourage interactive discussions among ISPs. ARConnect can act as a facilitator and help partners think through ideas.

- Where possible, offer in-person meeting opportunities to further encourage collaboration and discussion among providers.
- After multiple ISPs have participated in customer service education programming, consolidate takeaways and action items. Follow up with partners at least bi-annually to monitor progress on action items and, when helpful, reconvene meetings to work through challenges, share successes, and track progress by industry partners as a whole.
- **Potential Partners:**
 - ISPs and industry partners

5.3 Integrating Local Plans into the State Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan

The City of Fayetteville’s local plan did not include actionable next steps that need to be integrated into this project. With that in mind, ARConnect will continue to engage closely with communities across the state via the ABLN and the new County Broadband Committee structure that was recently implemented.

No local plans were brought to the state’s attention during the public comment period. However, in the future, a key function of the ARConnect convened ABLN will be to engage with municipalities and regions as they undertake local planning efforts.

5.4 Connecting the Plan to Existing Statewide Goals and Priorities

Executing on Governor Sanders’ vision for state government to be efficient and consumer-focused, and to keep all broadband-related activities centralized, ARConnect will serve as the sole administrative entity responsible for both the DEA and BEAD planning grants and documents, ensuring the alignment of both plans. The office also recognizes that alignment with other stakeholders and existing state priorities is critical for the efficient and effective execution of the overall vision and mission of broadband access, affordability, and digital skills and opportunity.

Achieving Arkansas’ vision to eliminate the digital divide and enhance broadband connectivity and digital opportunity for all Arkansans is vital. It will support and advance a number of the state’s broader existing and planned efforts related to bold educational reform, healthcare, small business, and agriculture, as described below.

- **Agriculture:** Just as other sectors of the economy continue to learn, embrace, and utilize technology to access new markets and gain production efficiencies, Arkansas’ agriculture producers must be equipped with internet connectivity and digital tools to capture new opportunities and strengthen Arkansas’ position as a global leader in agriculture. The state’s goal of universal broadband access and eliminating the digital divide in rural agricultural areas will support the Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s mission

of keeping farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets and allow industry to adopt key precision agriculture technologies.

- **Education and the LEARNS Initiative:** Governor Sanders' priority to ensure universal broadband access, resulting in enhanced educational opportunities and choices for students and their families, aligns directly with the Arkansas LEARNS initiative. The LEARNS initiative emphasizes the need for all Arkansas public schools to prepare students for the demands of today's workforce and explicitly mentions the need for reliable broadband access to support opportunities for educational and career advancement. Additionally, the LEARNS Initiative specifies that beginning in the 2026-27 school year, students will be required to complete 75 hours of community service to graduate. This is a state priority related to civic and social engagement on top of a priority related to education, and ARConnect intends to use the community service framework developed by the LEARNS Initiative to support the development of a pipeline for digital skills trainers and future American Connection Corps members in the state.
- **Healthcare:** Enabling greater positive impact to health outcomes for all Arkansans using telehealth solutions requires intentional efforts to ensure that all communities and individuals have access to telehealth technologies and the digital skills and support to use them. For many, telehealth may be the key to making healthcare more accessible and more affordable. Providing for universal broadband access and affordable, reliable high-speed internet will support the state's health outcome goals.
- **Small Business:** Governor Sanders' vision to bolster Arkansas' economy and develop a 21st-century workforce is largely dependent on and will be advanced by increased access to broadband. Tools and information needed to develop professional skills, discover job opportunities, and conduct business are increasingly located online. As such, broadband access and digital skills are a vital component of a thriving economy and workforce. The state's goal of universal broadband access and eliminating the digital divide will bolster Arkansas' short- and long-term economic and workforce development plans.

Above all, enhancing digital opportunity will advance education, healthcare, small business, and agriculture by providing resources to all Arkansans regardless of where they live or if they are a member of a covered population group. ARConnect's plan will make it possible for all individuals to access online education, meet with specialists via telehealth, connect with a wider customer base online, and leverage technology to make farming more efficient. The state's economy will be stronger because of increased broadband access, and all Arkansans will benefit from these investments.

Table 5: Alignment of State Agency Plans with Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan Goals⁴⁶

State Agency	Relevant Reports	Related Components	Aligned Goals
Arkansas Department of Agriculture	Arkansas Agriculture Department Strategic Plan (FY 2018 – FY 2019)	Leverage technology in the agricultural sector, improve communication with constituents across the state	Goal 1, Goal 2
Arkansas Department of Corrections	Arkansas Division of Correction Strategic Plan (2022 – 2023)	Provide constructive correctional opportunities that will help inmates with reentry into their communities, optimize inmate assignments in work and educational programs	Goal 2, Goal 4
Arkansas Department of Education	Arkansas LEARNS Act	Skills training to prepare students for the demands of the modern workforce, need for reliable broadband access to support educational and career opportunities	Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4
Arkansas Department of Health	Arkansas Department of Health Strategic Plan (2020 – 2023)	Support innovation in healthcare to create practical solutions to public health challenges	Goal 1, Goal 3
Arkansas Department of Human Services	Arkansas Department of Human Services Annual Report (2021)	Delivery of essential government services, outreach to low-income and historically disadvantaged Arkansans, workforce recruitment and skill development, increasing access to citizen services and government information online	Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4

⁴⁶ All of the agency partners listed in Table 5 play a key role in delivering essential services to Arkansans. Through the strategies outlined in Section 5.2 and the goal alignment described in the table, the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan will support other partners within state government and improve the delivery of essential services to all Arkansans.

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Annual Report (2022)	Workforce development and skills training, access to adult education programs, delivery of services for aging individuals and individuals with disabilities	Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3
Arkansas Economic Development Commission	Arkansas Economic Development Commission Annual Report (2022)	Workforce development and skills training, investments and increased use of innovative technologies	Goal 1, Goal 2
Arkansas Office of Skills Development	Arkansas Department of Commerce Mission Arkansas Fiber Academy Program , in partnership with Arkansas Community Colleges	Workforce development, access to technical skills training, infrastructure development	Goal 1, Goal 2

As the strategies and objectives within this Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan are implemented, ARConnect will share updates on activities with other Arkansas state agencies.

5.5 Coordination with BEAD and Other Digital Opportunity Programs

Arkansas’ Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan was developed concurrently with the state’s BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposal. Components of this plan draw from these documents, and the strategies outlined in each document were intentionally designed to complement one another. Because ARConnect is the administrative entity responsible for these workstreams, the office will work cohesively to meet all shared objectives.

Notably, the four categories of non-deployment priorities outlined in the BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume 2 – agriculture, education, healthcare, and small business – directly align with the goals and strategies described in Section 5.2. In addition to the strategies outlined in Section 5.2, ARConnect has also planned two additional activities through the BEAD program that will directly impact digital opportunity in Arkansas. As outlined in the BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume 2, ARConnect plans to implement the following two programs:

- 1. Workforce Development:** Arkansas seeks to build upon existing programs in its network of community and technical colleges, which already provide fiber-optic training programs. ARConnect plans to award

\$15 million to its community and technical colleges to help rapidly scale up existing efforts to meet the workforce demands of the broadband industry. In tandem, ARConnect will collaborate with both ISPs and colleges to create direct hiring pathways for graduates. ISPs will serve as partners in developing college curriculum to equip students with the relevant skills for broadband workforce needs. This will be crucial for Arkansas to be equipped with a highly skilled workforce to meet the labor demands of rapid BEAD deployment but also provides opportunities for broader digital skills education across the state.

- 2. Digital Safety for Elementary Education Students:** Arkansas will also allocate BEAD funds to state efforts to raise awareness on digital safety and social media for elementary education students. Partnering with the Arkansas Department of Education and County Broadband Committees, the state will facilitate educational curriculum and programming on digital safety among Arkansas' elementary schools. Education and cybersecurity are top priorities for the state, and Arkansas recognizes that its next generation needs the skills to navigate the digital world safely. This initiative will further expand the reach of the cybersecurity and online safety campaign described in Goal 4 to include young Arkansans.

Additionally, ARConnect will coordinate all broadband and digital opportunity funding, which includes the federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program (DECGP), Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program (DECGP), and subsequent rounds of funding from the BEAD program. In Arkansas, these federal programs, and any contributions from private and philanthropic partners, will fund all digital opportunity work. Given the broadband infrastructure challenges outlined in Section 4.2, BEAD planning dollars will initially prioritize infrastructure needs across the state – from there, BEAD funds will support non-deployment activities.

ARConnect is the sole state entity responsible for awarding and managing broadband infrastructure and non-deployment projects funded through BEAD and DEA, while also managing prior broadband infrastructure grant awards from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), and the Capital Projects Fund (CPF). The office has a full-time staff of six employees, charged with managing these grants, programs, and statewide strategies.

On top of coordinating the state's federal funding through these programs, ARConnect will work to establish and coordinate relationships with other funded digital opportunity programs across the state as they are awarded. ARConnect will monitor award lists for the DECGP, continue to engage partners who may launch individual digital opportunity programs through the ABLN, and remain in contact with stakeholders it engaged for the development of this plan to ensure efforts are not duplicated.

5.6 Implementation Timeline

To accomplish the goals and strategies outlined in Section 5.1, and achieve the measurable objectives listed in Section 5.2, ARConnect proposes the timeline below for implementing all necessary work streams to enhance digital opportunity in Arkansas.

This timeline is intended to be a high-level overview of when activities will take place. The potential activities outlined throughout Section 5.2 will be addressed during these times.

The timeline for achieving each goal and its corresponding strategies was determined based on when the state expects to receive federal funds, managing ARConnect’s time between digital opportunity and BEAD projects, and logistical considerations related to developing public-private partnerships with entities across the state.

In the regular course of events, delays to this timeline are possible and may include: delayed approval of this plan by the federal government, delayed federal allocation and release of funding, and lack of substantive technical assistance to states. These potential delays would arise from parties and circumstances beyond the scope of ARConnect and could not be addressed by ARConnect. An additional delay may arise from lack of interest in participating or applying for grants, or the execution of programs by nonprofits and other entities in Arkansas. AR Connect acknowledges that it can take proactive steps to mitigate this kind of delay and is already working to do so through extensive communication and outreach efforts to nonprofits and other entities.

Table 6: Implementation Timeline

Activity	2024				2025				2026				2027	2028	2029	2030
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
Goal 1	<i>Increase the Availability and Affordability of Internet Service in Arkansas</i>															
Strategy 1.1																
Strategy 1.2																
Strategy 1.3																
Strategy 1.4																
Goal 2	<i>Improve Arkansans’ Digital Skills by Implementing Digital Skills Training Opportunities</i>															
Strategy 2.1																
Strategy 2.2																
Strategy 2.3																

Activity	2024				2025				2026				2027	2028	2029	2030
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
Strategy 2.4																
Goal 3	<i>Leverage State Agencies, Programs, and Organizations to Keep Arkansans Connected, Safe, and Healthy, and Prioritize Accessibility</i>															
Strategy 3.1																
Goal 4	<i>Increase Access to Affordable Digital Devices</i>															
Strategy 4.1																
Strategy 4.2																
Strategy 4.3																
Goal 5	<i>Engage All Interested Arkansans and Community Partners in Digital Opportunity Efforts</i>															
Strategy 5.1																
Strategy 5.2																
Strategy 5.3																
Strategy 5.4																
Strategy 5.5																
Strategy 5.6																

6. Conclusion

Our state’s journey to universal broadband access – and creating the digital opportunity necessary for every Arkansan to fully take advantage of this connectivity – is an achievable goal that promises a stronger Arkansas. By 2030, ARConnect intends to make it a reality that every person, family, and community in Arkansas – regardless of location and income – will have access to affordable, high-speed internet service, the opportunity to enroll in basic computer skills training, and affordable devices.

Widespread access to affordable, high-speed internet and digital skills training will position the state’s economy, education system, healthcare system, agriculture industry, and more to thrive for decades to come.

ARConnect would like to thank the many partners and collaborators instrumental in helping to develop the vision, strategies, and goals outlined in the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. The state appreciates the time and energy that a variety of stakeholders invested in developing this plan, and ARConnect looks forward to working with all Arkansans to make this vision a reality.

The Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan lays out key goals, strategies, and measurable objectives to ensure every Arkansan has access to affordable, high-speed internet and can fully participate in the modern online world by 2030. ARConnect is eager to collaborate with stakeholders and community partners across Arkansas to make Governor Sanders’ vision a reality and establish a new age of self determination and opportunity for all Arkansans.

7. Appendix

Appendix A: Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team Members

Below is a table summarizing the members of the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Planning Team. These partners worked closely with ARConnect through all stages of the planning process, including community engagement, survey distribution, survey analysis, plan development, and more.

Organization	Team Members
ARConnect	Glen Howie – <i>State Broadband Director</i> Lane Bailey – <i>Broadband Grants Program Manager</i> Andrew Marecki – <i>American Connection Corps AmeriCorps Fellow</i> Emma French – <i>Compliance Manager</i> Kimberly Young – <i>Administrative Analyst</i> Laurie Ringler - <i>Broadband Project Manager (former)</i>
Heartland Forward	Ross DeVol – <i>President and CEO</i> Angie Cooper – <i>Executive Vice President</i> Dave Shideler, Ph.D – <i>Chief Research Officer</i> Solomon Graves – <i>Director of Public Policy</i> Mary Larkin Furlow – <i>Associate Manager of Public Policy</i> Meg Pisarczyk – <i>Advisor and Project Manager</i> Anastasia Bergeron – <i>Associate Consultant</i>
Arkansas Black Mayors Association	Kristy Carter, Ph.D – <i>Consultant, KC Consults</i> Sanci Richardson – <i>Consultant, The Bridge Consulting Group</i> Ima Etim – <i>Consultant, Open Chair Consulting</i>
Communities Unlimited	Catherine Krantz – <i>Area Director for Broadband</i> Deanna O'Malley – <i>Community Facilitator</i>
University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service	Hunter P. Goodman, Ph.D – <i>Assistant Professor, Community, Workforce and Economic Development (ED)</i> Tabatha Duvall – <i>Program Associate, Community, Workforce, and ED</i> Brandon Matthews – <i>Program Associate, Community, Professional, and ED</i>
University of Arkansas, Center for Communication Research	Ron Warren, Ph.D – <i>Associate Professor and Interim Chair</i>
Winrock International	Michelle Perez – <i>Senior Program Officer, U.S. Programs</i> Jordyn Williams – <i>Program Officer, U.S. Programs</i> Jaylin Sprout – <i>Program Associate</i>

Appendix B: Data Sources for Covered Population Map

As outlined in Section 3.1, ARConnect conducted 32 focus groups to directly engage with the federally-defined covered population groups. To determine where to host these focus groups, ARConnect consulted a variety of existing data sources, including the 2021 American Community Survey and Broadband Now’s survey, and mapped the results by census tract to learn which areas of the state had the highest concentration of individuals in each covered population group. An interactive version of the Arkansas covered population map is available at the following web address: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/04643a31a0bf4781bf2c43cfa611d861>. A detailed breakdown of the data sources used to populate each layer of the map is available below.

Layer / Covered Population	Data Source
Broadband availability	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Table 2801; calculated as households with “broadband of any type” divided by total households
BroadbandNow Survey	Broadband Now National Broadband Map
Population with a covered disability	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Table S1810
Families living below 150% of FPL	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Table S1701
Veterans	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Table S21001
Low English Proficiency	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Table DP02
Incarceration rate	US Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census, Table P18; calculated as the sum of individuals in correctional facilities for adults and juvenile facilities divided by total population
Urbanicity	Determined based upon rural definition in the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program NOFO using US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates for population
Population aged 60 years or older	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Data Profile (DP) 05
Racial and ethnic minority group layers	US Census Bureau, ACS 2021 5-year estimates, Data Profile (DP) 05

Appendix C: ADSOS – English

Below is a copy of the ADSOS, which was made available to individuals both online and in-person.

Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Survey

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. The State of Arkansas is currently conducting research to better understand the state’s digital divide, create a plan to address its digital skills gap and learn more about the unique challenges that stand in the way of various segments of our state’s population affording and using high-speed internet.

The Arkansas State Broadband Office’s goal is to get the state of Arkansas as close as possible to a reality where all people and communities have access to reliable high-speed internet – at an affordable price, and with opportunities to learn/build digital skills. In turn, this access will create opportunities to enhance education, healthcare, agriculture, local economies and more.

Data collected through this survey will directly inform the Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity plan, which will be available for public comment in the Fall of 2023. We appreciate your time and contribution to this information-gathering effort.

Many, but not all, communities have internet access available at homes, workplaces, businesses, schools, public buildings, or public outdoor spaces. Are you able to access the internet in your community from at least one of those kinds of places?

- Yes
 No

How often do you access the internet from these locations?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less Than Monthly	Not At All (But Have Access)	Unable to Access
At home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At the home of a friend or family member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At school or a college/university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At a coffee shop or other private business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

At outdoor public spaces or parks with free Wi-Fi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At City Hall, a library, or any other publicly-owned building	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How many total devices in your household are used to access the internet? Device examples would include tablets, computers, cell phones, smart TVs, game consoles (e.g., Xbox, PlayStation or Nintendo Switch), internet-enabled appliances (e.g., smart refrigerator, smart washing machine), smart thermostats and other smart home devices (e.g., Amazon Echo or Google Nest) and home security systems.

- None (But I have internet access)
- None (And I do not have internet access)
- 1 or 2
- 3 or 4
- 5 or more

What device(s) do you currently use to access the internet? Check all that apply.

- Desktop computer
- Laptop computer
- Tablet
- Gaming console (Playstation/Xbox)
- Smartphone/cell phone
- No device to connect
- Can't connect to the internet

Check the one time frame that best represents the age of internet devices in your home:

- 1-2 years old
- 3-4 years old
- 5-9 years old
- 10+ years old
- I don't know

How often does your primary device at home become inaccessible or unusable because of internet service interruptions?

- One or more times a week
- Once a month
- Once every 3-6 months
- Once a year
- This has never happened to me

If your computer is lost or damaged beyond repair, how long would it take for you to replace it?

- About one day
- About one week
- 2-4 weeks
- 1-6 months
- I could not replace it in the foreseeable future.

Do you or any member of your household subscribe to internet service in your home using any of the following technologies?

- Yes
- No

If you answered “no” to this question, please skip the next three questions and proceed to the question about barriers to internet access.

Do you or any member of your household subscribe to internet service in your home using any of the following technologies? (Select all that apply)

- A cellular data plan for a smartphone, cell phone or other mobile device, such as a hotspot
- Fixed, wireless internet (Internet access is delivered to my home via wireless technology, such as a tower.)
- Wired internet such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL (I have to plug a cable into a modem device to access the internet.)
- I don't know exactly what kind of service I have, but I have at-home Internet service.

Who is your internet service provider? Write in below:

- _____
- I don't know

Do you get to choose your internet service provider?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In your opinion, what is the primary barrier to having reliable internet access where you live?

- Cost
- Availability
- Finding out who provides service in my area
- I don't know how to get connected
- Other: _____
- There are no barriers to sufficient and reliable internet access where I live

Thinking about your home internet service, is the service bundled with other services such as telephone or television?

- Yes
- No

I don't know

Excluding the costs of other services in your bundle, to the nearest dollar, how much do you pay on a monthly basis for internet service?

- \$ _____
- I do not know what my service costs are
- I cannot afford to pay for service

To the nearest dollar, how much do you pay on a monthly basis for internet service?

- \$ _____
- I cannot afford to pay for service

How difficult, if at all, is it for you to fit your monthly internet bill into your household's budget?

- I do not have at-home internet service.
- Very difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Not too difficult
- Not at all difficult

At what monthly price would you consider a home internet subscription to be too expensive to consider?

- \$0-30
- \$30-60
- \$60-90
- \$90+

How satisfied are you with the quality of your home internet connection for doing the online activities that are important to you, such as streaming videos, playing games, taking classes, doing your job, paying bills online or utilizing telehealth?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not too satisfied
- Not at all satisfied
- I have no internet connection at home

Have you ever heard about the Affordable Connectivity Program, which offers a discount of up to \$30 per month for your home internet access?

- Yes
- No

Do you currently participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program, which offers a discount of up to \$30 per month for your home internet access?

- Yes
- No

Would you like to get more information about the Affordable Connectivity Program and/or receive assistance to enroll in the program?

- Yes
- No

In the past year, have you used the internet to search for:

- Information about government services or resources (e.g., voter registration, motor vehicle tag renewal, property information/building permits)
- Official government statistics or documents
- Recreational or tourist information
- Information about public health issues
- Applying for or managing government benefits (e.g., SNAP, TANF, Social Security)
- Enrolling in Internet subsidy programs (e.g., the Affordable Connectivity Program)
- Applying to or searching for a job
- None of the above

If you have searched for government information in the past year, how well did your internet search for government information meet your needs?

- Not well at all
- Not too well
- Somewhat well
- Very well
- I have not looked for government information online in the past year

If you were asked to complete the following tasks using the internet by yourself at home, how confident would you be that you could successfully complete them?

	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Too Confident	Not At All Confident
Searching for and applying for jobs, including creating and submitting a resume	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finding information about a health or medical condition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking a course or training to improve your job skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessing online banking or financial services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessing or applying for government services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finding educational content and information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Using a video application, such as Zoom, for work, school, or telehealth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Read or download a PDF file	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using a word processing application, such as Google Docs or Microsoft Word, to create a document	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finding tools to protect the privacy of your personal data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paying your bills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or TikTok)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicating with child care services or your children's schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where would you feel most comfortable going for a free or inexpensive class to address any of the tasks listed above? Check all that apply:

- At a library
- At your church
- At a local non-profit organization
- At a community center or facility like a YMCA
- At your place of work
- At a government office
- Other: _____

Indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would like to become more confident in using computers, smartphones and the internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would attend a free or inexpensive class to become more confident in using computers, smartphones and the internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to know how to better use online resources to find trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would attend a free or inexpensive class on using online resources to find trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to learn how to repair or upgrade my computer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would attend a free or inexpensive class to learn how to repair or upgrade my computer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to learn how to write software (or code).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would attend a free or inexpensive class to learn how to write software (or code).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does your household have enough computer devices available to meet the needs of those living in this home?

