

TITLE II
BROADBAND
CHAPTER 20
BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE—TARGETED SERVICE AREAS

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 1/1/28

129—20.1(8B,427) Definitions. The definitions in Iowa Code section 8B.1 shall apply to this chapter. In addition, for purposes of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply.

“As of date” means the as of date of the broadband availability maps and corresponding data sources utilized by the office in determining whether a communications service provider facilitates broadband service in a particular broadband block at or above the download and upload speeds specified in the definition of targeted service area and underlying the statewide map published and then in effect in accordance with rules 129—20.3(8B,427) and 129—20.4(8B,427).

“Broadband block” means:

1. Until the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopts and publishes a publicly available data set identifying a different or more granular unit of measurement(s) by appropriate regulation or order (such as location-specific, address-specific, or polygon-based), a census block.

2. If the FCC adopts and publishes a publicly available data set identifying a different or more granular unit of measurement(s) by appropriate regulation or order (such as location-specific, address-specific, or polygon-based), for purposes of the next iteration of the statewide map published in accordance with rule 129—20.4(8B,427) following the FCC’s adoption of such unit of measurement(s), such unit of measurement(s) as adopted by the FCC and which is located in this state.

“Broadband unit” or *“broadband units”* means a home, farm, school, or business within a broadband block as of the as of date. The number of broadband units within a broadband block shall be as represented on the statewide map published in accordance with rule 129—20.4(8B,427).

“Census block” means a U.S. Census Bureau census block located in this state, including any crop operation located within the census block.

“Chief information officer” or *“CIO”* means the state chief information officer or the state chief information officer’s designee.

“Installation of the broadband infrastructure” means the labor, construction, building, and furnishing of new physical infrastructure used for the transmission of data that provides broadband services. “Installation of the broadband infrastructure” does not include the process of removing existing infrastructure, fixtures, or other real property in preparation of installation of the broadband infrastructure.

“Materially underserved” means a broadband block within which less than 10 percent of the geographic area comprising the broadband block is facilitated with broadband service exceeding tier 1 upload and download speeds.

“Meaningfully available” means broadband service that is facilitated to consumers on a commercially reasonable basis and without significant interruption or delay. In determining whether broadband service is meaningfully available on a commercially reasonable basis, the office may consider product or delivery attributes or characteristics such as availability in terms of average uptime and downtime or latency or delays in the transmission of data.

“Tier 1 targeted service area” or *“tier 1 TSA”* means a targeted service area within which broadband speeds do not exceed tier 1 speed levels.

“Tier 2 targeted service area” or *“tier 2 TSA”* means a targeted service area within which broadband speeds do not exceed tier 2 speed levels, but are greater than tier 1 speed levels.

“Tier 3 targeted service area” or *“tier 3 TSA”* means a targeted service area within which broadband speeds do not exceed tier 3 speed levels, but are greater than tier 2 speed levels.

[ARC 2782C, IAB 10/26/16, effective 11/30/16; ARC 4606C, IAB 8/14/19, effective 9/18/19; ARC 5173C, IAB 9