- Yes
- No

In the past 6 months, which of the following technology devices have failed to function properly for you? (Select all that apply)

- Cell phone
- Desktop computer
- Laptop computer
- Tablet (or similar device)
- Other type of Internet-connected device (please specify)
- None of the above

How did you deal with the problem you encountered? (Select all that apply)

- I contacted user support for help
- I fixed the problem myself
- I fixed the problem with help from friends or family
- I was unable to fix one or more of these devices

- I found help online
- I went to a local computer store
- I went to a community institution, such as a school, library, or church

In thinking about purchasing a desktop or laptop computer, what would you consider to be too expensive?

- \$ _____
- I cannot afford to purchase a computer

Does your job require you to have internet access at home?

- Not applicable – retired or not employed
- Yes
- No

If you answered “no” or “not applicable” to this question, please skip the following two questions.

Do you receive a stipend to help pay for the requirement?

- Yes
- No

If you answered “no” to this question, please skip the following question.

What is the value of the stipend you receive from your employer for at-home internet service?

- \$ _____
- I do not know how much the stipend is that employer provides

Do you or someone in your household work from home and need internet access to work?

- Yes
- No

Do you have a home-based business, or are you planning to start one within the next three years?

- Yes, I already have one
- No, but I’m planning to start one
- No

Does anyone in your household use the internet for educational purposes?

- Yes
- No

Would you be interested in participating in in-person community events or focus groups on the subject of internet availability, affordability and access in Arkansas?

- Yes
- No

If you answered “no” to this question, please skip the following question.

What is the best email address or phone number to contact you for more information on upcoming events and engagement opportunities? Any contact information you provide will be kept confidential and not shared publicly.

- Phone: _____
- Email: _____

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer

What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 59
- 60 or older
- Prefer not to answer

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- Less than high school (Grades 1-8 or no formal schooling)
- High school incomplete (Grades 9-11 or Grade 12 with NO diploma)
- High school graduate (Grade 12 with diploma or GED certificate)
- Some college, no degree (includes some community college)
- Two-year associate degree from a college or university
- Four-year college or university degree/Bachelor's degree (e.g., BS, BA, AB)
- Some postgraduate or professional schooling, no postgraduate degree
- Postgraduate or professional degree, including master's, doctorate, medical or law degree (e.g., MA, MS, PhD, MD, JD)
- Prefer not to answer

Have you formerly been incarcerated in an Arkansas state correctional facility?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Have you served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, and been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable?

- Yes
- No

Prefer not to answer

Which of the following best describes your race? (Select all that apply)

- White or Caucasian
- Black or African-American
- Asian or Asian-American
- Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native
- Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
- Some other race (please specify): _____
- Prefer not to answer

Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?

- Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban
- Not of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin

What is your total annual household income from all sources, and before taxes?

- Less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 to less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 to less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to less than \$30,000
- \$30,000 to less than \$40,000
- \$40,000 to less than \$50,000
- \$50,000 to less than \$75,000
- \$75,000 to less than \$100,000
- \$100,000 and over
- Prefer not to answer

Do you have difficulty in any of the following areas? (Select all that apply, but you do not need to select any answer choices if none are relevant)

- Seeing even if wearing glasses
- Hearing even if using a hearing aid
- Walking or climbing steps
- Remembering or concentrating
- Self-care such as washing all over or dressing
- Communicating, for example understanding or being understood
- Prefer not to answer

Is English your first language?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

How would you describe the area where you reside?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Other: _____

What is your 5-digit zip code?

- _____

How many adults, age 18 and over, currently live in your household, including yourself?

- _____

How many children, under age 18, currently live in your household?

- _____

PLEASE ONLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IF YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE CHILDREN LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD:

Are your children required to do schoolwork at home?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

How many days a week do your children need access to the internet?

- _____

Where do your children get the internet access they need to complete their homework?

- _____

What device do your children primarily use to access the internet to do their schoolwork at home?

- A smartphone that my family owns
- A tablet that my family owns
- A computer that my family owns
- A tablet issued to them from their school
- A computer issued to them from their school
- A tablet available to them in a public place, like a library or after-school group
- A computer available to them in a public place, like a library or after-school group
- Other: _____

What is your level of agreement for the following statements about how your child can use the internet and technology?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My child(ren) cannot complete their homework, because they do not have access to the internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) cannot complete their homework, because they do not have access to computers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My computer skills are good enough to help my child(ren) complete their homework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) has/have good enough computer skills to complete their homework on their own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) is/are learning computer skills at school that will prepare them for the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) access(es) the internet at a public or school library.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) can safely access public libraries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I learn computer or internet skills from family members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your level of agreement with the following statements about the skills you or your children possess to avoid or minimize online risks?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My child(ren) has/have the skills to detect and avoid false or misleading information online.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) is/are able to avoid online bullying by peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My child(ren) is/are able to get help dealing with online bullying by peers if it does occur.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) is/are able to effectively detect and avoid online financial scams or predators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) is/are able to avoid exposure to graphic violence or pornography online.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child(ren) is/are able to get help if they are exposed to graphic violence or pornography online.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware of the extent my child(ren) is/are exposed to any of the above types of risks or content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the time and skills to protect my child(ren) from the above risks and content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix D: ADSOS – Spanish

Below is a copy of the Spanish version of the ADSOS, which was made available to individuals both online and in-person. The survey was translated into Spanish to be more accessible to the state’s Hispanic communities.

Plan de Oportunidades y Capacitación Digitales para el Estado de Arkansas

Gracias por dedicar su tiempo para completar esta encuesta. El Estado de Arkansas está llevando a cabo un estudio para comprender mejor en qué consiste la brecha digital del estado, crear un plan para resolver la falta de habilidades digitales y entender mejor cuáles son los desafíos que enfrentan varios segmentos de la población para pagar y utilizar Internet de alta velocidad.

El objetivo es posicionar al estado de Arkansas lo más cerca posible a una realidad en la que todas las comunidades y personas tengan acceso a un servicio de internet confiable, de alta velocidad, a un precio accesible, y con oportunidades para aprender y desarrollar habilidades digitales. A su vez, este acceso creará oportunidades para mejorar la educación, la atención médica, la agricultura, la economía y más.

Esta encuesta toma entre 10 y 15 minutos en completarse. Los datos recogidos a través de esta encuesta serán incorporados directamente al Plan de Oportunidades y Capacitación Digitales de Arkansas que estará disponible para recibir comentarios del público en el otoño de 2023. Agradecemos su tiempo y su contribución a este esfuerzo de recopilación de información.

Muchas comunidades, aunque no todas, disponen de acceso al internet en el hogar, lugares de trabajo, empresas, colegios, edificios o espacios públicos al aire libre. ¿Puede acceder al Internet en su comunidad en alguno de estos lugares?

- Si
 No

¿Con qué frecuencia se conecta al Internet desde estos lugares?

	A diario	Seman-a lmente	Mensu-al mente	Menos de un mes	No me conecto (Pero Tengo Acceso)	No tengo acceso
En casa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En el trabajo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En casa de un amigo o familiar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En la escuela o la universidad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En el café o en un negocio privado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

En espacios públicos al aire libre o parques con Wi-Fi gratis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En la Sede Municipal, una biblioteca, o algún edificio de gobierno	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¿Cuántos dispositivos en total se utilizan en su hogar para acceder a Internet?

Los ejemplos de dispositivos incluyen tabletas, computadoras, teléfonos móviles, televisores inteligentes, consolas de videojuegos (por ejemplo, Xbox, PlayStation o Nintendo Switch), electrodomésticos con acceso al internet (por ejemplo, refrigeradores y lavadoras inteligentes), termostatos inteligentes y otros dispositivos domésticos inteligentes (por ejemplo, Amazon Echo o Google Nest) y sistemas de seguridad.

- Ninguno (Pero tengo acceso al internet)
- Ninguno (Y si tengo acceso al internet)
- 1 o 2
- 3 o 4
- 5 o más

¿Qué dispositivo(s) utiliza actualmente para acceder al Internet? Marque todos los que corresponda.

- Computadora
- Laptop
- Tableta
- Consola de juegos (Playstation/Xbox)
- Smartphone/teléfono móvil
- No tengo dispositivos para conectarme
- No me puede conectar al internet

Marque una opción que mejor represente los años que tienen los dispositivos de conexión al Internet en su hogar:

- 1-2 años
- 3-4 años
- 5-9 años
- 10+ años
- No sé

¿Con qué frecuencia su principal dispositivo de conexión al internet en casa es inaccesible o inutilizable debido a interrupciones en el servicio de Internet?

- Una o más veces por semana
- Una vez al mes
- Una vez cada 3-6 meses
- Una vez al año

Esto nunca me ha sucedido

Si su computadora se perdiera o sufriera daños irreparables, ¿cuánto tardaría en reemplazarla?

- Cerca de un día
- Cerca de una semana
- 2-4 semanas
- 1-6 meses
- No lo pudiera reemplazar en el futuro cercano

¿Usted o algún miembro de su hogar está suscrito a un servicio de Internet en su casa que utilice alguna de las siguientes tecnologías?

- Si
- No

Si ha respondido "no" a esta pregunta, ignore las tres preguntas siguientes y pase a la pregunta sobre los obstáculos de acceso al Internet.

¿Está usted o algún miembro de su hogar suscrito a un servicio de Internet en casa para su teléfono u otros dispositivos?

- Un plan de datos celulares para un smartphone, teléfono u otro dispositivo móvil, como un hotspot.
- Internet fijo e inalámbrico (el acceso a Internet llega a mi casa a través de tecnología inalámbrica, como una torre de transmisión).
- Internet por cable, como cable, fibra óptica o DSL (tengo que conectar un cable a un dispositivo de módem para acceder a Internet).
- No sé exactamente qué tipo de servicio tengo, pero tengo servicio de Internet en casa

¿Quién es su proveedor de servicios de Internet? Menciónelo a continuación:

- _____
- No sé

¿Tiene la oportunidad de elegir su proveedor de servicios de internet?

- Si
- No
- No estoy seguro

En su opinión, ¿cuál es el principal obstáculo para tener un acceso confiable al Internet donde vive?

- Costo
- Disponibilidad
- Averiguar quién brinda servicio en mi área
- No sé cómo conectarme
- Otros: _____
- No hay obstáculos para acceder a un servicio de Internet que sea suficiente y confiable donde vivo

Pensando en el servicio de Internet en su hogar, ¿el servicio está incluido en otros servicios como teléfono o televisión?

- Si
- No
- No sé

Excluyendo los costos de otros servicios en su paquete de suscripción. ¿Cuánto paga mensualmente por el servicio de Internet?

- \$ _____
- No sé cuáles son los costos del servicio
- No puedo pagar por el servicio

Redondeando el costo en dólares, ¿cuánto paga mensualmente por el servicio de Internet?

- \$ _____
- No sé el costo
- No puedo pagar por el servicio

¿Qué tan difícil es para usted incluir su factura mensual del servicio de Internet en el presupuesto de su hogar?

- No tengo servicio de internet en casa
- Muy difícil
- Un poco difícil
- No demasiado difícil
- No es difícil para nada

¿Qué precio mensual consideraría demasiado costoso para una suscripción a Internet en el hogar?

- \$0-30
- \$30-60
- \$60-90
- \$90+

¿Qué tan satisfecho está con la calidad de la conexión de su servicio de Internet en casa para realizar las actividades en línea que son importantes para usted, como videos, jugar, tomar clases, hacer su trabajo, pagar facturas o utilizar las citas médicas virtuales?

- Muy satisfecho
- Más o menos satisfecho
- No demasiado satisfecho
- Nada satisfecho
- No tengo conexión al internet en casa

¿Alguna vez ha escuchado hablar del Programa de Conectividad Accesible, que ofrece un descuento de hasta \$30 por mes para el acceso al Internet en su hogar?

- No

Si

¿Participa actualmente en el Programa de Conectividad Accesible, que ofrece un descuento de hasta \$30 por mes para el acceso al Internet en su hogar?

Si
 No

¿Le gustaría obtener más información sobre el Programa de Conectividad Accesible y/o recibir asistencia en la inscripción del programa?

Si
 No

En el último año, ¿ha utilizado el Internet para buscar alguna de las siguientes opciones? (seleccione todo lo que corresponda):

- Información sobre servicios o recursos del gobierno (p. ej., registro de votantes, renovación de calcomanías de vehículos motorizados, información sobre propiedad/permisos de construcción)
- Estadísticas o documentos oficiales del gobierno
- Información turística o de recreación
- Información sobre problemas de salud pública
- Solicitar o administrar beneficios del gobierno (p. ej., SNAP, TANF, Seguro Social)
- Inscribirse en programas de subsidios del servicio de Internet (p. ej., el Programa de Conectividad Accesible)
- Solicitar o buscar trabajo
- Ninguno de los anteriores

Si ha buscado información del gobierno en el último año, ¿en qué medida su búsqueda de información gubernamental en Internet satisfizo sus necesidades?

- No me sirvió en absoluto
- No demasiado bien
- Más o menos bien
- Muy bien
- No he buscado información del gobierno por internet en el último año.

Si se le pidiera completar las siguientes tareas usando el Internet en su casa, ¿qué tan seguro estaría de poder completarlas con éxito?

	Muy seguro	Más o menos seguro	No muy seguro	No estaría seguro
Buscar y solicitar empleo, incluyendo la creación y envío de un currículum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hallar información sobre una condición médica o de salud	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tomar un curso o capacitación para mejorar sus habilidades laborales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acceder a servicios bancarios o financieros por internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acceder o solicitar servicios del gobierno	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buscar contenido educativo e información	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usar una aplicación de video, como Zoom, para el trabajo, la escuela o una cita médica virtual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encontrar contenido educativo e información	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leer o descargar un archivo PDF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usar una aplicación de procesamiento de textos, como Google Docs o Microsoft Word, para crear un documento	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buscar herramientas para proteger la privacidad de sus datos personales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pagar sus cuentas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usar el correo electrónico	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usar las redes sociales (p. ej., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube o TikTok)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comunicarse con los servicios de cuidado infantil o las escuelas de sus hijos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprar por Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¿Dónde se sentiría más cómodo yendo para tomar una clase gratuita o económica para aprender a realizar las tareas enumeradas anteriormente? Marque todo lo que corresponda:

- En una biblioteca
- En su iglesia
- En una organización local sin fines de lucro
- En un centro comunitario o en YMCA
- En su lugar de trabajo
- En una oficina del gobierno
- Otro: _____

Indique su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con cada afirmación a continuación:

	Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
Me gustaría tener más confianza en el uso de computadoras, teléfonos inteligentes e Internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistiría a una clase gratuita o de costo accesible para tener más confianza al usar computadoras, teléfonos inteligentes e Internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Me gustaría saber cómo utilizar mejor los recursos en línea para encontrar información confiable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistiría a una clase gratuita o de costo accesible sobre el uso de recursos en línea para encontrar información confiable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Me gustaría aprender a reparar o actualizar mi computadora.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistiría a una clase gratuita o de costo accesible para aprender a reparar o actualizar mi computadora.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Me gustaría aprender a desarrollar software (o código).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistiría a una clase gratuita o de costo accesible para aprender a desarrollar software (o código).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¿Dispone de suficientes dispositivos informáticos para satisfacer las necesidades de las personas que viven en su hogar?

- Sí
- No

En los últimos 6 meses, ¿cuál de los siguientes dispositivos tecnológicos no le ha funcionado correctamente? (Seleccione todos los que correspondan)

- Teléfono móvil
- Computadora

- Laptop
- Tableta (o dispositivo similar)
- Otro tipo de dispositivo conectado a Internet (especifique)
- Ninguno de los anteriores

¿Cómo resolvió el problema? (Seleccione todo lo que corresponda)

- Me puse en contacto con el servicio de atención al usuario para pedir ayuda
- Arreglé el problema yo mismo
- Arreglé el problema con ayuda de amigos o familiares
- No pude arreglar ningún dispositivo
- Encontré ayuda en el Internet
- Fui a una tienda local de informática
- Fui a una institución comunitaria, como una escuela, una biblioteca o una iglesia

Al pensar en comprar una computadora o laptop, ¿qué precio consideraría que es demasiado alto?

- \$ _____
- No puedo pagar por una computadora

¿Su trabajo le obliga a tener acceso al Internet en casa?

- No corresponde (jubilado o sin empleo)
- Si
- No

Si ha respondido "no" o "no corresponde" a esta pregunta, omita las dos preguntas siguientes

¿Recibe un estipendio para ayudar a pagar por ese requisito?

- Si
- No

Si respondió "no" a esta pregunta, omita la siguiente pregunta.

¿Cuál es el valor del estipendio que recibe de su empleador por el uso del servicio de Internet en el hogar?

- \$ _____
- No sé cuánto es el estipendio que proporciona el empleador

¿Usted o alguien en su hogar trabaja desde casa y necesita acceso al Internet para trabajar?

- Si
- No

¿Posee un negocio basado en el hogar o está planeando iniciar uno dentro de los próximos tres años?

- Si, tengo uno
- No, pero estoy planeando iniciar un negocio
- No

¿Alguien en su hogar usa el Internet para fines educativos?

- Si
- No

¿Le interesaría participar en eventos comunitarios en persona o en grupos de estudio sobre la disponibilidad, costo y accesibilidad del servicio de Internet en Arkansas?

- Si
- No

Si respondió "no" a esta pregunta, ignore la siguiente pregunta.

¿Cuál es el mejor correo electrónico o número de teléfono para contactarle y obtener más información para participar en los próximos eventos y oportunidades? Cualquier información personal que proporcione se mantendrá confidencial y no se compartirá públicamente.

- Teléfono: _____
- Email: _____

¿Cuál es su género?

- Masculino
- Femenino
- Prefiero no responder

¿Qué edad tiene?

- 18 a 24
- 25 a 34
- 35 a 44
- 45 a 54
- 55 a 59
- 60 o mayor
- Prefiero no responder

¿Cuál es el máximo nivel educativo que usted haya completado o título de mayor nivel recibido?

- Sin llegar a la escuela secundaria (Grados 1-8 o sin educación formal)
- Escuela secundaria incompleta (Grados 9-11 o Grado 12 SIN diploma)
- Graduado de la escuela secundaria (Grado 12 con diploma o certificado GED)
- Estudios universitarios incompletos, sin título (incluye alguna universidad comunitaria)
- Título de asociado de dos años de un colegio o universidad
- Título universitario de cuatro años/Bachillerato (p. ej., BS, BA, AB)
- Educación de posgrado o profesional incompleta, sin título de posgrado
- Posgrado o título profesional, incluyendo maestría, doctorado, título médico o de derecho (p. ej., MA, MS, PhD, MD, JD)
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Ha estado encarcelado anteriormente en un centro correccional del estado de Arkansas?

- Si
- No
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Ha prestado servicio militar, naval, aéreo o espacial y ha sido dado de baja en condiciones que no sean deshonrosas?

- Si
- No
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Cuáles de las siguientes opciones describe mejor su raza? (Seleccione todas las que correspondan)

- Blanco o caucásico
- Negro o afroamericano
- Asiático o asiático-americano
- Nativos americanos/indios americanos/nativos de Alaska
- Isleño del Pacífico/nativo de Hawái
- Otra raza (por favor especifique): _____
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Cuál de las siguientes opciones describe mejor su origen étnico?

- De origen hispano, latino o español, como mexicano, puertorriqueño o cubano.
- No es de origen hispano, latino o español

¿Cuál es el total de ingresos anuales en su hogar provenientes de todas las fuentes de ingresos y antes de pagar impuestos?

- Menos de \$15,000
- \$15,000 o menos de \$20,000
- \$20,000 o menos de \$25,000
- \$25,000 o menos de \$30,000
- \$30,000 o menos de \$40,000
- \$40,000 o menos de \$50,000
- \$50,000 o menos de \$75,000
- \$75,000 o menos de \$100,000
- \$100,000 o más
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Tiene dificultad en alguna de las siguientes áreas? (Seleccione todas las que correspondan; pero si ninguna es relevante, no necesita seleccionar ninguna opción de respuesta)

- Ver aunque este usando lentes
- Oír aunque use un audífono
- Caminar o subir escalones

- Recordar o concentrarse
- Cuidado personal, como bañarse o vestirse
- Comunicar, por ejemplo, entender o ser entendido
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Es inglés su primer idioma?

- Si
- No
- Prefiero no contestar

¿Cómo describiría la zona donde vive?

- Urbana
- Suburbana
- Rural
- Otra: _____

¿Cuál es su código postal de 5 dígitos?

- _____

¿Cuántos adultos, mayores de 18 años, viven actualmente en su hogar, incluyéndose usted mismo?

- _____

¿Cuántos niños, menores de 18 años, viven actualmente en su hogar?

- _____

POR FAVOR RESPONDA LAS SIGUIENTES PREGUNTAS SÓLO SI TIENE UNO O MÁS HIJOS VIVIENDO EN SU HOGAR:

¿Sus hijos tienen que hacer tareas escolares en casa?

- Si
- No
- No sé

¿Cuántos días a la semana sus hijos necesitan tener acceso al Internet?

- _____

¿Dónde obtienen sus hijos el acceso al Internet que necesitan para completar sus tareas?

- _____

¿Qué dispositivo usan principalmente sus hijos para acceder al Internet para hacer sus tareas escolares en casa?

- Un teléfono inteligente que tiene mi familia
- Una tableta que tiene mi familia

- Una computadora que es propiedad de mi familia
- Una tableta que les entregó su escuela
- Una computadora que les entregó su escuela
- Una tableta disponible para ellos en un lugar público, como una biblioteca o un grupo extraescolar
- Una computadora disponible en un lugar público, como una biblioteca o un grupo extracurricular
- Otros: _____

Qué tan de acuerdo está con las siguientes afirmaciones sobre cómo sus hijos pueden usar el internet y tecnología?

	Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
Mi(s) hijo(s) no pueden completar su tarea porque no tienen acceso al Internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) no pueden completar su tarea porque no tienen acceso a las computadoras.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mis conocimientos sobre informática son suficientemente buenos para ayudar a mi(s) hijo(s) a completar su tarea.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) tiene(n) suficientes conocimientos sobre informática para completar su tarea solo.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) está(n) adquiriendo conocimientos sobre informática en la escuela que los prepararán para el futuro.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) accede(n) al Internet en una biblioteca pública o de la escuela.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mis hijos pueden acceder de manera segura a las bibliotecas públicas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adquiero conocimientos sobre informática o sobre el Internet de los miembros de la familia.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Qué tan de acuerdo está con las siguientes afirmaciones sobre las habilidades que usted o sus hijos poseen para evitar o minimizar los riesgos en línea?

	Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
Mi(s) hijo(s) tiene(n) la capacidad para detectar y evitar información falsa o engañosa en el internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) es(son) capaz(ces) de evitar el acoso en línea por parte de sus compañeros.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) puede(n) obtener ayuda para hacer frente al acoso en línea por parte de sus compañeros si sucede.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) es(son) capaz(ces) de detectar y evitar de manera efectiva estafas financieras o depredadores en línea.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) es(son) capaz(ces) de evitar la exposición a la violencia gráfica o la pornografía en línea.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mi(s) hijo(s) puede(n) obtener ayuda si está(n) expuesto(s) a la violencia gráfica o pornografía en línea.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soy consciente de la magnitud en que mi(s) hijo(s) está(n) expuesto(s) a cualquiera de los tipos de riesgos o contenido mencionados anteriormente.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tengo el tiempo y la capacidad para proteger a mi(s) hijo(s) de los riesgos y contenidos mencionados.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix E: Methodology for Analyzing ADSOS Results

Section 4.2.8 outlines the distinct barriers to digital opportunity for covered population groups. Many of the findings in this section were derived from responses to the ADSOS. ARConnect partnered with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service to analyze survey results and compare findings between population groups and with the full pool of survey responses. Below is an overview of the methodology used for this data analysis:

All survey responses were divided into eight categories of "covered populations" as defined by NTIA and the DEA. Those categories include persons who are 60 years of age or older; incarcerated individuals; veterans; persons with disabilities; members of a racial or ethnic minority group; rural residents; individuals with a language barrier, including those who are English learners or have low literacy levels; and individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150 percent of the poverty level. Questions from the survey were used to identify to which covered population the respondent belonged. This was a straightforward process for six of the eight covered populations: persons who are 60 years of age or older (Question 40); incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a federal correctional facility (Question 42); veterans (Question 43); individuals with disabilities (Question 47); members of a racial or ethnic minority group (Question 44); and individuals who primarily reside in a rural area (Question 49).

The remaining two covered populations required additional tools and analysis. For individuals who live in a covered household, Question 46 (total annual income) was used and cross referenced with Questions 51 (total adults in household) and 52 (total children in the household). Responses to questions 51 and 52 were added together to give a combined total household size and cross referenced with I-942P Supplement, Income Guidelines for Reduced Fees, based on household size at 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) to determine eligibility as total income and household size increased. Households with a total of more than 20 were excluded from analysis. Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners or have low levels of literacy combined responses from Question 48 (response "no" - is English your first language) with Question 41 (highest level of completed school or degree) responses of less than high school or high school incomplete. Duplicate responses were excluded when combining the responses from both questions. In all instances, respondents that failed to answer the corresponding covered population questions and those with nonsensical responses were excluded in all final counts for analysis.

When comparing covered population responses to those of the entire dataset, the methodology used variances of +5% or -5% of the entire dataset to determine statistical significance.

Appendix F: Clickthrough Rates for Digital Ads Promoting the ADSOS

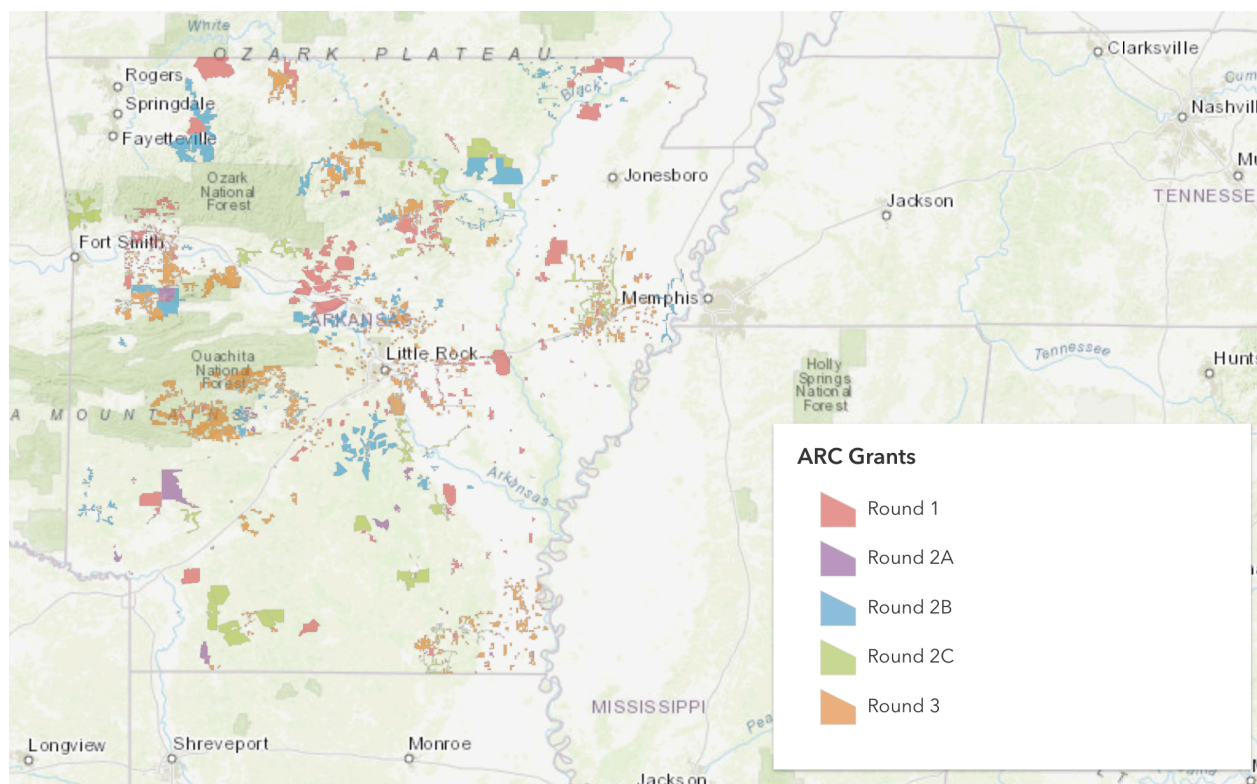
Below is a table summarizing the impressions, clicks, and clickthrough rates for digital ads that ARConnect ran on multiple platforms to advertise the ADSOS.

Platform	Impressions	Clicks	Clickthrough Rate
Outbrain (Programmatic/Native Display)	24,399,152	41,490	0.17%
Meta (Facebook and Instagram)	1,009,357	6,934	0.69%
LinkedIn	706,371	3,514	0.50%
TOTAL	26,114,880	51,938	0.20%

Appendix G: Map of ARC Grant Program Awards

The ARC grant program was established to provide funding and incentivize ISPs to deploy or improve broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities across the state. To date, the program has funded three broadband infrastructure grant rounds, totaling nearly \$550 million in grants awarded across 185 projects that will connect nearly 130,000 homes and businesses. The map below shows all of the projects that have been funded through the ARC grant program, and an interactive version of this map is available at the following web address:

<https://adfa-gov.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=87b2fabf4f774530b29af0b07ec67249>.



Appendix H: Public Computer Access Locations in Arkansas

ARConnect identified dozens of locations that offer public computer access for Arkansans. Computer access is available at career education and community colleges, Arkansas Department of Human Services offices, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services offices, Arkansas public libraries, throughout the Central Arkansas Development Council’s region, and at Goodwill Industries offices across the state. Below are tables summarizing the locations where individuals can access public computers in Arkansas.

Career Education and Community Colleges		
Location Name	Counties Served	Address
Arkansas Baptist College Adult Education	Pulaski	1418 W. Daisy L Gaston Bates Dr. , Little Rock, AR 72202
Arkansas Correctional School	Jefferson	8000 Correction Cir., Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Arkansas Northeastern College	Mississippi	2501 S. Division St., Blytheville, AR 72315
Arkansas State University – Beebe at Searcy	Cleburne, White, Woodruff	1800 E. Moore, Searcy, AR 72145
Arkansas State University – Mid-South	Crittenden, Cross	2000 W. Broadway, West Memphis, AR 72301
Arkansas State University – Mountain Home	Baxter, Marion	1600 S. College St., Mountain Home, AR 72653
Arkansas State University – Newport	Craighead, Jackson, Poinsett	7648 Victory Blvd., Newport, AR 72112
Arkansas State University – Newport at Jonesboro	Craighead, Jackson, Poinsett	2311 E. Nettleton Ave., Ste. 1, Jonesboro, AR 72401
Arkansas State University – Newport at Marked Tree	Craighead, Jackson, Poinsett	33500 Old Hwy. 63 N., Marked Tree, AR 72386
Arkansas State University – Newport at Trumann	Craighead, Jackson, Poinsett	212 S. Melton Ave., Trumann, AR 72472
Arkansas Technical University – Ozark Campus	Franklin, Johnson, Logan	1700 Helberg Ln., Ozark, AR 72949
Black River Technical College – Pocahontas	Clay, Greene, Lawrence, Randolph	1410 Hwy. 304 E., Pocahontas, AR 72455
College of the Ouachitas Adult Education	Clark, Dallas, Grant, Hot Spring, Saline	1735 E. Sullenberger, Malvern, AR 72104

College of the Ouachitas Learning Resource Center	Clark, Dallas, Grant, Hot Spring, Saline	One College Cir., Malvern, AR 72104
Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas – DeQueen Campus	Howard, Little River, Pike, Sevier	183 College Dr., DeQueen, AR 71832
East Arkansas Community College (formerly Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute)	Cross, Lee, Monroe, Poinsett, St. Francis, Woodruff	1620 Newcastle Rd., Forrest City, AR 72335
East Arkansas Community College	Cross, Lee, Monroe, Poinsett, St. Francis, Woodruff	1700 Newcastle Rd., Forrest City, AR 72335
Fayetteville Public Schools Jefferson Center	Washington	612 S. College, Fayetteville, AR 72701
Fort Smith Public Schools Adult Education Center	Scott, Sebastian	501 S. 20th St., Fort Smith, AR 72901
Little Rock School District Adult Education Center	Pulaski	4800 W. 26th St., Little Rock, AR 72204
Lonoke School District	Lonoke, Prairie	401 W. Holly St., Lonoke, AR 72086
National Park College	Garland	101 College Dr., Hot Springs, AR 71913
North Arkansas College South Campus	Boone, Carroll, Madison, Newton, Searcy	1515 Pioneer Dr., Harrison, AR 72601
Northwest Arkansas Community College	Benton	One College Dr., Bentonville, AR 72712
Northwest Technical Institute Adult Education Center	Washington	610 E. Emma, Springdale, AR 72765
Ozarka College	Fulton, Izard, Stone	218 College Dr., Melbourne, AR 72556
Ozark Literacy Council	Washington	2596 Keystone Crossing, Fayetteville, AR 72703
Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas – DeWitt Campus	Arkansas, Lee, Phillips	1210 Rice Belt Ave., DeWitt, AR 72042
Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas – Stuttgart Campus	Arkansas, Lee, Phillips	2807 Hwy. 165 S., Stuttgart, AR 72160

Pulaski County Adult Education Main Center	Pulaski	4424 B Hwy. 161 N., North Little Rock, AR 72117
Russellville School District Adult Education	Pope, Yell	1000 S. Arkansas Ave., Russellville, AR 72811
Southeast Arkansas College	Arkansas, Cleveland, Jefferson	1900 S. Hazel St., Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Southeast Arkansas College Adult Education Building	Arkansas, Cleveland, Jefferson	2900 S. Orange St., Pine Bluff, AR 71603
South Arkansas Community College Adult Education	Bradley, Union	3696 E. Main Rd., El Dorado, AR 71731
Southern Arkansas University Tech Adult Education Center	Calhoun, Colombia, Dallas, Ouachita	237 Jackson St., Camden, AR 71701
Southern Arkansas University Tech Rocket Success Center	Calhoun, Colombia, Dallas, Ouachita	14439 King Rd., Camden, AR 71701
University of Arkansas at Monticello College of Technology – McGehee	Ashley, Chicot, Desha, Drew, Lincoln	1609 E. Ash St., P.O. Box 747, McGehee, AR 71654
University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville	Independence, Sharp	2005 White Dr., Batesville, AR 72503
University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville Highland Adult	Independence, Sharp	33 Choctaw Ctr., Cherokee Village, AR 72529
University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton Community	Conway, Faulkner, Perry, Van Buren	600 N. Saint Joseph St., Morrilton, AR 72110
University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton Conway Adult	Conway, Faulkner, Perry, Van Buren	125 Center St., Conway, AR 72034
University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton North Central	Conway, Faulkner, Perry, Van Buren	100 Success Dr., Clinton, AR 72031
University of Arkansas Cossatot	Howard, Little River, Pike, Sevier	183 College Dr., DeQueen, AR 71832
University of Arkansas Cossatot Ashdown Campus	Howard, Little River, Pike, Sevier	1411 N. Constitution Ave., Ashdown, AR 71822
University of Arkansas Cossatot Nashville Campus	Howard, Little River, Pike, Sevier	1558 Hwy. 371 W., Nashville, AR 71852

University of Arkansas – Hope & Texarkana	Hempstead, Lafayette, Miller, Nevada	2500 S. Main St., Hope, AR 71801
University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College Saline County Adult Education Center	Pulaski, Saline	16936 I-30, Benton, AR 72019
University of Arkansas Rich Mountain	Montgomery, Polk, Scott	1100 College Dr., Mena, AR 71953
University of Arkansas Rich Mountain Waldron Campus	Montgomery, Polk, Scott	456 W. 6th St., P.O. Box 114, Waldron, AR 72958
Van Buren School District Crawford County Adult Education Center	Crawford	605 Alma Boulevard Cir., Van Buren, AR 72956

Arkansas Department of Human Services		
Location Name	Counties Served	Address
Arkansas County DHS Office 1	Arkansas	100 Court Sq., DeWitt, AR 72042
Arkansas County DHS Office 2	Arkansas	203 S. Leslie St., Stuttgart, AR 72160
Ashley County DHS Office	Ashley	201 W. Lincoln, Hamburg, AR 71646
Baxter County DHS Office	Baxter	204 Bucher Dr., Mountain Home, AR 72654
Benton County DHS Office	Benton	900 S.E. 13th Ct., Bentonville, AR 72712
Boone County DHS Office	Boone	2126 Capps Rd., Harrison, AR 72601
Bradley County DHS Office	Bradley	902 Halligan, Warren, AR 71671
Calhoun County DHS Office	Calhoun	136 Archer, Hampton, AR 71744
Carroll County DHS Office	Carroll	304 Hailey Rd., Berryville, AR 72616
Chicot County DHS Office	Chicot	1736 Hwy. 65 & 82 S., Lake Village, AR 71653
Clark County DHS Office	Clark	602 S. 10th St., Arkadelphia, AR 71923
Clay County DHS Office	Clay	187 N. 2nd St., Piggott, AR 72454
Cleburne County DHS Office	Cleburne	1521 W. Main, Heber Springs, AR 72543
Cleveland County DHS Office	Cleveland	201 5th St., Rison, AR 71665
Columbia County DHS Office	Columbia	601 E. University, Magnolia, AR 71754
Conway County DHS Office	Conway	2 Bruce St., Morrilton, AR 72110
Craighead County DHS Office	Craighead	1600 Browns Lane Access Rd., Jonesboro, AR 72401

Crawford County DHS Office	Crawford	704 Cloverleaf Cir., Van Buren, AR 72956
Crittenden County DHS Office	Crittenden	401 S. College Blvd., West Memphis, AR 72301
Cross County DHS Office	Cross	803 Hwy. 64 E., Wynne, AR 72396
Dallas County DHS Office	Dallas	1202 W. 3rd St., Fordyce, AR 71742
Desha County DHS Office	Desha	200 N. First St., McGehee, AR 71654
Drew County DHS Office	Drew	444 US Hwy. 425 N., Monticello, AR 71655
Faulkner County DHS Office	Faulkner	1000 E. Siebenmorgan Rd., Conway, AR 72033
Franklin County DHS Office	Franklin	800 W. Commercial Ozark, AR 72949
Fulton County DHS Office	Fulton	222 Byron Rd., Salem, AR 72576
Garland County DHS Office	Garland	115 Stover St., Hot Springs, AR 71913
Grant County DHS Office	Grant	16 Opportunity Dr., Sheridan, AR 72150
Greene County DHS Office	Greene	809 Goldsmith Rd., Paragould, AR 72450
Hempstead County DHS Office	Hempstead	116 N. Laurel, Hope, AR 71801
Hot Spring County DHS Office	Hot Spring	2505 Pine Bluff St., Malvern, AR 72104
Howard County DHS Office	Howard	534 N. Main St., Nashville, AR 71852
Independence County DHS Office	Independence	100 Weaver Ave., Batesville, AR 72501
Izard County DHS Office	Izard	278 E. Main St., Melbourne, AR 72556
Jackson County DHS Office	Jackson	3rd & Hazel St., Newport, AR 72112
Jefferson County DHS Office	Jefferson	1222 W. 6th St., Pine Bluff, AR 71611
Johnson County DHS Office	Johnson	900 S. Rogers Ave., Clarksville, AR 72830
Lafayette County DHS Office	Lafayette	2612 Spruce St., Lewisville, AR 71845
Lawrence County DHS Office	Lawrence	400 N.W. 4th St., Walnut Ridge, AR 72476
Lee County DHS Office	Lee	772 W. Chestnut St., Marianna, AR 72360
Lincoln County DHS Office	Lincoln	101 W. Wiley St., Star City, AR 71667
Little River County DHS Office	Little River	90 Waddell St, Ashdown, AR 71822
Logan County DHS Office 1	Logan	17 W. McKeen, Paris, AR 72360
Logan County DHS Office 2	Logan	398 E. 2nd, Booneville, AR 72927
Lonoke County DHS Office	Lonoke	100 Park St, Lonoke, AR 72086

Madison County DHS Office	Madison	1013 N. College Ave., Huntsville, AR 72740
Marion County DHS Office	Marion County	114 E. Old Main, Yellville, AR 72687
Miller County DHS Office	Miller	3809 Airport Plz., Texarkana, AR 71854
Mississippi County DHS Office 1	Mississippi	1104 Bynum Rd., Blytheville, AR 72315
Mississippi County DHS Office 2	Mississippi	437 S. Country Club Rd., Osceola, AR 72370
Monroe County DHS Office 1	Monroe	600 N. 11th St., Clarendon, AR 72029
Monroe County DHS Office 2	Monroe	301 1/2 N. New Orleans, Brinkley, AR 72021
Montgomery County DHS Office	Montgomery	232 Graham St., Mt. Ida, AR 71957
Nevada County DHS Office	Nevada	355 W. 1st St. N., Prescott, AR 71857
Newton County DHS Office	Newton	100 Spring St., Jasper, AR 72641

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services		
Location Name	Counties Served	Address
Arkadelphia DWS Office	Clark	502 S. 6th St., Arkadelphia, AR 71923
Batesville DWS Office	Fulton, Independence, Izard, Sharp, Stone	396 Barnett Dr., Batesville, AR 72501
Benton DWS Office	Saline	400 Edison St., Benton, AR 72015
Blytheville DWS Office	Mississippi	2825 S. Division, Blytheville, AR 72321
Camden DWS Office	Calhoun, Dallas, Ouachita	237 S.W. Jackson St., Camden, AR 71701
Clarksville DWS Office	Johnson	23 Sherwood Plaza Shopping Ctr., Clarksville, AR 72830
Conway DWS Office	Faulkner, Van Buren	1500 N. Museum Rd., Conway, AR 72032
Dumas DWS Office	Desha	130 W. Waterman, Dumas, AR 71639
El Dorado DWS Office	Union	523 E. Sixth St., El Dorado, AR 71730
Fayetteville DWS Office	Madison, Washington	2143 W. M.L.K. Blvd., Fayetteville, AR 72701
Forrest City DWS Office	Cross, Monroe, Prairie, St. Francis	300 Eldridge Rd., Ste. 2, Forrest City, AR 72355

Fort Smith DWS Office	Crawford, Logan, Sebastian, Franklin	616 Garrison Ave., Rm. 101, Fort Smith, AR 72901
Harrison DWS Office	Boone, Carroll, Newton, Searcy	818 Hwy. 62-65 N., Harrison, AR 72601
Helena DWS Office	Phillips, Lee	819 Newman Dr., Helena, AR 72342
Hope DWS Office	Hempstead, Howard, Nevada, S. Pike	205 Smith Rd., Ste. A, Hope, AR 71801
Hot Springs DWS Office	Garland, Montgomery, N. Pike	2254 Albert Pike, Ste. A, Hot Springs, AR 71913
Jacksonville DWS Office	Pulaski	2 Crestview Plz., Jacksonville, AR 72076
Jonesboro DWS Office	Craighead, Poinsett, Lawrence, Randolph	2311 E. Nettleton Ave., Jonesboro, AR 72401
Little Rock UI DWS Office	Pulaski	5401 S. University, Little Rock, AR 72209
Little Rock ES DWS Office	Pulaski	5401 S. University, Little Rock, AR 72209
Little Rock T/WP DWS Office	Pulaski	5401 S. University, Little Rock, AR 72209
Magnolia DWS Office	Colombia, Lafayette	104 Harvey Couch Blvd., Magnolia, AR 71753
Malvern DWS Office	Hot Spring	1735 E. Sullenberger St., Malvern, AR 72104
Mena DWS Office	Polk, Scott	1100 College Dr., Abernathy Bldg., Mena, AR 71953
Monticello DWS Office	Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Desha, Drew	477 S. Main St., Monticello, AR 71655
Mt. Home DWS Office	Baxter, Marion	1058 Highland Cir., Ste. 20, Mtn. Home, AR 72653
Newport DWS Office	Jackson, Woodruff	7648 Victory Blvd., Ste. B, Newport, AR 72112
Paragould DWS Office	Clay, Greene	1015 Linwood Dr., Ste. 4, Paragould, AR 72450
Pine Bluff DWS Office	Arkansas, Cleveland, Grant, Jefferson, Lincoln	1001 S. Tennessee St., Pine Bluff, AR 71601
Rogers DWS Office	Benton	100 N. Dixieland Rd., Rogers, AR 72756
Russellville DWS Office	Craighead, Poinsett, Lawrence, Randolph	104 S. Rochester Ave., Russellville, AR 72801
Searcy DWS Office	Cleburne, White	501 W. Arch Ave., Searcy, AR 72143
Siloam Springs DWS Office	Benton, Washington	809 S. Mt. Olive St., Siloam Springs, AR 72761

Texarkana DWS Office	Little River, Miller, Sevier	1702 Hampton Rd., Texarkana, TX 75503
West Memphis DWS Office	Crittenden	ASU Mid-South, 2003 W. Broadway, West Memphis, AR 72301

Arkansas Public Libraries			
Location Name	Counties Served	Address	Wi-Fi Available?
Arkansas County Library	Stuttgart Public Library	2002 S. Buerkle St., Stuttgart, AR, 72160	Yes
Arkansas County Library	DeWitt Public Library	205 W. Maxwell Ave., DeWitt, AR 72042	Yes
Arkansas County Library	Cleon Collier Memorial Library	211 W. Main St., Gillette, AR 72055	No
Arkansas River Valley Regional Library	Central Library	501 N. Front St., Dardanelle, AR 72834	Yes
Arkansas River Valley Regional	Yell County Library	904 Atlanta St., Danville, AR 72833	Yes
Arkansas River Valley Regional	Johnson County Library	2 Taylor Cir., Clarksville, AR 72830	Yes
Arkansas River Valley Regional	Logan County Library	419 N. Kennedy, Booneville, AR 72927	Yes
Arkansas River Valley Regional	Boyd T and Mollie Gattis Logan County Library	100 E. Academy, Paris, AR 72855	Yes
Arkansas River Valley Regional	Franklin County Library	407 W. Market St., Ozark, AR 72949	Yes
Arkansas River Valley Regional	Charleston Public Library	12 S. School St., Charleston, AR 72933	Yes
Ashley County Library	Ashley County Library	211 E Lincoln St., Hamburg, AR	Yes
Ashley County Library	Crossett Public Library	1700 S. Main St., Crossett, AR 71635	Yes
Barton Library	Barton Library – El Dorado	200 E. 5th St., El Dorado, AR 71730	Yes

Barton Library	Huttig Branch Library	204 Frost St., Huttig, AR 71747	Yes
Barton Library	Junction City Library	301 N. Myrtle, Junction City, AR 71749	Yes
Barton Library	Norphlet Public Library	101 W. Padgett, Norphlet, AR 71759	Yes
Barton Library	Smackover Public Library	700 S. Broadway St., Smackover, AR 71762	Yes
Barton Library	Strong City Library	210 Phippen Rd., Strong, AR 71765	Yes
Baxter County Library	Donald W. Reynolds Library	300 Library Hill, Mountain Home, AR 72653	Yes
Bella Vista Public Library	Bella Vista Public Library	11 Dickens Pl., Bella Vista, AR 72714	Yes
Bentonville Public Library	Bentonville Public Library	405 S. Main St., Bentonville, AR 72712	Yes
Boone County Library	Boone County Library	221 W. Stephenson Ave., Harrison, AR 72601	Yes
Calhoun County Library	Calhoun County Library	115 S. 2nd St., Hampton, AR 71744	Yes
Calhoun County Library	Thornton Public Library	S. 2nd St., Thornton, AR 71766	No
Carroll-Madison Library System	Berryville Public Library	104 Spring St., Berryville, AR 72616	No
Carroll-Madison Library System	Eureka Springs Carnegie	194 Spring St., Eureka Springs, AR 72632	Unknown
Carroll-Madison Library System	Green Forest Public Library	206 E. Main St., Green Forest, AR 72638	Yes
Carroll-Madison Library System	Madison County Public Library	827 N College Ave., Huntsville, AR 72740	Yes
Carroll-Madison Library System	Kingston Community Library	Kingston Sq., P.O. Box 6, Kingston, AR 72742	Yes
Carroll-Madison Library System	St. Paul Public Library	145 5th St., St. Paul, AR 72760	Yes

Central Arkansas Library System	Main Library	100 Rock St., Little Rock, AR 72201	Yes
Central Arkansas Library System	Millie Brooks Library	13024 Hwy. 365, Wrightsville, AR 72206	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Dee Brown Library	6325 Baseline Rd., Little Rock, AR 72209	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Hillary Rodham Clinton Library & Learning Center	4800 W. 10th St., Little Rock, AR 72204	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	John Gould Fletcher Library	823 N. Buchanan St., Little Rock, AR 72205	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Maumelle Library	10 Lake Pointe Dr., Maumelle, AR 72113	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Sidney S. McMath Library	2100 John Barrow Rd., Little Rock, AR 72204	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Max Milam Library	609 Aplin Ave., Perryville, AR 72126	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Nixon Library	703 W. Main St., Jacksonville, AR 72076	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Oley E. Rooker Library	11 Otter Creek Ct., Little Rock, AR 72210	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Amy Sanders Library	10200 Johnson Dr., Sherwood, AR 72120	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Adolphine Fletcher Terry Library	2015 Napa Valley Dr., Little Rock, AR 72212	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Roosevelt Thompson Library	38 Rahling Cir., Little Rock, AR 72223	Unknown
Central Arkansas Library System	Sue Cowan Williams Library	1800 Chester St., Little Rock, AR 72206	Unknown
Clark County Library	Clark County Library	609 Caddo St., Arkadelphia, AR 71923	Yes
Clark County Library	Cabe Public Library-Gurdon Branch	204 E. Walnut, Gurdon, AR 71743	Unknown

Columbia County Library	Columbia County Central	2057 N. Jackson St., Magnolia, AR 71753	Yes
Columbia County Library	Taylor Public Library	101 W. Pope St., Taylor, AR 71861	Yes
Conway County Library	Conway County Library	101 W. Church St., Morrilton, AR 72110	Yes
Crawford County Library System	Van Buren Public Library	1409 Main St., Van Buren, AR 72956	Yes
Crawford County Library System	Alma Public Library	624 Fayetteville Ave., Alma, AR 72921	Unknown
Crawford County Library System	Mulberry Public Library	220 N. Main St., Mulberry, AR 72947	Unknown
Crawford County Library System	Mountainburg Public Library	1300 N. Hwy. 71, Mountainburg, AR 72946	Unknown
Crittenden County Library	Earle Library	703 Commerce St Earle, AR 72331	Yes
Crittenden County Library	Gilmore Library	269 W. Menesha St., Turrell, AR 72384	Yes
Crittenden County Library	Horseshoe Public Library	3181 Horseshoe Cir., Hughes, AR 72348	Yes
Crittenden County Library	Woolfolk Public Library	100 N. Currie St., Marion, AR 72364	Yes
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	Jonesboro Public Library	315 W. Oak Ave., Jonesboro, AR 72401	Yes
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	Caraway Public Library	102 B E. State St., Caraway, AR 72419	Unknown
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	Poinsett County Public Library	200 N. East St., Harrisburg, AR 72432	Unknown
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	McAdams Library	106 Cobean, Lake City, AR 72437	Unknown
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	Goldsby Library	240 Greenwood St., Lapanto, AR 72354	Unknown
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	Marked Tree Public Library	102 Locust, Marked Tree, AR 72365	Unknown
Crowley Ridge Regional Library	Kohn Memorial Library	103 S. Edmonds, Monette, AR 72447	Unknown

Crowley Ridge Regional Library	West Poinsett County Public Library	W. 2nd & Washington St., Weiner, AR 72479	Unknown
East Central Arkansas Regional Library	Wynn/Cross County Library	410 E. Merriman Ave., Wynne, AR 72396	Yes
East Central Arkansas Regional Library	Parkin Branch Library	122 Wilson, Parkin, AR 72373	Unknown
East Central Arkansas Regional Library	Augusta/Woodruff County Library	201 Mulberry St., Augusta, AR 72006	Unknown
East Central Arkansas Regional Library	McCrary Branch Library	105 E. 2nd St., McCrary, AR 72101	Unknown
East Central Arkansas Regional Library	Cotton Plant Branch Library	124 Main St., Cotton Plant, AR 72036	Unknown
Fairfield Bay Library	Fairfield Bay Library	369 Dave Creek Pkwy., Fairfield Bay, AR 72088	Yes
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Conway Public Library	1900 W. Tyler St., Conway, AR 72034	Yes
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Clinton Public Library	289 Factory Rd., Clinton, AR 72031	Unknown
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Damascus Public Library	17379 US 65, Damascus, AR 72039	Unknown
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Mayflower Public Library	6 Ashmore Dr., Mayflower, AR 72106	Unknown
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Twin Groves Public Library	10 Twin Groves Ln., Twin Groves, AR 72039	Unknown
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Greenbrier Public Library	13 Wilson Farm Rd., Greenbrier, AR 72058	Unknown
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Mount Vernon Public Library	1371 Hwy. 36, Mt. Vernon, AR 72111	Unknown
Faulkner/ Van Buren County Library System	Vilonia Public Library	3 Bise St., Vilonia, AR 72173	Unknown
Fayetteville Public Library	Fayetteville Public Library	401 W. Mountain St., Fayetteville, AR 72701	Yes

Forrest City Public Library	Forrest City Public Library	421 S. Washington, Forrest City, AR 72335	Yes
Fort Smith Public Library System	Main Library	3201 Rogers Ave., Fort Smith, AR 72903	Yes
Fort Smith Public Library System	Dallas Street Neighborhood Branch Library	8100 Dallas St., Fort Smith, AR 72903	Unknown
Fort Smith Public Library System	Miller Branch Library	8701 S. 28th St., Fort Smith, AR 72908	Unknown
Fort Smith Public Library System	Windsor Drive Branch Library	4701 Windsor Dr., Fort Smith, AR 72904	Unknown
Garland County Library	Garland County Library	1427 Malvern Ave., Hot Springs, AR 71901	Yes
Gentry Public library	Gentry Public Library	105 E. Main St., Gentry, AR 72734	Yes
Gravette Public Library	Gravette Public Library	604 1st Ave. SE Gravette, AR 72736	Yes
Hempstead County Library	Hempstead County Library	500 S. Elm St., Hope, AR 71801	Yes
Independence County Library	Independence County Library	368 E. Main St., Batesville, AR 72501	Yes
Decatur Public Library	Iva Jane Peek Public Library	121 N. Main St., Decatur, AR 72722	Yes
Jackson County Library	W.A. Billingsley Memorial	213 Walnut St., Newport, AR 72112	Yes
Jackson County Library	Tuckerman City Library	200 W. Main, Tuckerman, AR 72473	Yes
Lafayette County Library	Lafayette County Library	219 E. 3rd St., Lewisville, AR 71845	Unknown
Lafayette County Library	Cabe Memorial Public Library	312 Main St., Stamps, AR 71860	Unknown
Lawrence County Library	Lawrence County Library	115 W. Walnut St., Walnut Ridge, AR 72476	Yes

Lawrence County Library	Bobbie Jean Memorial Library	102 Hendrix, Imboden, AR 72434	Unknown
Lawrence County Library	Driftwood Branch Library	28 S. Hwy. 25, Lynn, AR 72440	Unknown
Lonoke County Library System	Cabot Public Library	909 W. Main St., Cabot, AR 72023	Yes
Lonoke County Library System	Carlisle Public Library	105 E. 5th St., Carlisle, AR 72024	Yes
Lonoke County Library System	Marjorie Walker McCrary Memorial Library	204 E. 2nd St., Lonoke, AR 72086	Yes
Lonoke County Library System	William F. Foster Library	100 E. Taylor, England, AR 72046	Yes
Marion County Library	Marion County Library	308 Old Main St., Yellville, AR 72687	Yes
Mid-Arkansas Regional Library	Malvern-Hot Spring County Library	202 E. Third St., Malvern, AR 72104	Yes
Mid-Arkansas Regional Library	Grant County Library	210 N. Oak St., Sheridan, AR 72150	Yes
Mid-Arkansas Regional Library	The Roy and Christine Sturgis Library of Cleveland County	203 Magnolia St., Rison, AR 71665	Yes
Mid-Arkansas Regional Library	Dallas County Library	501 E. 4th St., Fordyce, AR 71742	Yes
Mississippi County Library System	Blytheville Public Library	200 N. 5th St., Blytheville, AR 72315	Yes
Mississippi County Library System	Keiser Public Library	112 Main St Keiser, AR 72351	Yes
Mississippi County Library System	Leachville Public Library	105 S. Main St., Leachville, AR 72438	Yes
Mississippi County Library System	Manila Public Library	103 N. Dewey Ave., Manila, AR 72442	Yes

Mississippi County Library System	Osceola Public Library	320 W. Hale Ave., Osceola, AR 72370	Yes
Mississippi County Library System	Wilson Public Library	1 Park St., Wilson, AR 72395	Yes
Newton County Library	Newton County Library	HC 31 Box 8, Jasper, AR 72641	Yes
Northeast Arkansas Regional Library	Corning Public Library	613 Pine St., Corning, AR 72422	Yes
Northeast Arkansas Regional Library	Randolph County Library	111 W. Everett St., Pocahontas, AR 72455	Yes
Northeast Arkansas Regional Library	Greene County Library	120 N. 12th St., Paragould, AR 72450	Yes
Northeast Arkansas Regional Library	Piggott Public Library	361 W. Main St., Piggott, AR 72454	Yes
Northeast Arkansas Regional Library	Rector Public Library	121 W. 4th St., Rector, AR 72461	Yes
Ouachita Mountains Regional Library	Montgomery County Library	145 A Whittington St., Mount Ida, AR 71957	Yes
Ouachita Mountains Regional Library	Polk County Library	410 8th St., Mena, AR 71953	Yes
Pea Ridge Library	Pea Ridge Library	781 N. Curtis Ave., Pea Ridge, AR 72751	Yes
Phillips Lee Monroe	Phillips County Library	702 Porter St., Helena, AR 72342	Yes
Phillips Lee Monroe Regional Library	Lee County Library	77 W. Main St., Mariana, AR 72360	No
Phillips Lee Monroe Regional Library	Monroe County Library	270 Madison St., Clarendon, AR 72029	No
Pine Bluff/ Jefferson County library	Pine Bluff Public Library	200 E 8th St., Pine Bluff, AR 71601	Yes
Pine Bluff/ Jefferson County Library	Watson Chapel Public Library	4120 S. Camden Rd., Pine Bluff, AR 71603	Unknown
Pine Bluff/ Jefferson County Library	White Hall Public Library	300 Anderson Ave., White Hall, AR 71602	Unknown

Pine Bluff/ Jefferson County Library	Altheimer Public Library	222 S. Edline, Altheimer, AR 72004	Unknown
Pine Bluff/ Jefferson County Library	Redfield Public Library	310 Brodie St., Redfield, AR 72132	Unknown
Pope County Library System	Pope County Library,	116 E. 3rd St., Russellville, AR 72801	Yes
Pope County Library System	Atkins Centennial Library	216 N.E. 1st St., Atkins, AR 72823	Yes
Pope County Library System	Dover Public Library	80 Liberty Rd., Dover, AR 72837	Yes
Pope County Library System	Hector Public Library	11600 AR 27, Hector, AR 72843	Yes
Prairie County Library System	Hazen Public Library	121 US 70, Hazen, AR 72064	Yes
Prairie County Library System	Des Arc Public Library	602 W. Curran St., Des Arc, AR 72040	Unknown
Prairie County Library System	DeValls Bluff Public Library	173 Market St., DeValls Bluff, AR 72041	Unknown
Public Library of Camden and Ouachita County	Public Library of Camden and	405 Cash Rd. SW, Camden, AR 71701	Yes
Rogers Public Library	Rogers Public Library	711 S. Dixieland Rd., Rogers, AR 72758	No
Saline County Library	Bob Herzfeld Memorial Library	1800 Smithers Dr., Benton, AR 72015	Yes
Saline County Library	Mabel Boswell Memorial	201 Prickett Rd., Bryant, AR 72022	Unknown
Scott Sebastian Regional Library	Scott Sebastian Regional Library	18 N. Adnair, Greenwood, AR 72936	Yes
Scott Sebastian Regional Library	Scott County Library	141 W. 2nd St., Waldron, AR 72958	Yes
Scott Sebastian Regional Library	Hartford Branch Library	22 Broadway, Hartford, AR 72938	No
Scott Sebastian Regional Library	Lavaca Branch Library	100 S. Davis Lavaca, AR 72941	Yes

Scott Sebastian Regional Library	Mansfield Branch Library	220 N. Sebascott Ave., Mansfield, AR 72944	No
Searcy County Library	Jim G. Ferguson Memorial Library	202 E. Main St., Marshall, AR 72650	Unknown
Siloam Springs Public Library	City of Siloam Springs Public Library	205 E. Jefferson St., Siloam Springs, AR 72761	Yes
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Dermott Branch Library	117 S. Freeman, Dermott, AR 71638	Yes
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Dumas Branch Library	120 E. Choctaw, Dumas, AR 71639	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Eudora Branch Library	161 N. Cherry, Eudora, AR 71640	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Hermitage Branch Library	122 S. Main, Hermitage, AR 71647	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Lake Village Branch Library	108 Church St., Lake Village, AR 71653	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	McGehee Branch Library	211 N. 4th St., McGehee, AR 71654	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Monticello Branch Library	114 W. Jefferson Ave., Monticello, AR 71655	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Star City Branch Library	200 E. Wiley, Star City, AR 71667	Unknown
Southeast Arkansas Regional Library	Warren Branch Library	115 W. Cypress, Warren, AR 71671	Unknown
Southwest Arkansas Regional Library	Prescott/Nevada County Library	121 W. Main St., Prescott, AR 71857	Unknown
Southwest Arkansas Regional Library	Pike County Library	210 2nd Ave., Murfreesboro, AR 71958	Unknown
Southwest Arkansas Regional Library	Glenwood Branch Library	1000 Lakeshore Dr.,	Unknown
Southwest Arkansas Regional Library	Delight Branch Library	301 E. Antioch St., Delight, AR 71940	Unknown

Sulphur Springs Public Library	Sulphur Springs Public Library	512 S. Black Ave., Sulphur Springs, AR 72768	Unknown
Texarkana Public Library	Texarkana Public Library	600 W. 3rd St., Texarkana, TX 75501	Yes
Sevier County Library Systems	DeQueen Branch Library	200 W. Stillwell Ave., De Queen, AR 71832	Yes
Sevier County Library Systems	Gillham Branch Library	202 W. 2nd St., Gillham, AR 71841	Yes
Sevier County Library Systems	Horatio-Garner Memorial Library	108 Main St., Horatio, AR 71842	Yes
Sevier County Library Systems	Lockesburg Branch Library	112 E. Main St., Lockesburg, AR 71846	Yes
Tri-County Regional Library	Howard County Library	426 N. Main, Ste. 5,	No
Tri-County Regional Library	Dierks Branch Library	202 W. 3rd St., Dierks, AR 71833	No
Tri-County Regional Library	Mineral Springs Public Library	310 E. Runnels, Mineral Springs, AR 71851	No
Tri-County Regional Library	Tollette Public Library	205 Town Hall Dr., Mineral Springs, AR 71851	No
Tri-County Regional Library	Foreman Public Library	216 Schuman St., Foreman, AR 71836	Yes
Tri-County Regional Library	Winthrop Public Library	720 High St., Winthrop, AR 71866	Yes
Tri-County Regional Library	Ashdown Community Library	160 E. Commerce St., Ashdown, AR 71822	Yes
Trumann Public Library	Truman Public Library	1200 W. Main St., Trumann, AR 72472	Yes
Washington County Library System	Elkins Public Library	352 N. Center St., Elkins, AR 72727	Yes
Washington County Library System	Farmington Public Library	175 Cimarron Way, Farmington, AR 72730	Yes
Washington County Library System	Greenland Library	8 E. Rose St., Greenland, AR 72737	No

Washington County Library System	Lincoln Public Library	107 W. Bean St., Lincoln, AR 72744	Yes
Washington County Library System	Prairie Grove Public Library	123 S. Neal St., Prairie Grove, AR	Yes
Washington County Library System	Springdale Public Library	405 S. Pleasant St., Springdale, AR 72764	Yes
Washington County Library System	West Fork Municipal Library	198 W. Main St., West Fork, AR 72774	Yes
Washington County Library System	Winslow Public Library	351 US 71, Winslow, AR 72959	Yes
West Memphis Public Library	West Memphis Public Library	213 N. Avalon St., West Memphis, AR 72301	Yes
White County Regional	Searcy Public Library	113 E. Pleasure Ave., Searcy, AR 72143	Yes
White County Regional	Baldwin-Kittler Memorial Library	612 Van Buren, Judsonia, AR 72081	Unknown
White County Regional	Lyda Miller Public Library	2609 Hwy. 367 N., Bald Knob, AR 72010	Unknown
White County Regional	Goff Public Library	323 N. Elm, Beebe, AR 72012	Unknown
White County Regional	Bradford Public Library	302 W. Walnut St., Bradford, AR 72020	Unknown
White County Regional	Rose Bud Public Library	548A Hwy. 5, Rose Bud, AR 72137	Unknown
White County Regional	Pangburn Public Library	914 Main St., Pangburn, AR 72121	Unknown
White County Regional	El Paso Community Library	1607 Ridge Rd., El Paso, AR 72045	Unknown
White River Regional Library	Mary I. Wold Cleburne County Library	1009 W. Main St., Heber Springs, AR 72543	Yes
White River Regional Library	Greers Ferry Library	8240 Edgemont Rd., Greers Feery, AR 72067	Yes
White River Regional Library	Quitman Library	5904 W. Heber Springs Rd., Quitman, AR 72131	Yes

White River Regional Library	Salem Public Library	207 N. Pickren St., Salem, AR 72576	Yes
White River Regional Library	Mammoth Spring Library	415 Main St, Mammoth Springs, AR 72554	Yes
White River Regional Library	Viola Public Library	AR 223, Viola, AR 72583	Yes
White River Regional Library	Melbourne Library	915 Main St., Melbourne, AR 72556	Yes
White River Regional Library	Calico Rock Library	301 2nd St., Calico Rock, AR 72519	Yes
White River Regional Library	Horseshoe Bend Public Library	9 Club Rd., Horseshoe Bend, AR 72512	Yes
White River Regional Library	Sharp County Library	201 Church St., Hardy, AR 72542	Yes
White River Regional Library	Evening Shade Library	227 W. Main St., Evening Shade, AR 72532	Yes
White River Regional Library	Williford Library	1606 US Hwy. 63, Williford, AR 72482	Yes
White River Regional Library	Sharp County Library	120 E. Spring St., Cave City, AR 72521	Yes
White River Regional Library	Stone County Library	326 W. Washington St., Mountain View, AR 72560	Yes
William F. Laman Public Library	William F. Laman Public Library	2801 Orange St., North Little Rock, AR 72114	Yes
William F. Laman Public Library	Argenta Branch	420 Main St., North Little Rock, AR 72114	Yes

Central Arkansas Development Council			
Location Name	Counties Served	Address	Wi-Fi Available?
Amity Head Start	Clark	213 N. Clark St., Amity, AR 71921	Yes
Arkadelphia Head Start	Clark	301 N. 23rd St., Arkadelphia, AR 71923	Yes
Arkadelphia SCAT/ Senior Activity Center	Clark	1305 N. 10th St., Arkadelphia, AR 71923	Yes

Benton Head Start	Saline	321 Edison Ave., Benton, AR 72018	Yes
Benton Sr Activity Center	Saline	1800 Citizens Dr., Benton, AR 72015	Yes
Bismark Head Start	Hot Spring	2078 Arlie Moore Rd., Bismark, AR 71929	Yes
Camden Office	Ouachita	313 Jefferson, Camden, AR 71707	Yes
El Dorado Office	Union	1426 N. West Ave., El Dorado, 71730	Yes
Fordyce Office	Dallas	410 E. 4th St., Fordyce, AR 71742	Yes
Glenwood Head Start	Pike	747 Lakeshore Dr., Glenwood, AR 71943	Yes
Glenwood Senior Activity Center	Pike	229 Betty St., Glenwood, AR 71943	Yes
Gurdon Senior Activity Center/ Head Start	Clark	410 E. Main, Gurdon, AR 71743	Yes
Hot Springs SCAT	Garland	525 Airport, Ste. 10, Hot Springs, AR	Yes
Hot Springs Village	Garland	198 Carmona Rd., Hot Springs, AR 71909	Yes
Lonoke Office	Lonoke	117 S.E. Front St., Lonoke, AR 72086	Yes
Magnet Cove Head Start	Hot Spring	21977 Hwy. 51, Malvern, AR 72104	Yes
Magnolia Office	Colombia	1503 N. Vine, Magnolia, AR 71754	Yes
Malvern Head Start	Hot Spring	21977 Hwy. 51, Malvern, AR 72104	Yes
Malvern SCAT & Operations Office	Hot Spring	1303 S. Main, Malvern, AR 72104	Yes
Malvern Senior Activity Center	Hot Spring	1800 W. Moline, Malvern, AR 72104	Yes
Mt. Ida Senior Activity Center	Montgomery	156 Senior Dr., Mt. Ida, 71957	Yes
Murfreesboro Senior Activity Center/ Head Start	Pike	120 E. Court, Ste. B, Murfreesboro, AR 71958	Yes
Shannon Hills Head Start	Pulaski	11925 County Line Rd., Alexander, AR 72002	Yes
Texarkana Office	Bowie, TX	2400 Richmond Rd., Texarkana, TX 75503	Yes

Goodwill Industries

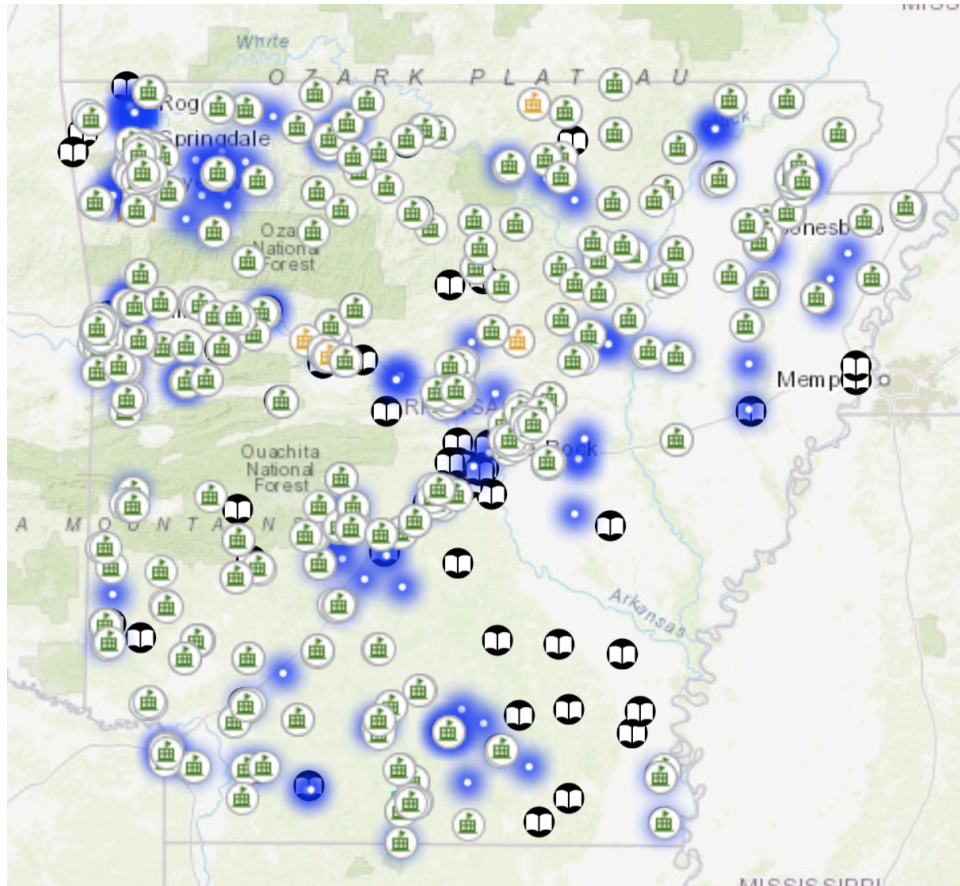
Location Name	Counties Served	Address
Batesville Goodwill	Independence	3209 Harrison St., Batesville, AR 72501

Bella Vista Goodwill	Benton	210 Town Center S.E., Bella Vista, AR 72714
Benton Goodwill	Saline	1716 Military Rd., Benton, AR 72015
Blytheville Goodwill	Mississippi	125 Chickasaw Plz., Blytheville, AR 72315
Bryant Goodwill	Saline	5914 Hwy. 5 N., Bryant, AR 72022
Cabot Goodwill	Lonoke	204 S. Rockwood Dr., Cabot, AR 72023
Fayetteville Goodwill	Washington	3105 W. M.L.K. Blvd., Fayetteville, AR 72704
Fayetteville Goodwill	Washington	705 E. Appleby Rd., Fayetteville, AR 72703
Fort Smith Goodwill	Sebastian	3225 S. 74th St., Fort Smith, AR 72903
Harrison Goodwill	Boone	814 Hwy. 62-65 N., Ste. 9, Harrison, AR 72601
Hot Springs Goodwill	Garland	205 Garrison St., Hot Springs, AR 71913
Jacksonville Goodwill	Pulaski	1309 TP White Dr., Jacksonville, AR 72076
Jonesboro Goodwill	Craighead	1515 S. Caraway Rd., Jonesboro, AR 72401
Little Rock Goodwill	Pulaski	1110 W. 7th St., Little Rock, AR 72201
Little Rock Goodwill	Pulaski	109 Markham Park Dr., Little Rock, AR 72211
Little Rock Goodwill	Pulaski	7400 Scott Hamilton Dr., Little Rock, AR 72209
Mountain Home Goodwill	Baxter	759 Hwy. 62 E., Ste. 102, Mountain Home, AR 72653
North Little Rock Goodwill	Pulaski	3000 W. Scenic Dr., North Little Rock, AR 72118
Newport Goodwill	Jackson	2500 Malcolm Ave., Ste. D, Newport, AR 72112
Paragould Goodwill	Greene	2808 W. Kings Hwy., Paragould, AR 72450
Pine Bluff Goodwill	Jefferson	2514 W. 28th St., Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Rogers Goodwill	Benton	4301 S. Dixieland Rd., Rogers, AR 72758
Siloam Springs Goodwill	Benton	1001 S. Mt. Olive St., Siloam Springs, AR 72761

Appendix I: Arkansas Public Wi-Fi Availability Map

The University of Arkansas published a map of publicly available Wi-Fi locations throughout the state. The interactive map is available at the following web address:

<https://ar-wifi-map-uark.hub.arcgis.com/apps/3de10c8bfd448a9942256c6227a14f3/explore>.



Appendix J: Arkansas Digital Opportunity Assets Form

To collect information on digital opportunity assets across the state, ARConnect created the Arkansas Digital Opportunity Assets Form and shared it with key stakeholders and the public to collect as much information as possible on existing digital opportunity organizations, programs, and strategies. The form is still open and accepting responses. The form is available at the following web address: <https://forms.gle/2gTLk8t6aRDDyvp69>.

Appendix K: Digital Use and Internet Access in Fayetteville, Arkansas

In 2019, the City of Fayetteville’s Digital Inclusion Task Force released a report titled “Digital Use and Internet Access in Fayetteville, Arkansas.” The full report, based on a survey to better understand how people use the internet and barriers to digital opportunity at the local level, is available at the following web address:

<https://www.fayetteville-ar.gov/DocumentCenter/View/26222/Digital-Use-and-Internet-Access-in-Fayetteville-Arkansas>.

Appendix L: Arkansas Connectivity Coalition Member Organizations

The Arkansas Connectivity Coalition is referenced multiple times throughout the report. The Coalition's members include the following organizations: Arkansas Black Mayors Association, Arkansas Community Foundation, Arkansas Farm Bureau, Arkansas Impact Philanthropy, Arkansas Municipal League, Communities Unlimited, Diamond State Networks, Forward Arkansas, Heartland Forward, Holman Strategies, Hope Policy Institute, Runway Group, University of Arkansas – Center for Communication Research, University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Service, UAMS, Winrock International, and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation.

Appendix M: Community Engagement Tracker and Public Comment Disclosure

Throughout the creation of this plan, ARConnect kept track of all community engagement efforts across the state. This included meetings in all 75 counties as part of the Broadband Roadshow, 32 focus groups with covered populations, six regional meetings, five public comment outreach events, and outreach to a variety of community partners and media outlets to further engage Arkansans on the Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan.

As detailed in Section 3.1, ARConnect also published a draft version of this plan for the public to review, then gave the public 30 days to provide written comment on that draft. ARConnect cataloged and responded to all written comments related to the draft version of this plan. A full list of all community engagement activities, as well as an overview of the written public comments the state received on the draft version of this plan, is available on the next page of this document.

Statutory Requirement #5

List of Organizations with which the Administering Entity for your State collaborated in developing the Plan

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
<i>Include the name of the Organization, as it appears on the Organization's website and records.</i>	<i>Select the category that best matches from the dropdown list. If you select "Other", please specify in the notes column.</i>	<i>Select the category that best matches from the dropdown list. If you select "Other", please specify in the notes column.</i>	<i>Include any notes or clarifications regarding your previous responses.</i>	<i>Please list the organization's website, if applicable.</i>
4H Changemakers Program	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://4-h.org/programs/tech-changemakers/
AARP Arkansas	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		https://states.aarp.org/arkansas/
AR Association of Community Action Agencies	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		
AR Coalition of Marshallese	Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving Institution	Community Outreach		https://www.arkansasmarshallese.org/
AR Department of Corrections	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		
AR Department of Education	Other	Community Outreach		
AR Department of Labor	Workforce Development Organization	Community Outreach		
AR Veterans Association – two regional offices – Little Rock and Fayetteville	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		
Area Agency on Aging are across the state. CareLink in Central AR is strong	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		
Arkansas Adult Education	Workforce Development Organization	Community Outreach		https://aalrc.org/
Arkansas Association of Counties	County or Municipal Government	Community Outreach		https://www.arcounties.org/
Arkansas Baptist College (HBCU)	Historically Black College or University	Community Outreach		https://www.arkansasbaptist.edu/
Arkansas Black Mayors Association	Predominantly Black Institution	Community Outreach		
Arkansas Community Colleges	Local Education Agency	Community Outreach		https://www.arkansascc.org/
Arkansas Community Foundation	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://www.arcf.org/
Arkansas Division of Higher Education	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		https://adhe.edu/
Arkansas Economic Developers & Chamber Executives	Economic Development	Community Outreach		https://aedce.org/
Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Inc	Other	Community Outreach		
Arkansas Farm Bureau	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.arfb.com/
Arkansas Foodbank	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://arkansasfoodbank.org/
Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		https://adhe.edu/about/coordinating-board
Arkansas Impact Philanthropy	Foundation	Community Outreach		https://arkansasimpact.org/
Arkansas Library Association	Industry Representative or Association (501c6)	Community Outreach		https://www.arlib.org/
Arkansas Minority Health Commission	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/arkansas-minority-health-commission
Arkansas Municipal League	County or Municipal Government	Community Outreach		https://www.arml.org/
Arkansas Office of Skills Development	Other	Community Outreach		https://arkansasosd.com/
Arkansas State Library	Community Anchor Institution	Community Outreach		https://www.library.arkansas.gov/
Arkansas Support Network	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		https://supports.org/
Arkansas System Division of Agriculture	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		
Arkansas United	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://arkansasunited.org/
Arkansas Veterans Affairs	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		
Better Community Developers	Other	Community Outreach		
CANOPY Northwest Arkansas (refugee resettlement organization)	Civil Rights Organization	Community Outreach		http://www.canopynwa.org/home
Central Arkansas Association of Black Journalists	Industry Representative or Association (501c6)	Community Outreach		
Central Arkansas Planning & Development District	Local Education Agency	Community Outreach		https://www.capdd.org/
City of Fayetteville Digital Inclusion Planning Team	County or Municipal Government	Community Outreach		
City of Little Rock	County or Municipal Government	Community Outreach		https://www.littlerock.gov/
Communications Workers of America, Local 6507 (Little Rock)	Workforce Development Organization	Community Outreach		
Communications Workers of America, Local 6508 (Little Rock)	Workforce Development Organization	Community Outreach		https://cwa-union.org/cwa_local_6508
Communities Unlimited	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://communitiesu.org/
Community Health Centers of Arkansas	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		https://www.chc-ar.org/
Conexion de Negocios Latinos	Hispanic-serving Institution	Community Outreach		https://www.conexiondenegocioslatinos.com/
DecARate- (access to AR Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and Coalitions Against Domestic Violence)	County or Municipal Government	Community Outreach		
Delta Population Health Institute	Health or Telehealth Organization (Direct Service and Policy focus)	Community Outreach		https://delta-phi.org/
Diamond State Networks	Other	Community Outreach		

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
Disability Rights Arkansas	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		https://disabilityrightsar.org/
Eastern Arkansas Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.eapdd.org/
El Centro Hispano	Hispanic-serving Institution	Community Outreach		https://www.centrohispanoarkansas.com/
El Zócalo	Hispanic-serving Institution	Community Outreach		
Elaine Legacy Center	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		http://www.elainelegacycenter.org/
Excel by 8	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://www.excelby8.net/
Fort Smith Vietnamese churches	Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving Institution	Community Outreach		
Forward Arkansas	Local Education Agency	Community Outreach		https://forwardarkansas.org/
Goodwill Industries of Arkansas	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://www.goodwillar.org/
Heartland Forward	Economic Development	Community Outreach		https://heartlandforward.org/
Holman Strategies	Other	Community Outreach		
Hope Policy Institute	Economic Development	Community Outreach		http://hopepolicy.org/
Mong Association in Siloam Springs	Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving Institution	Community Outreach		
Northwest Arkansas Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://nwaedd.org/
Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.nwarpc.org/
Philander Smith College (HBCU)	Historically Black College or University	Community Outreach		https://www.philander.edu/
Phoenix Youth & Family Services, Inc.	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		https://www.phoenixyouth.com/
Pulaski County Sheriff	County or Municipal Government	Community Outreach		
Refugee Resettlement Office, a ministry of Catholic Charities of Arkansas	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.dolr.org/catholic-charities/refugee-resettlement
RootedED Northwest Arkansas	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		
Runway Group	Economic Development	Community Outreach		https://runwaynwa.com/
Rural Community Alliance	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://thenewrural.org/
Shorter College (HBCU)	Historically Black College or University	Community Outreach		https://www.shortercollege.edu/
South Arkansas Health Council	Health or Telehealth Organization (Direct Service and Policy focus)	Community Outreach		
Southeast Arkansas Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.southeastarkansas.org/
Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission	Other	Community Outreach		https://searpc.com/
Southwest Arkansas Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.southwestar.org/
University of AR Cossatot	Local Education Agency	Community Outreach		https://www.cccua.edu/index.html
University of Arkansas	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		https://www.uark.edu/
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (HBCU)	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)	Organization that Represents Covered Populations	Community Outreach		https://www.uams.edu/
University of Arkansas-Department of Communication	Institutions of Higher Education (if not listed above)	Community Outreach		
Urban League of Arkansas	Nonprofit Organization (501c3)	Community Outreach		https://www.urbanleagueark.org/
West Central Arkansas Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://wcapdd.org/
Western Arkansas Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.wapdd.org/
White River Planning & Development District	Other	Community Outreach		https://www.wrpdd.org/
Winrock International	Foundation	Community Outreach		https://winrock.org/
Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation	Foundation	Community Outreach		https://wrfoundation.org/
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Conway Bureau	Other	Community Outreach	News Bureau	https://www.arkansasonline.com/
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, State Capitol Bureau - Little Rock	Other	Community Outreach	News Bureau	https://www.arkansasonline.com/
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Washington DC Bureau	Other	Community Outreach	News Bureau	https://www.arkansasonline.com/
Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fort Smith Bureau	Other	Community Outreach	News Bureau	https://www.nwaonline.com/
Arkansas Broadcasters Association	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	https://arkbroadcasters.org/
Arkansas College Media Association	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	
Arkansas Press Women	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	https://arkansaspresswomen.org/
Arkansas Scholastic Press Association	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	https://www.arkansascholasticpressassociation.org/
Public Relations Society of America, Arkansas Chapter	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	https://arkprsa.org/
Society of Professional Journalists Arkansas - Pro Chapter	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	https://arkansasppj.org/
Arkansas Press Association	Other	Community Outreach	Media Organization/Association	
The Southern Standard	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Little River Journal	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Batesville Daily Guard	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.guardonline.com/
The Beebe News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://beebeNews.com/

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
The Weekly Vista	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Saline Courier	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.arkansasonline.com/
Carroll County News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.carrollconews.com/
NEA Town Courier	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.neatowncourier.com/
Booneville Democrat	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Monroe County Argus	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://monroecountyherald.news/
The Arkansas Leader	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.arkansasleader.com/
White River Current	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.whiterivercurrent.com/
Camden News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.camdenarknews.com/
Charleston Express	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Villager Journal	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Johnson County Graphic	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.thegraphic.org/
Van Buren County Democrat	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Log Cabin Democrat	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.thecabin.net/
Clay County Courier	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.claycountycourier.com/
The Ashley News Observer	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.ashleynewsobserver.com/
Yell County Record	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.theyellcountyrecord.com/
Post-Dispatch	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
De Queen Bee	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.dequeenbee.com/
DeWitt Era-Enterprise	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.dewitt-ee.com/
Dumas Clarion	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.dumasclarion.com/
El Dorado News-Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.eldoradonews.com/
The England Democrat	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Eudora Enterprise	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Lake Area Weekly	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Washington County Enterprise-Leader	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://wcel.nwaonline.com/
La Prensa Libre	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://laprensaliibrear.com/
Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.nwaonline.com/
The Mountain Echo	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Fordyce News-Advocate	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Times-Herald	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.thnews.com/
Times Record	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.swtimes.com/
Glenwood Herald	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Westside Eagle Observer	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.eagleobserver.com/
Ashley County Ledger	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.ashleycountyledger.com/
South Arkansas Sun	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.southarkansasun.net/
Spring River Chronicle	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://src-news.com/
Harrison Daily Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://harrisdaily.com/
Grand Prairie Herald	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://herald-publishing.com/
The Sun Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.thesuntimes.com/
Helena World	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.helenaworld.org/
Hope-Prescott News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://hopeprescott.com/
Pacesetting Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Sentinel-Record	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.hotstr.com/
Hot Springs Village Voice	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	http://www.hsvvoice.com/
The Madison County Record	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.mcrecordonline.com/
Newton County Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://newtoncountytimes.com/
The Sun	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.jonesborosun.com/
Arkansas Business	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.arkansasbusiness.com/
The Daily Record	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.dailyrecord.us/
Banner-News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.magnoliabannernews.com/
Malvern Daily Record	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.malvern-online.com/
The Citizen	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.thedailycitizen.com/
Courier-Index	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Marshall Mountain Wave	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.emountainwave.com/
McGehee-Dermott Times-News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Melbourne Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Mena Star	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.menastar.com/

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
Advance-Monticellonian	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	http://advancemonticellonian.com/
Petit Jean Country Headlight	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.headlightnews.com/
Montgomery County News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.mcnews.online/
The Baxter Bulletin	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.baxterbulletin.com/
Stone County Leader	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://stonecountyleader.com/
Murfreesboro Diamond	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Nashville News-Leader	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Independent	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	http://eureka.news/
The Osceola Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.osceolatimes.com/
Ozark Spectator	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.ozarkspectator.net/
Paragould Daily Press	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.paragoulddailypress.com/
Paris Express	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Pea Ridge Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Perry County Petit Jean Country Headlight	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.headlightnews.com/
Clay County Times-Democrat	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.cctimesdemocrat.com/
Pine Bluff Commercial	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Pocahontas Star Herald	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.starheraldnews.com/
Cleveland County Herald	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.clevelandcountyherald.com/
The Courier	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.couriernews.com/
The News/Areawide Media	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.areawideneews.com/
The Daily Citizen	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.thedailycitizen.com/
The Sheridan Headlight	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://thesheridanheadlight.com/
Herald Leader	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://hl.nwaonline.com/
Lafayette County Press	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Lincoln American	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
The Lincoln Ledger	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Texarkana Gazette	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.texarkanagazette.com/
Poinsett County Democrat Tribune	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.democratribune.com/
Press Argus-Courier	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Waldron News	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.waldronnews.com/
The Times Dispatch	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.jonesborosun.com/times_dispatch/
The Eagle Democrat	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	http://theeagledemocrat.com/
Evening Times	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	http://theeveningtimes.com/theeveningtimes/
Wynne Progress	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	
Axios NWA	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.axios.com/local/nw-arkansas https://talkbusiness.net/category/regions/northwest-arkansas-region/
NW Arkansas Business Journal	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://talkbusiness.net/category/regions/northwest-arkansas-region/
Arkansas Business Publishing Group	Other	Community Outreach	Newspaper	https://www.arkansasbusiness.com/about-abpg
KTPB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDEL-FM / KVRC-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KPGG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMJI-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCON-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFPW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBTA-AM/FM/KZLE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAAB-AM/KWOZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBEV-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBVA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAFN-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAFN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBZU-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KREB-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KSEC-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KKEG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTHS-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KQIS-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLCN-AM/KHLS-FM-CHC 910/MC 96.3	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KQBK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBRI-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
KKSP-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZDT-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KPZK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWPS	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KJMT	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMGC/KAMD	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDXE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KJBX-FM/KJBX-HD2-AC 106.3	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KRMW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLTK-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFCM-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBRI-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLYR-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXIO-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KGFL-AM/KHPQ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDYN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTRQ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KASR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMJX-FM/KDJE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCCB-AM/KBKG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCHR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWNW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAGH-AM/FM-KWLT	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KYEL-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCAB-AM/KCJC-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWXT-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDQN-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KILX-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXSA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFLI-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDEW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXFE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHGA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCXY-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDMS-AM/KLBQ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KELD-AM/KAGL-FM/KMLK	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KIXB-FM/KMRX-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOYH-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHTE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVDW-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KESA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFFB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFAY-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCYT-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KKIX-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KQSM-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KEZA-FM/KIGL-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KRRD-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBJT-AM/KQEW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXJK-AM/KBFC-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBBQ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFPW-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTCS-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWHN-AM/KMAG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLSZ-FM/KOMS-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KISR-FM/KREU-FM/KFSA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFSW-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZBB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KKBD-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
KRZP-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHGZ-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAKS-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAMJ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOTN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KURM-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCNY-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTHS-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFMD-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZKZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KYXK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHMB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KELD-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOOU-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWHF-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHOZ-AM/KHBZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCWD-FM/KNWA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KENA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KSUG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAWW-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFFA-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KJW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBYB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXAR-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHPA-FM/KTPA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KKIK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLAZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZNG-AM/KQUS-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLXQ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVRE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVLO-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBTM-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFIN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KNEA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVHU-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KEAZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDXY-FM/KDXY-HD2 & HD3	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KKTZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KABZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KKPT-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KJBN-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KPZK-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAAY-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KSSN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KURB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTUV-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KARN-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWLR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOLL-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMXF-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVMA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBGB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLBL	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZYP-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAMS-FM/KALM-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXHT-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBCN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCGS-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
KWLR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHKN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVSA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KENA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KQOR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTTG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KGPO-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHBM-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVOM-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOMT/KPFM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTLO-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMTB-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KNAS-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KNBY-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOKR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWLT-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOSE-AM/KQXF-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDYN-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KRZS	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDRS-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTPG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KERX-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KBOA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCAT-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KDPX-FM/KPBA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KIPR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KPOC-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KAMO-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KFFK-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KURM-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWKK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KARV-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KSAR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHOM-FM/KBMV-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWCK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KSMD-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KARN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLRG-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMTL-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOKY-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZTS-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMCK-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KUOA-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KXNA-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KYNG-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KZHE-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWAK-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KOSY-AM/KKYR-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KEWL-FM/KKTK-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTFS-FM/KTFS-AM/KCMS-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTOY-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTTY-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KYGL-FM/KPWW-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KEGI-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHGG-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCMC-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KVMZ-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KHGG-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KIYS-FM/KIYS-HD2	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	

Organization Name	Type of organization	Engagement Purpose (Select the purpose that best matches). If you select "Other", please specify in the notes.	Notes	Link to the organization's website (if available)
KRLW-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWRF-FM/AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCLT-FM/KAKJ-FM-US(s) 104.9/UC 105.3	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KQPN-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KTRN-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KJJI-AM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KLAL-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KWYN-AM/FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KCTT-FM	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KUAR (NPR Affiliate)	Other	Community Outreach	Radio Station	
KMYA-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KTVE-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KXNW-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KNWA-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KFSM-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KHBS-TV/KHOG-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KVTH-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KAIT-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KVTJ-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KARK-TV/KARZ-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KLRA-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KATV-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KTHV-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KLRT-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KASN-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KVTN-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	
KFTA-TV	Other	Community Outreach	TV Station	

Engagement Title/Description	Engagement Date	Engagement Type	Engagement Location	Target Audience	Target Audience Location	Target Audience County	# Engaged	Covered Populations Reached					
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/22/2023	Meeting/Presentation	215 East Central Avenue, Bentonville, AR 72712	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Benton County	11						
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/22/2023	Meeting/Presentation	601 Dr Spurlin Cir, Berryville, AR 72616	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Carroll County	6						
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/22/2023	Meeting/Presentation	1 W Main St, Huntsville, AR 72740	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Madison County	5						
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/24/2023	Meeting/Presentation	570 Ben Lane, Camden, AR 71701	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Ouachita County	10						
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/24/2023	Meeting/Presentation	101 N. Washington Ave, El Dorado, AR 71730	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Union County	20						
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/24/2023	Meeting/Presentation	309 W Main St, Hampton, AR 71744	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Calhoun County	6						
County Broadband Public Meeting	2/24/2023	Meeting/Presentation	101 E Cedar, Warren, AR 71671	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Bradley County	16						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/8/2023	Meeting/Presentation	305 East Adams St., Hamburg, AR 71646	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Ashley County	11						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/8/2023	Meeting/Presentation	108 Main St, Lake Village, AR 71653	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Chicot County	6						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/8/2023	Meeting/Presentation	901 Holly St, McGehee, AR 71654	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Desha County	22						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/8/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Senior Citizens Center 203 Henley Drive Monticello, AR 71655	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Drew County	7						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/10/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Safe Shelter at Ben Geren Park 7200 Zero Street Fort Smith, AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Sebastian County	7						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/10/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Department of Emergency Management 1820 Chestnut Van Buren, AR 72956	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Crawford County	4						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/10/2023	Meeting/Presentation	211 West Commercial ST Ozark, AR 72949	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Franklin County	7						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/10/2023	Meeting/Presentation	First Security Bank Community Room 115 N. Craven St Clarksville, AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Johnson County	9						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/15/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Little River Election Center 349 N 3rd St Ashdown, AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Little River County	6						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/15/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Office of Emergency Management 900 Leslie Street Nashville, AR 71852	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Howard County	6						
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/15/2023	Meeting/Presentation	204 E Main St Murfreesboro, AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Pike County	5						

Engagement Title/Description	Engagement Date	Engagement Type	Engagement Location	Target Audience	Target Audience Location	Target Audience County	# Engaged	Covered Populations Reached			
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/15/2023	Meeting/Presentation	115 N. 3rd Street DeQueen AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Sevier County	10				
Legislative Breakfast	3/16/2023	Meeting/Presentation	1524 W 4th St, Little Rock, AR 72201, USA	Members of the General Assembly	Statewide Engagement	Pulaski County	25				
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/17/2023	Meeting/Presentation	151 S 2nd Ave, Piggott, AR 72454	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Clay County	13				
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/17/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Arkansas Northeastern College 2501 S Division Street, Room A101 Blytheville, AR 72316	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Mississippi County	16				
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/17/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Marion City Hall 13 Military Rd Marion, AR 72364	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Crittenden County	5				
County Broadband Public Meeting	3/17/2023	Meeting/Presentation	St Francis County Courthouse 313 S Izard St Forrest City, AR 72335	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	St Francis County	18				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/5/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Courthouse 123 S Main Street Salem, AR 72576	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Fulton County	20				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/5/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Mountain Home City Hall 720 S Hickory Street Mountain Home, AR 72653	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Baxter County	21				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/5/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Melbourne Community Center 451 College Drive Melbourne, AR 72556	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Izard County	16				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/5/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Old Courthouse 107 W Main Street Mountain View, AR 72560	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Stone County	13				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/7/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Lincoln County Courthouse 300 S Drew ST Star City, AR 71667	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Lincoln County	21				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/7/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Veteran's Building, 404 Sycamore St, Rison AR.	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Cleveland County	16				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/12/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Courthouse 2nd Floor 300 East Old Main Yellville, AR 72687	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Marion County	22				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/12/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Harrison Regional Chamber of Commerce, 303 N. Main St, Suite 301, Harrison	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Boone County	39				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/12/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Jasper City Hall 101 E. Elm Street Jasper, AR 72641	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Newton County	21				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/12/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Marshall City Hall 500 Highway 65 N Marshall, AR 72650	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Searcy County	17				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/14/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Nevada County Courthouse 215 E 2nd Street Prescott, AR 71857	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Nevada County	25				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/14/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Arkadelphia Alliance and Chamber 201 North 26th Street Arkadelphia, AR 71923	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Clark County	24				
County Broadband Public Meeting	4/14/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Malvern Chamber of Commerce 213 W 3rd Street Malvern, AR 72104	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Hot Spring County	30				

Engagement Title/Description	Engagement Date	Engagement Type	Engagement Location	Target Audience	Target Audience Location	Target Audience County	# Engaged	Covered Populations Reached					
County Broadband Public Meeting	5/17/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Dallas County Library 501 E 4th St Fordyce, AR 71742	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Dallas County	17						
County Broadband Public Meeting	5/17/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Jefferson County Quorum Courtroom 101 E Barraque St. Pine Bluff, AR 71601	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Jefferson County	41						
County Broadband Public Meeting	5/19/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Jackson County Courthouse 200 Main St Newport, AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Jackson County	25						
County Broadband Public Meeting	5/19/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Poinsett County Library 200 East St. Harrisburg, AR 72432	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Poinsett County	16						
County Broadband Public Meeting	5/19/2023	Meeting/Presentation	East Central Arkansas Regional Library 410 Merriman Ave E Wynne, AR 72396	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Cross County	15						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/7/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Van Buren County Courthouse Annex 1414 Hwy 65 South Clinton, AR	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Van Buren County	19						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/7/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Faulkner Co Courthouse 801 Locust St Conway, AR 72034	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Faulkner County	38						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/7/2023	Meeting/Presentation	OEM Conference Room 102 S Main St. Benton, AR 72015	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Saline County	40						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/8/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Little Rock Courthouse 201 Broadway St Little Rock, AR 72201	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Pulaski County	58						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/9/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Woodruff Electric Cooperative – Augusta 779 US Highway 64 Augusta, AR 72006	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Woodruff County	17						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/9/2023	Meeting/Presentation	Prairie County Courthouse Annex 605 AR-38, Des Arc, AR 72040	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Prairie County	18						
County Broadband Public Meeting	6/9/2023	Meeting/Presentation	The Old Train Depot 109 Front Street Lonoke, AR 72086	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Local	Lonoke County	30						
Public Comment Outreach Meeting	1/11/2024	Meeting/Presentation	215 E Central Ave Bentonville, AR 72712	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Regional	Benton County	15						
Public Comment Outreach Meeting	1/12/2024	Meeting/Presentation	Virtual	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Statewide Engagement	Various	82						
Public Comment Outreach Meeting	1/18/2024	Meeting/Presentation	1562 White Dr Batesville, AR 72501	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Regional	Independence County	22						
Public Comment Outreach Meeting	1/19/2024	Meeting/Presentation	121 W Main St Prescott, AR 71857	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Regional	Nevada County	20						
Public Comment Outreach Meeting	1/19/2024	Meeting/Presentation	120 River Market Ave Little Rock, AR 72201	County elected officials, municipal leaders, school districts, healthcare representatives, chamber of commerce, concerned citizens	Regional	Pulaski County	12						

Public Comment Disclosure							Feedback Provided		Other Comments		Date Submitted		Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response	
First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan									
Hal	Vandver			hvandiver@gmail.com	All	I support the plan. I find your plan addresses my concerns regarding the availability of broadband service. I wrote a public comment previously in that regard, having spoken with all 75 county clerks across our state gathering political data in the last election. I found the lack of internet services in rural counties to be prevalent and unacceptable. I see by your map that you are, indeed, concentrating in those areas in your initial rounds of grants. And, I find your goals for achieving total access by 2028 to be admirable and hope they can be achieved. I also appreciate your digital skills training. The exodus of young people from rural areas in our state due to lack of opportunity will continue if children are not trained with basic skills required by today's business community. My one concern is oversight of all of the money that has been appropriated, making sure it goes where it is most needed, and oversight of construction methods to ensure the quality of the connectivity. However, all in all, I would say from a layman's point of view, you are headed in the right direction. Let's make sure our children can compete and businesses are attracted to all areas of our wonderful, unique "Natural State."			1/9/2024					
Jule	Morton			njam69@gmail.com	availability, digital training					1/14/2024				
Cheryl	Barnard			cheryl.barnard201@gmail.com	residence location has no fiberoptic broadband	Our location in far southern Perry County -- near Williams Junction area on Hwy 10 - does not have fiberoptic broadband access; and, according to the Kinetic Corp office, there is no plan to get that done anytime soon; the Pulaski County side of Hwy 10 does have the fiberoptics Mobile broadband access plays a crucial role in improving healthcare outcomes, especially in rural or underserved areas. It allows individuals to utilize telemedicine services, engage with healthcare providers, and access vital health information via their mobile device. Thrive Mobile research indicates that 44% of Medicaid members had their wireless service canceled or shut off due to cost, and only 29% of health plan members have their plan's mobile app loaded onto their phone. Thrive Mobile directly addresses the digital divide with our comprehensive mobile solution to minimize health disparities for underserved populations. Our primary goal is to eliminate utilization gaps, simplifying actions that promote overall wellbeing. We streamline access to healthcare services by providing customers with a free, high-quality large-screen mobile device pre-loaded with essential apps for telemedicine, government health resources, and healthcare provider connectivity. Additionally, we offer on-demand digital navigation support and incentives to encourage proactive health management. Our pilot programs have given us a deep appreciation of the fundamental challenges that many of our customers experience today--making telemedicine more available is irrelevant if you don't have a working phone or a data plan. Distribution of Thrive Mobile's devices and unlimited talk/text/data plans can help Arkansas achieve its long-term goal to provide 65,000 free/low-cost devices across the state, with the added benefit that these devices can directly improve healthcare outcomes by enabling last mile care connectivity.			1/15/2024					
Leslie	Solcner	Thrive Mobile	Chief of Staff	lesliesolcner@gmail.com	Section 5.2.4					1/16/2024				
Jim	Lendall			jimlendall@gmail.com		A couple of basic questions not elucidated by the state's office site. How much will it cost for individuals to access the state-funded Wi-Fi or do they have to go through commercial ISPs and pay their outrageous fees? If the private ISPs use the expanded service (which for profit reasons was not done already by them) to screw more customers, will they pay the state back in this corporate welfare scheme?			1/17/2024					
Mary Lou	Basham			mloubasham@gmail.com	5. Strategies, Measurable Objectives, and Implementation and 5.6	Priority should be given to establishing internet providers across the state concurrent with a multi pronged digital access marketing campaign. The groups and agencies appear to be appropriately broad to effectively cover 75 counties. What we need is main stream media to report and publish some sort of "story" each and every week in 2024. Their stories will be picked up by other media. Also, the public school systems can be a communication outlet in tandem with Main stream media. The key is that the messaging must be consistent and accurate across all outlets. And, personal story telling is key in this endeavor. There is also the story of state and federal and local entities cooperating to improve the lives of all Arkansans and that is an important story.			1/18/2024					
Chris	Lee	University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture	Chief Information Officer	cleef@uada.edu	Access & Affordability, Digital Skills	I am new to the CIO role at UADA and want to ensure we have an opportunity to participate in this effort to ensure our organization is part of the overall solution to support our state and county governments, along with our communities who are underserved.			1/19/2024					
Danny	Stewart			dstewart@dannystewart.com	4.23	Affordability is mentioned only as \$30 and \$31. However, "affordable" seems to be undefined. And "affordable" is different from young people vs established people vs retirees when it comes to residence services. Then there are other levels for business, small business, not-for-profits, etc. If there is a way with the grant money to address issues like this I work for a not-so-small business. Last year, Lumen unilaterally raised our price for gig/gig internet from \$450 to \$1650 a month, taking it from affordable to burdensome.			1/19/2024					
Danny	Stewart			dstewart@dannystewart.com	Curriculum	It's good to see that some professional educational institutions are working on this. I envision a core (browser, search engines, categories of sites, don't believe everything, etc.) then options for access for and connecting desktop computers (ethernet), access for and connecting laptop computers and mobile devices (WiFi) and then specific resources for agriculture, education, business (federal, state and local levels).			1/19/2024					
Danny	Stewart			dstewart@dannystewart.com	Grants to Trailers	Is the grant program designed (a) with a preference for the little guy - those individuals who are EXPERTS in their counties and are capable of adapting a training session to the needs of the group, or (b) toward having the smallest number of grantees, likely big companies that typically miss the needs of the participants.			1/19/2024					
Glen	Taylor			bow_hunter5@yahoo.com	Quality internet service	I live in Judsonia Arkansas, my internet is constantly going out or running very slow! I have bright speed as an internet provider (dsl). Please get quality high speed internet for this town!			1/20/2024					
Lena	McJunkins			greeneyelena@gmail.com					1/20/2024					
Lovie	Hester			Dhester655@sbcbglobal.net					1/20/2024					

Public Comment Disclosure									
First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan	Feedback Provided	Other Comments	Date Submitted	Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response
						My wife and I moved to Hot Springs two years ago. My job requires that I have high speed internet as I work for a global IT company and work remote. Our location does not have high speed internet available. When we bought our home, we were told by the provider that they were running fiber to our neighborhood and we should have high speed internet within a few months. That was almost two years ago now. I have made due by getting Starlink but it's not nearly as fast, nor does it have the bandwidth I need for my work. These contractors that are installing fiber, who is following up with them about progress? Are they pocketing funds and not installing the connectivity? Had there been an audit of these companies? Perhaps there is some other reason this has stalled, but our community hasn't been given any update or plan. I would recommend requiring the contractors to provide a 1 year and 5 year plan, depending on the budget cycle, and require them to present their progress on regular basis. That would allow opportunity to address road blocks or set backs. Then publish those findings so the public has some idea what to expect. Thanks for your time. Please feel free to contact me as I am willing to assist.		1/20/2024	Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan. The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor. We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.
Dale	LeComte			scott.lecomte@gmail.com	Broadband availability				Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan. The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.
Deirdra	Wilson			deidratwilson@gmail.com				1/21/2024	The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor. We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.
Sam	Evans			SamEvans@outlook.com	We need FIBER broadband, not expensive throttled wireless.	FIBER for all of Arkansas - nothing else is future-proof. NO more subsidies for unaffordable wireless internet. It doesn't work in a lot of hilly areas and it's subject to lower congestion and weather. Electric Co-ops are the answer in rural areas. They already have the right-of-way and the poles for fast deployment. They just need to be forced to do it. January 24, 2024		1/23/2024	The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor. We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.
Ines	Polonius	Communities Unlimited	CEO	ines.polonius@communities.org	Strategy 2.24, listed on page 92	Mr. Glen Howie Arkansas Department of Commerce Arkansas State Broadband Office 1 Commerce Way, Building 4 Little Rock, Arkansas 72202 RE: Arkansas Digital Opportunity Plan Comments Dear Mr. Howie, We applaud the state of Arkansas' and the Arkansas State Broadband Office's hard work to bridge the digital divide for all Arkansans and we appreciate the innovation and diligence of your team. Communities Unlimited is a non-profit organization that serves Arkansas and six other states in the southern United States, connecting communities to solutions through human connections and providing technical assistance on community development, including broadband-related topics, economic development, environmental infrastructure, small business ecosystems, affordable housing, healthy foods, and entrepreneurship. CU is also a U.S. Treasury-certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Members from CU's staff helped AR Connect host focus groups, share the ADOS with relevant stakeholders, and disseminate information related to Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity plan. The organization is also a member of the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition. Communities Unlimited's promise is to partner with people who want to escape from persistent poverty and connect them to solutions for achieving sustainable prosperity. Through human connection and ingenuity combined with cutting-edge technology and expertise, CU connects people to solutions that sustain healthy businesses, healthy communities, and healthy lives. CU's entrepreneurship program has a long history working with small businesses owners to develop capacity. CU's entrepreneurship team specializes in working alongside small business owners over several months to a year to help improve management skills while also increasing the profitability of the business for capital readiness and owner wealth building. This capacity training includes e-commerce and digital skills training. Related to our work in this field, we have a recommendation to make to the State's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan: Prioritize Digital Opportunity Capacity in Small Business and Community Development. We recommend the State not wait until the end of 2026 to implement the Small Business digital skills strategy. This Strategy 2.24, listed on page 92, and referenced in the implementation timeline on page 110 of the plan, is shown as not initiating until 4th QTR of 2026. As this is a priority for the State (as mentioned in state goal 5.4 on page 107) and will have positive economic results for small business, communities, and the State, Arkansas should get started sooner. As high-speed broadband rolls-out into new communities, we should be immediately equipping local small businesses and entrepreneurs with the digital skills to fully take advantage of the new world-class connectivity so local Arkansas economies can receive the greatest impact. By starting this digital skill strategy two years earlier in 2025 Q1, we will see two additional years of economic multipliers. Small business, entrepreneurship, and digital skills training resources exist in the state, and can be valuable partners in these efforts. Communities Unlimited looks forward to working with the Arkansas State Broadband Office to help the state of Arkansas successfully overcome its challenges to broadband access, adoption, and use. Sincerely, Ines Polonius, CEO Communities Unlimited 3 East Colt Square Drive Fayetteville, AR 72703 P 479-443-2700 www.CommunitiesU.org		1/23/2024	Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan. The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor. We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.
Shirley	Renix	Concerned Citizens of Waldo	Community Organizer	shirley@arpanel.org	To help children to be able to keep up with school and to have every advantage	All I can say it's much needed in the area were I work in were they don't have any service at all		1/23/2024	The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor. We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.
Elaine	Williams	Concerned Citizens of Prescott		ewrecyc@outlook.com	Broadband yes	Much needed for the rural communities		1/23/2024	The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor. We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.

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Pamela	Weaver	Comcast	VP of Government and Regulatory Affairs	pamela.pickett@comcast.com	Entirety	<p>Comcast Cable Communications, LLC, on behalf of its subsidiaries (together, "Comcast"), submits this letter in response to the Arkansas State Broadband Office ("ARConnect") Draft Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan ("Draft Plan"). Comcast thanks ARConnect for seeking stakeholder comment and commends it for an exemplary start to achieving digital equity and accessibility for all Arkansas residents and communities.</p> <p>Supporting our local communities has been core to Comcast's DNA, and given Comcast's long and proven track record of success expanding broadband access and adoption in Arkansas, Comcast stands ready to partner with the State in its efforts through various existing programs. Comcast offers these comments to the Draft Plan in the spirit of longstanding partnership and looks forward to continuing this critical work to advance digital skills and close Arkansas's digital divide.</p> <p>Comcast's Significant Investments in Arkansas Connectivity</p> <p>Comcast strongly supports broadband deployment and adoption initiatives in Arkansas and stands ready to further support the State's efforts. Comcast continues to invest heavily in the State, with investments during the past three years totaling \$162.6 million, including \$65 million toward technology and infrastructure improvements like Internet network upgrades. Nearly 230,300 Arkansas homes and businesses have access to Xfinity Internet and Comcast Business products and services, including speeds of 12 gigabits per second or more. Comcast's investments serve as force multipliers for public funding. For example, Comcast has partnered with ARConnect to receive Arkansas Rural Connect ("ARC") grants to serve unserved and underserved areas of Cross, Faulkner, and Pulaski Counties. In addition to the \$18 million awarded in ARC grant funding, Comcast contributed more than \$16 million toward closing Arkansas's digital divide. Over the past three years, Comcast added and upgraded nearly 10,000 miles of our network to connect homes and businesses and is preparing for the rollout of our next generation 10G network across the United States, including throughout our Arkansas service territory. This growth is all part of the more than \$20 billion investment Comcast made nationwide from 2018 to 2022 in our networks, which now cover more than 60 million U.S. homes and businesses.</p> <p>Internet Essentials</p> <p>Internet Essentials ("IE") is the largest and most successful broadband adoption initiative in the industry, connecting more than 10 million Americans to broadband Internet at home since launching in 2011. IE is designed to be a wrap-around solution that addresses the main barriers to broadband adoption. IE provides subscribers with access to broadband service at speeds of 50/10 Mbps for \$9.95 per month or 100/20 Mbps for \$29.95 per month (for IE Plus), access to millions of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, a wireless gateway at no additional cost, the ability to obtain low-cost or no-cost computers, unlimited data, and free digital skills training. Notably, while the IE price of \$9.95 per month has remained steady since the program launched, speeds for that service have increased seven times, including more than doubling during the early days of the pandemic. Recognizing the critical need for Internet-ready devices in addition to a broadband connection, Comcast has distributed more than 200,000 free and subsidized laptops. The IE program has been designed to eliminate barriers for financially constrained households and help more families benefit from home Internet access. To become an IE customer, there is no credit check required, no term contract requirement, and customers who do not have a social security number (or prefer not to provide their social security number) may provide other forms of identification to apply.</p> <p>-Since 2011, 144,000 low-income Arkansas residents in 36,000 homes have connected to the Internet through IE.</p> <p>-The top cities for IE connections include Little Rock, North Little Rock, West Memphis, Jacksonville, and Marion.</p> <p>Comcast/Xfinity proudly participates in the Affordable Connectivity Program ("ACP") with all tiers of Internet service the company offers, including two tiers (IE and IE Plus) that are fully covered by the \$30 ACP benefit. We hope that the federal government will renew ACP funding and are proud to have supported and/or cohosted nearly 900 ACP events nationwide since October 2022. Beyond connectivity, we work with tens of thousands of partners across the country, including nonprofits and city leaders, to support digital skills training to improve economic mobility. We offer free training through our IE Learning Center: Internet Essentials – Free Internet from Xfinity (xfinity.com), which features hundreds of modules on Internet basics, online safety, digital skills for everyday life, and advanced skill-building. The content is curated from partners like Common Sense Media, Goodwill, CNBC, Women in Sports Technology, and more. Since 2017, the Little Rock School District Parent Engagement Department distributes at least 400 IE fliers at events throughout the school year. Moreover, IE materials were included in at least 100 backpacks during the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commission's Back-2-School Supply Drive, and the Watershed Inc. inserted IE fliers in 200 food boxes during their annual Holiday Food Drive. In addition, Comcast has partnered with several experts, including ConnectSafely, Older Adults Technology Services ("OATS"), and Council for Opportunity in Education, to develop printed digital skills curricula that are distributed to thousands of community partners free of cost. These include several online safety toolkits for seniors and students, discussion guides for parents, and our Jurassic World Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math ("STEAM") curricula. Comcast has long invested in nonprofit partners focused on digital skills via the Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation to help provide skills-building, job training, and other career development offerings for the full spectrum of learners, from elementary, middle, and high school students to adults. Locally, these organizations include Central Arkansas Boys & Girls Clubs, including the Billy Mitchell, Penick, Whetstone, and Wetherington clubs, among other organizations.</p> <p>According to a recent study, "Wired and Hired: Employment Effects of Subsidized Broadband Internet for low-income Americans" published in the American Economic Journal, IE customers make an average of \$1,385 more per year and are 8 percent more likely to be employed than those eligible for but not connected through IE.</p> <p>Digital Equity Challenges and Opportunities</p> <p>Barriers to Broadband Adoption. Both longitudinal research and empirical evidence demonstrate that the primary barriers to broadband adoption extend beyond affordability and include perceived relevance and digital readiness, among others:</p> <p>Perceived Relevance. A significant population of Americans who have not yet adopted home broadband do not recognize the relevance of such connectivity. The National Urban League ("NUL") Lewis Latimer Plan explains that perceived relevance may be tied to a lack of awareness and understanding of the Internet's uses and capabilities, in addition to the necessary skills needed to use it. NTIA's Internet Use Survey data showed that 58 percent of the 21 million offline households indicated no interest in or need to be online. Moreover, a 2021 Pew Research Center survey found that 71 percent of non-broadband users say that they would not be interested in an at-home broadband connection. These numbers help to demonstrate why education for and outreach to the unconnected and newly connected regarding broadband and its associated benefits is imperative for closing the digital divide.</p> <p>Digital Readiness. Digital readiness is "the sum of the technical skills and cognitive skills people employ to use computers to retrieve information, interpret what they find, and judge the quality of that information" and "the ability to communicate and collaborate using the Internet." Digital readiness challenges impact different parts of people's lives, including the use of developing technologies, online educational resources, and telehealth capabilities. While the U.S. workforce has a high demand for digital skills, many workers, especially workers of color and those without higher education, lack these skills.</p> <p>Other Adoption Barriers. Other adoption barriers pertain to information and language, distrust, and structural issues tied to poverty. Information and language barriers may pertain to individuals determining program eligibility, parsing an application process, and setting up devices and services. Addressing language barriers is important for Comcast, which is why IE call center agents can help IE applicants in more than 240 languages, in addition to American Sign Language. Distrust may pertain to biases against free services and government programs, as well as uncertainty about additional costs and privacy concerns. Structural barriers may include complicated housing situations, such as recent moves or plans to relocate. Comcast recognizes that just like there is no single solution to addressing broadband adoption, the underlying challenges are also not monolithic.</p> <p>Bringing the Adoption Gap. Empirical evidence demonstrates that community outreach and engagement – by digital navigators, community-based organizations, community anchor institutions, faith-based leaders, and other trusted voices – is vital to overcoming complex adoption barriers.</p> <p>To this end, Comcast has been investing for more than a decade to expand digital equity and inclusion in Arkansas, including through community outreach engagement efforts. Project UP is our comprehensive initiative to advance digital equity and help build a future of unlimited possibilities. Backed by a \$1 billion commitment to reach tens of millions of people, Project UP encompasses the programs and community partnerships across Comcast, NBCUniversal, and Sky that connect people to the Internet, advance economic mobility, and open doors for the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs, storytellers, and creators.</p> <p>Project UP encompasses a number of longstanding and new initiatives in collaboration with local communities, including:</p> <p>Digital Navigator Programs. Digital navigators are a powerful and proven tool to aid broadband adoption. Digital navigators are typically hired volunteers or staff from trusted community institutions – such as libraries, social or public service agencies, and community-based organizations – who can assist users in overcoming barriers to adoption in a tailored manner.</p> <p>Digital navigators can address the relevance of broadband by demonstrating benefits like access to information, telehealth capabilities, and introduction to upskilling programs that serve as pathways to education, employment, and more. A recent Boston Consulting Group ("BCG") study supported by Comcast surveyed 1,500 people who have participated in programs with digital navigators and found that 65 percent of respondents were able to obtain Internet connectivity or a connected device, and 85 percent of respondents now use the Internet more frequently. The same research demonstrates that the benefits of digital navigators extend beyond individuals obtaining Internet access – almost 50 percent of respondents obtained better health care; more than 40 percent of respondents received support for essentials like food, rent, and housing; and more than one in three respondents found a new job or secured higher income. Given the importance of digital navigators, in 2022 alone, Comcast invested \$14 million in more than 225 nonprofits to support digital navigator programs across our service areas.</p> <p>Additionally, investing in digital navigators will provide individuals from all racial/ethnic and educational backgrounds with the opportunity to learn more from members of their own communities about how broadband-connected technology can be relevant to their lives. Research from BCG revealed several other key findings, including that (1) trust and relationship-building are key to reaching disconnected communities; (2) familiar outreach channels are most effective at getting learners in the door; (3) one-on-one attention is often most effective, especially for learning fundamental skills; (4) resourcing and local coordination can minimize burdens on individual digital navigators; and (5) digital navigators are the trusted voice on the ground for understanding community needs. These solutions address the main barriers to broadband adoption, as described above, and increase digital</p>				<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>
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Abby	Hughes Holsclaw	Arkansas Impact Philanthropy	Coordinator	abby@arkansasimpact.org	All	<p>Arkansas Impact Philanthropy (AIP) welcomes the opportunity to submit comments to your office on Arkansas's Digital Opportunity Plan. We are grateful for you and your team's leadership to prioritize broadband and digital opportunity issues in Arkansas. It is our collective belief that, if implemented strategically, these funds will have a historical impact on our state helping reduce and eliminate institutional and structural barriers to technology access and use.</p> <p>As grantmakers investing in Arkansas, AIP's mission is to convene funders to collaborate, influence, and invest for systemic change throughout Arkansas. We envision a strong philanthropic sector that collaborates to create a more prosperous Arkansas for all Arkansans. One area of particular interest is our commitment to elevate access to broadband and connectivity for Arkansans.</p> <p>Following on the momentum built during AIP's engagement with the 2020 census, the collaborative has turned its focus to equitable broadband expansion and access. Through our broadband initiative, we seek not only to build the infrastructure to ensure high-speed internet access for all Arkansans, but also to strengthen the capacity of Arkansas communities and nonprofit organizations to organize around common concerns, elevate the voices of marginalized communities, and collaborate to connect individuals to affordable internet services.</p> <p>In partnership with Rural LISC, we have piloted the Digital Connectors Program with seven nonprofit organizations working in communities as trusted navigators to support individuals as they assess their broadband options and sign up for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) to lower their internet costs. Further, AIP has launched the Building Connected Communities Club with the partners listed below to design a grassroots, high-touch campaign to promote broadband adoption and use.</p> <p>Building Connection Communities Club Partners: Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association Arkansas Public Policy Panel Arkansas United El Centro Hispano Garland County Library Life Skills for Youth Rural Community Alliance Tri-County Rural Health Urban League of the State of Arkansas</p> <p>Additional partners of the BCCC include Rural LISC partnerships in Arkansas, specifically in these organizations: Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center, Inc. Communities Unlimited, Inc. Delta Community Development and Law Center, Inc. Go Forward Pine Bluff/The Generator Mississippi County, Arkansas Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc. Southeast Arkansas Community College Startup Junkie Consulting LLC/Conductor Upskill Northwest Arkansas</p> <p>Role of Digital Navigators AIP strongly believes in the need for digital navigators and how their roles can be leveraged for building capacity and bridging the digital divide. Nearly 20% of Americans lack a broadband connection or digital device at home according to the 2020 US census. The Boston Consulting Group recently studied digital navigator programs and found from a survey of over 1,500 people that digital navigators can increase the effectiveness of digital equity programs. With support from a digital navigator, over 65% of survey respondents were able to obtain internet access, obtain a computer or tablet at home, and over 85% reported using the internet more. This illustrates the crucial role that digital navigators play, and we need to support and significantly expand these roles across Arkansas.</p> <p>We endorse the State's strategy on Page 80, Goal 5, part 5.3 which states, "house an AmeriCorps digital navigator in the ARConnect office for the implementation duration to support the project." AIP applauds that ARConnect currently has an American Connection Corps (ACC) fellow on staff and encourages the continued partnership with ACC to help the State grow its institutional knowledge.</p> <p>We recommend that, to have effective digital navigator programs, it is important to support the development of a standardized digital navigator curriculum and assessments. Currently, the plan mentions this on page 10, Goal 2, section 2.5.</p> <p>We recommend building on-the-ground capacity by supporting the development of digital navigators by providing ample funding for local stakeholders.</p> <p>We recommend providing increased financial support for grassroots outreach campaigns delivered by trusted organizations who have existing relationships with the target communities.</p> <p>Partnerships with Public Housing Authorities & Federally Supported Residential Communities We endorse the following statements in the plan as sound strategy: Page 81, Section 5.2 - "In addition to the organizations listed as potential partners, ARConnect is eager to work with all local and county officials, philanthropic organizations, and other institutions that support and engage with covered populations." Page 31 in reference to Table 2 - "Can support digital opportunity efforts based on their current engagement in supporting high-speed internet availability, affordability, and adoption." Page 79, Section 5.1, Goal 1.3 - "Explore partnerships with municipal housing authorities to include affordable at-home internet service at multi-unit dwellings."</p> <p>We recommend that the plan also refer to nonprofit developers of affordable housing.</p> <p>Capacity Building for Ecosystems We endorse the plan uplifting relationship building with workforce development partners to determine organizations that can help with physical device refurbishment (page 97). We agree and appreciate that the plan presents a reasonable pricing model of the cost of consumer device access (page 65).</p> <p>We recommend that the plan emphasizes the importance of on-the-ground programs and community action agencies to support this initiative with regards to page 80, Section 5.1, Goal 4.2 - foster programs that distribute low-cost and free devices to those included in covered populations across the state. Potential partners that are listed operate at the statewide level; and, we recommend exploring partnerships with local boots-on-the-ground organizations.</p> <p>We endorse the plan's specific mention of mini grants to expand free Wi-Fi access at non-profit organizations, community organizations, and institutions that serve covered populations under potential actions (page 86).</p> <p>Prioritize Digital Opportunity Capacity in Small Business and Community Development We recommend the State not wait until the end of 2026 to implement the Small Business digital skills strategy. This Strategy 2.24, listed on page 92, and referenced in the implementation timeline on page 110 of the plan, is shown as not initiating until 4th quarter of 2026. As this is a priority for the State (as mentioned in state goal 5.4 on page 107) and will have positive economic results for small business, communities, and the State, Arkansas should move the start date of this strategy up in the plan. As high-speed broadband rolls-out into new communities, we should be immediately equipping local small businesses and entrepreneurs with the digital skills to fully take advantage of the new world-class connectivity so local Arkansas economies can receive the greatest impact. By starting this digital skill strategy two years earlier in 2025 quarter 1, we will see two additional years of economic multipliers. Small business, entrepreneurship, and digital skills training resources exist in the state, and can be valuable partners in these efforts.</p> <p>Nonprofits & Community Organizations Are Ready Partners We recommend the State prioritize local nonprofits who can serve as a trusted, community resource which can easily be accessed by members of the community. Additionally, we recommend that page 79, Section 5.1, Goal 2.2 - create a temporary, community mini grant program to support the expansion of existing digital skills programs at organizations and institutions that serve covered populations - be expanded to provide technical assistance for grant awareness and the application process.</p> <p>Reach Rural & Covered Communities We recommend the State expand on its plan to uplift and reach rural communities as a covered, prioritized population. Plans should have tailored solutions based on survey findings to directly reach covered populations rather than relying on broad awareness campaigns and general outreach efforts. Further, we ask that plans detail efforts beyond basic internet and computer skills training - which are often insufficient for marginalized communities facing decades of digital disparities. Finally, we recommend the State create a plan for sustaining affordable broadband beyond the ACP funding period which may end in the coming months.</p> <p>We believe that by addressing the noted concerns, the State's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan can comprehensively serve our communities and covered populations. AIP stands ready and committed to assist the State to realize its objectives detailed in the plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please contact Abby Hughes Holsclaw, AIP Coordinator, at abby@arkansasimpact.org with questions.</p>		1/24/2024	<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. 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						<p>Large screen device ownership: We would recommend specifically mentioning large screen devices as the goal throughout the plan. Personal device ownership provides a unique computing experience that cannot be replicated through public use of computers or shared devices. Large screen devices such as laptops, desktops, Chromebooks, and tablets, are critical for a full and equitable computing experience. While smartphones are often more affordable than the upfront cost of a computer, evidence shows the use of smartphones alone may limit the range of one's online activity and depth of overall digital skills.</p> <p>Device quality and intended use: We recommend putting into place policies that ensure that devices are reliable and that the choice of device matches a recipient's intended use and context.</p> <p>Workforce opportunity: We highly support efforts at refurbishing computers as a viable workforce development program. It has a low entry point for staff and a robust career ladder to family sustaining wages. Plus, it may come with its own set of funding sources (such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) to support the work on an ongoing basis. Developing a new program or integrating into an existing refurbishing program that is designed to train personnel in technical skills and refurbishment would not only increase the State's capacity, but also create a pipeline of technology talent for future initiatives.</p> <p>Support for device deployment: Planning is required for deployment of computers to Covered Populations is a complex, multi-step, multifaceted process. Specific training and support should be provided to entities that are tasked with providing devices to Covered Populations. Intentional effort should be placed on developing a deployment network through community-based organizations, with formalized connections made between device sources in populated hubs and rural deployment points. It will be important to ensure that deployment partners are interested, have the capacity, and are supported in this role.</p> <p>Device essentials: There are supports in addition to a computer that are needed for specific covered populations. Our Device Essentials graphic (https://digitunity.org/community-forums/device-essentials/) outlines many of those supports and may be helpful to your team. Items such as headphones for telehealth and telework, desks for cramped senior apartments to cybersecurity software all have costs and require planning.</p> <p>Connecting supply to deployment: Digitunity has a longstanding online technology donation matching platform that can be utilized to connect the supply of new and refurbished devices to vetted community organizations for deployment. This is a critical and often overlooked part of the overall device ecosystem, and we'd be happy to share more about this and do a demo with your team.</p> <p>Ecosystem approach: To ensure that all Arkansas residents are able to obtain a free or low cost computer, establishing a robust supply of free and affordable devices through accessible, resilient, community-level distribution systems is critical. Systems thinking is required, with active involvement from a diverse range of actors and stakeholders. Digitunity's Methodology for a Sustainable Device Ecosystem (found here) provides a framework for addressing this issue on a large scale and we'd be happy to share more about how this necessary approach can be integrated into the plan.</p>			
Karisa	Tashjian	Digitunity	Senior Director of Programs and Strategic Partnerships	karisa@digitunity.org	Goal 4: Increase Access to Affordable Digital Devices, pages 96-99			1/25/2024	<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>
Debra	Lang	Town of Georgetown	Justice of Peace District B	DEBLANG1960@GMAIL.COM		<p>Only heard that comments were available for the public in today's newspaper. Need to make sure that our community is being looked at for better broadband access. We have a cell tower that gives us some internet but our cell phone service is practically useless. We have to use WiFi calling from our internet to get any service at all. Our community is prone to flooding from the White River and we can be and have been cut off for a week or two. If our internet is down we have no communication unless we have a ground line which is awful, so much static you can't hear to talk when the lines are wet or under water, which is the reason most of us have quit using ground line service. To highlight the lack of service to our community, we didn't get the Emergency Service Broadcast alert that went out a month or two ago. Please review your findings and make sure our small community has not been overlooked in your plans. Thank you, we desperately need better phone service to our area.</p>		1/25/2024	<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>

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						<p>(EducationSuperHighway will also email these comments in both DOCX and PDF formats to the broadband office since some of the formatting and footnotes may not have come through here on the portal.)</p> <p>EducationSuperHighway Comments and Model Language for Arkansas's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan</p> <p>Background Approximately 28 million households in the United States do not have high-speed broadband. Seventeen million of these households are offline because they cannot afford an available internet connection. This broadband affordability gap has become one of the primary inhibitors of access to economic security and opportunity. It is a reality centered in our nation's poorest communities and disproportionately impacts people of color. As states consider their comprehensive broadband affordability strategies, a critical tool that should be leveraged and included to connect millions of unconnected households is the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Achieving national best practice ACP adoption rates can significantly accelerate closing the broadband affordability gap, connecting two-thirds of the 17 million households impacted by this gap. Especially as the ACP's future status is being considered, States should reiterate its importance by referencing it as crucial to successfully realizing digital equity in their state. Furthermore, States can use Digital Equity Act plans and funding to implement key strategies to increase ACP adoption.</p> <p>The impact of the ACP can be felt equally across partisan lines, with participation rates nearly identical in Republican (31.2% of eligible households) and Democrat states (30.8%). Our analysis of ACP enrollment data also shows that both rural and urban households benefit greatly from the program, with 13% of rural households and 15% of households in metro or urban areas enrolled in the ACP.</p> <p>Millions of eligible households are not taking advantage of the program as they are unaware that the ACP exists. Surveys of low- and lower-middle-income households have found that in some communities, up to 75% of eligible households are unaware that they might be eligible for federal broadband benefits. Trust in the program is another critical barrier, as many eligible households are concerned about sharing personal information as part of the enrollment process. Finally, enrollment barriers such as application accessibility, language assistance, and documentation challenges necessitate direct support for a portion of eligible households that cannot complete the enrollment process independently.</p> <p>Broad outreach alone often fails to build the trust needed to drive people to action and should be paired with outreach and enrollment support from trusted sources such as government agencies that administer benefit programs, school districts, community health centers, faith leaders, community-based organizations, and businesses they regularly interact with. These organizations have existing relationships with eligible households, know the most effective time, place, and manner to increase awareness in the communities they serve, and have established outreach channels such as in-person community events, digital marketing, emailing, phone banking, text messaging, physical information distribution and posters in high-traffic target areas. Furthermore, they provide trusted space and avenues to support enrollment in the ACP, and can help mitigate some of the challenges households face when they enroll.</p> <p>To overcome the complex barriers that keep under-resourced households offline, EducationSuperHighway (ESH) believes that state leaders should take action to convene a state-wide ACP-focused cohort that brings together these critical trusted institutions, leveraging Digital Equity Act funds to enable outreach to and support for unconnected households. At a micro level, the cohort will provide a collective framework to ensure the creation and sustainability of an ecosystem of organizations and stakeholders working on digital equity initiatives, with a particular focus on the ACP. At a macro level, this work can provide a model for what state-wide ACP implementation could look like, as well as confirm the most effective role that the state may play in supporting future capacity or competitive grant-funded recipients in alignment with Digital Equity Plans.</p> <p>The cohort should consist of a series of workshops intended to promote ways in which leveraging the ACP contributes to achieving digital equity across the state. To facilitate this, ESH can provide pro bono co-facilitation of the cohort and serve as a subject matter expert and technical advisor, providing its expertise to the cohort community. This group should strive to create a collaborative space where organizations can learn from and inform one another's work across the state. It should also promote coordination and collaboration between the state and other stakeholders, alleviating the unintentional creation of silos, gaps, and/or redundancies in programming.</p> <p>To date, ESH has partnered with broadband offices in several states to implement the cohort model and equip FCC grant recipients, as well as other digital equity-minded and focused organizations, with foundational knowledge on the ACP and how leveraging this program contributes to achieving digital equity across the state. This includes: 1) how the ACP operates; 2) tools, training, and resources with respect to awareness and enrollment activities and tactics; 3) the intricacies of cross-sector partnerships and campaign execution; and 4) best practices for implementing digital and on-the-ground ACP campaigns. We have also seen great success with this initiative when the ACP Cohort is embedded in the operations of larger digital equity groups or coalitions, for example, as a working group of a larger digital equity stakeholders group. This allows a group of organizations to address a core element of digital equity – affordable broadband access – with the support of ESH's ACP subject matter expertise.</p> <p>Roles & Responsibilities State Broadband Offices and their staff are uniquely positioned to lead the creation and facilitation of a statewide ACP Cohort. In order to ensure an effective and streamlined cohort implementation, a Broadband Office staff member should be designated to lead the cohort engagement. It is also a best practice to include additional staffing resources with a focus on communications, who can assist with managing state-led communications, campaigns, messaging and awareness initiatives related to the cohort. A critical element of the state's role will be to incentivize motivation and participation, and states should set an ACP enrollment goal in order to achieve this that is measurable and can be used to regularly assess progress and course-correct where appropriate.</p> <p>Objectives and Programming The main objective of the ACP Cohort is to combine the expertise and experience of key institutions, organizations, and stakeholders to make a larger impact on the state's most unconnected communities. An important output of this cohort should be to increase ACP enrollment across the state. Through the creation of curated resources and programming, and a series of workshops, the cohort should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create a forum for knowledge sharing, including an understanding of current ACP-related work across the state through guest speakers and cohort member updates -Share lessons learned and emerging best practices -Address common barriers -Provide opportunities for cohort members to support and reinforce one another -Supplement and leverage needed resources where possible (i.e., cross-posting marketing outreach and sharing digital equity advocate personnel) -Create a pipeline for future funding opportunities, including identifying funding intermediaries that can help expand the funds' reach and impact by supporting smaller and less resourced organizations, to ensure that key state organizations can contribute to ACP adoption <p>The creation of a statewide ACP-focused cohort will serve to ensure that mechanisms for increasing broadband affordability and connecting unconnected households remain a cornerstone of the state's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. The cohort will secure cohesion between the state's plan, the execution of their capacity grant funds, and alignment with the ecosystem of competitive grant funded institutions to create the conditions for successful ACP adoption statewide.</p> <p>Recommendations for supporting broadband affordability if the ACP is not renewed If the ACP does not get renewed, states will lose a critical intervention to solving the broadband affordability gap. It is therefore important that states reiterate how crucial the ACP is to achieving digital equity in their state. Nevertheless, a linchpin of state DE plans should focus on assisting the work of statewide agencies, organizations and other trusted institutions to support community members with awareness and enrollment in the low-cost broadband plans that will remain post-ACP. We strongly urge that if ACP is not renewed, states should explore ways they can partner with these essential awareness and "on-the-ground" enrollment partners to support them with continuing to drive broadband adoption in their communities. As states solidify their processes to engage and include these key organizations, such as convening key stakeholders around digital equity, we recommend a continued focus on broadband affordability. A cohort model still lends itself well as a forum to disseminate information, share lessons learned, and engage organizations around affordability strategies and low-cost broadband plans.</p> <p>Model Language for Arkansas's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan The following is suggested language about a statewide ACP-focused cohort to insert into the state's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan:</p> <p>The ACP is a critical tool to achieve digital equity in Arkansas, and sees it as a cornerstone of this work. In addition, Arkansas will implement a cohort strategy to further support digital equity and internet affordability. The cohort will unite trusted stakeholders that have existing relationships with ACP-eligible households – such as libraries, schools, housing authorities, faith-based, tribal, or community-based organizations – and equip them with tools and resources to promote ACP adoption. Moreover, this cohort will convene those organizations that have the greatest trust and relationships with those they serve, many representing the identified covered populations. Concretely, the ACP cohort will join a series of workshops intended to promote ways in which leveraging the ACP contributes to achieving digital equity across the state. Such a cohort can provide a collective framework to ensure the creation and sustainability of an ecosystem of stakeholders working on digital equity initiatives, with a particular focus on the ACP. This group should strive to create a collaborative space where organizations can learn from and inform one another's work. It should also promote coordination between the state and other stakeholders, alleviating the unintentional creation of silos, gaps, and/or redundancies in programming.</p> <p>Goals of the ACP cohort strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create a collaborative-learning community for cohort members -Increase effectiveness of cohort members in their communities -Improve communication from cohort members to the state and vice versa -Increase alignment between state's Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan and local DE plans 			
Tim	Alborg	EducationSuperHighway	Director	tim.alborg@educationsuperhighway.org	Implementation			1/25/2024	<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>

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Iris	O'Donnell Bellisario	Lead for America	Digital Equity Specialist	iris.odonnellbellisario@lead4america.org	Strategies, Measurable Objectives and Implementation Introduction and Vision for Digital Opportunity Assets and Obstacles	<p>On behalf of Lead for America (LFA) and our American Connection Corps (ACC) program, we would like to take this opportunity to thank your office and governor for prioritizing digital inclusion opportunities strategically in your state, particularly in regards to reaching rural and underserved communities and incorporating more boots-on-the-ground approaches through non-profit and community partnerships and Digital Navigator models like the American Connection Corps. Rural LISC and ACC have partnered together to bring you feedback regarding the AR digital opportunity plan.</p> <p>Background on LFA & ACC: Since 2018, LFA has created over 400 full-time service opportunities for outstanding leaders across the nation. In 2021, LFA began partnering with AmeriCorps and has since recruited over 230 highly motivated, exceptional, and diverse leaders to serve in underserved rural and urban communities across America.</p> <p>In 2021, LFA launched the American Connection Corps (ACC) – a national AmeriCorps program focused on advancing economic prosperity in rural and emerging communities. ACC has specifically focused on through collaborative efforts to expand high-speed broadband and closely focused around capacity on infrastructure and access initiatives, thus closing the digital divide. ACC was developed in partnership with the American Connection Project (ACP), a coalition led by Land O'Lakes, Microsoft, Comcast and over 175 companies and organizations spanning numerous industries, collectively advocating for innovative policies enabling high-speed internet access to all Americans. We are also a close partner of Heartland Forward which continues to support our efforts in Arkansas.</p> <p>Background on LISC LISC is a nonprofit housing and community organization and certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) with offices in 38 cities nationwide and a rural network encompassing 140 partners serving 49 states and Puerto Rico. LISC's work supports a wide range of activities, including affordable housing, digital inclusion, economic development, building family wealth and incomes, education, community safety, and community health. LISC mobilizes corporate, government, and philanthropic support to provide local community development and business development organizations with loans, grants, equity investments, capacity building, and technical assistance.</p> <p>LISC supports digital inclusion initiatives in rural and urban communities to ensure that all individuals and communities can fully participate in our society and economy. We believe resilient communities necessitate digital inclusion activities that provide affordable, robust broadband internet options, widely available internet-enabled devices and equipment that meet users' needs, and access to digital literacy training and technical support. With four decades of experience investing in communities' social and economic infrastructure, LISC recognizes the promise of new digital equity investments to help meet the needs of historically disconnected individuals and communities.</p> <p>Specific Comments:</p> <p>We are pleased to offer comments to the Arkansas digital equity plan. We have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of the American Connection Corps program and the Rural LISC cohort model on individuals and communities in Arkansas as well as dozens of other states. We offer these comments informed by our experience as national AmeriCorps intermediary programs and supporters of community-based organizations working on expanding digital inclusion initiatives and capacity in predominantly rural communities.</p> <p>Our organizations has representatives in Arkansas at: Arkansas State Broadband Office City of Little Rock Communities Unlimited - serving Hope and Texarkana areas</p> <p>Need & role for digital navigators</p> <p>Nearly 20% of Americans lack a broadband connection or digital device at home according to the 2020 US Census. The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) recently studied digital navigator programs over a few years and found from a survey of over 1,500 people that digital navigators can significantly increase the effectiveness of digital equity programs (https://www.bcg.com/publications/2022/how-to-close-digital-divide-with-human-approach).</p> <p>With support from a digital navigator, over 65% of survey respondents were able to obtain internet access, computer or tablet at home, and over 85% reported using the internet more. This illustrates the crucial role that digital navigators can play and the importance of continuing to support these roles across Arkansas in the coming decade.</p> <p>As outlined in the Boston Consulting Group study, digital navigator programs "come in many shapes and sizes," including four major archetypes: 1) Intervention Specialists 2) Digital-Inclusion Specialists 3) Social-Change Agents and 4) Functional-Skill Builders.</p> <p>We applaud your plan's emphasis on continuing the partnership with the American Connection Corps (ACC) and believe this will strengthen Arkansas' digital navigation efforts and support knowledge sharing between existing and new digital navigators. We encourage ARConnect to explore ways of expanding the ACC partnership and statewide placement opportunities even further, as we have similarly expanded statewide to serve Idaho, Illinois, and Massachusetts through 10-20 placements across each state.</p> <p>Lead For America and our ACC program believes in investing heavily and holistically in our ACC AmeriCorps Members to not just be "entry level" contributors but to become emerging civic leaders that also serve as "Digital Navigators 2.0+." Our model goes beyond the basic DN approach to encompass all 4 archetypes of the digital navigator. We provide our ACC Members with four (4) in-person training intensives per year, access to digital inclusion experts and nationally recognized Northstar digital literacy assessment curriculum, and weekly group support calls to ensure their effectiveness, impact, and preparation. Our ACC members "do whatever it takes" to get things done when it comes to advancing digital equity in their communities.</p> <p>In the plan draft proposed in January 2024, the Arkansas state broadband office highlights the important roles of Digital Navigators in the following ways: On page 80 of the plan, section 5.3 highlights the support that an AmeriCorps digital navigator can provide for implementation of the digital equity plan Strategy 5.3 mentions leveraging ARConnect's existing partnership with AmeriCorps Lead for America - American Connection Corps program through Digital equity act funding to plan and budget for a digital navigator</p> <p>With this context in mind, we believe that the plan needs to be more ambitious. We would like to see the following changes implemented to support digital navigators: Support the development of a standardized digital navigator curriculum and assessments. The plan currently mentions this in Section 2.5 Goal 2; however, we'd like to see the ARConnect adopt a standardized digital navigator curriculum to assist the implementation process of this goal. Develop and provide increased financial support for outreach campaigns Develop dedicated support lines to assist community members with digital literacy skills such as: identifying scams and cybersecurity risks, access patient portals for medical treatment, submitting job applications and much more. Invest in research and evaluation to improve existing program design and closely measure impacts</p> <p>With this context in mind, we believe that the plan described above clearly meets the needs of digital navigators and will support the community in bridging the digital divide.</p> <p>Role of nonprofits & community organizations</p> <p>Local nonprofits serve as a trusted, community resource which can be easily accessed by members of the community. Many individuals already accessing a nonprofits services may also be eligible for federal/state broadband programs.</p> <p>In the plan draft proposed in January 2024, the Arkansas state broadband office highlights the importance of nonprofits in the following ways: Goal 1: increase availability and affordability of internet references creating a temporary grant program to support expansion of free wifi with organizations and institutions Goal 2: improve digital skills by implementing training opportunities Goal 3: mentions leveraging existing agencies, programs and organizations</p> <p>With this context in mind, we'd like to see some additions to Goal 2.2. We would like to see the following changes implemented to support digital navigators: Goal 2.2 is set to create a temporary, community mini-grant program to support the expansion of existing digital skills programs at organizations and institutions that serve covered populations. We recommend that in addition to this information, we'd like to see more outreach and technical assistance provided for grant awareness and the application process</p> <p>Partnership with public housing authorities</p> <p>We appreciate that the plan mentions partnership opportunities with public housing authorities and discusses expanding initiatives to ensure supports target federally supported residential communities. On page 31 of the plan, it highlights that public housing authorities and federal programs can support digital opportunity efforts based on their current engagement in supporting high-speed internet availability, affordability and adoption. On Goal 1.3 it highlights that ARConnect will explore partnerships with municipal housing authorities to include affordable at-home internet service at multi-unit dwellings. We'd like to see the plan expand to partner with specific affordable housing developers.</p> <p>Capacity Building For Ecosystems</p> <p>The plan discusses the importance of capacity building for digital equity ecosystems throughout the state of Arkansas in the following ways:</p>			
								1/25/2024	<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>

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						<p>One key requirement of state digital equity plans is that they include a state's vision of digital equity. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) suggests that digital equity visions address at least these two questions:</p> <p>1. What will digital equity look like in the context of your state?</p> <p>2. What are the broad goals that should be accomplished in executing this plan (e.g., improve rural health outcomes, increase underrepresented youth employment in technology-related fields)?</p> <p>NTIA has specifically advised states to "lead with equity," intentionally identifying, amplifying, and centering the voices of those most affected by the digital divide and disconnected communities.</p> <p>With the extraordinary task and responsibility of state policymakers and local communities in mind, the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society launched the Visions of Digital Equity project to aid both in ensuring that more community voices are heard in crafting visions that increase opportunity for all.</p> <p>Through surveys, community meetings, interviews, conversations, and a collaborative writing process with community contributors, we have arrived at a set of principles to help guide both the process and the resulting visions of digital equity.</p> <p>We learned that a well-crafted vision of digital equity has the potential to be very powerful. It can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Offer a glimpse of a state transformed by universal connectivity. -Provide a roadmap and resources for the digital inclusion efforts to come, and -Act as a north star for goal setting, planning, and implementation efforts over the months and years to come. <p>The best visions of digital equity will be community centered and focused on creating change, specific and clearly articulated, and ambitious but attainable.</p> <p>The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society reviewed the draft Arkansas Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan and shared a summary of it with our readers (https://www.benton.org/blog/developing-digital-skills-and-opportunity-arkansas).</p> <p>Upon review, we offer 10 Principles for Digital Equity Visions (see https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/VisionDigitalEquity.pdf). We hope these principles help the people of Arkansas evaluate both the draft Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan and ARConnect's revision of the plan. To that end, we also offer A Checklist for Evaluating Digital Equity Visions (see https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/DEV_checklist.pdf).</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the plan; I would be happy to answer any questions or discuss the potential of Arkansas's vision for digital equity.</p>				<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>
Kevin	Taglang	Benton Institute for Broadband & Society	Executive Editor	headlines@benton.org	Vision for Digital Opportunity			1/25/2024		
					Assets and Obstacles and Strategies, Measurable Objectives, and Implementation	The full Comment with Attachments and Footnotes will be emailed to broadband@arkansas.gov .				<p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>
Rola	Masri	Environmental Health Trust	Director of Government Outreach	rolamasri@ehtrust.org		The Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan is thorough and provides vivid description of the vision, mission, and core steps guiding the planning process to date, partners involved.		1/25/2024		
			Assistant Professor, Community, Workforce, and Economic Development	hgoodman@uada.edu		<p>There is a strong emphasis on stakeholder engagement and the plan, especially in pp. 13-17. The document describes how AR Connect conducted focus groups, incorporated county committees, visited every county in a state-wide tour, and utilized data to ensure covered populations as well as Arkansans in every aspect of the state were given an opportunity for feedback.</p> <p>There is a difference in tone between the heavily detailed components in sections 1-4 which read as heavily focused on background as noted. Part 5 shifts to a more practical approach applied approaches that translate the data collected into strategies for the state.</p> <p>Thank you to the AR Connect Broadband team, Heartland Forward, and partners who contributed to the plan's creation.</p>			<p>Thank you for submitting comments regarding the State of Arkansas' Digital Skills and Opportunity Plan. Your comments have been received, cataloged, and considered for incorporation into the plan.</p> <p>The public comment process is critical to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Arkansas State Broadband Office is committed to continuously improving its programs and planning documents. Thank you for participating in this important endeavor.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to continue connecting the unconnected, fostering an environment of affordability, and enabling digital opportunity for all Arkansans.</p>	
Hunter	Goodman	UADA-Extension						1/25/2024		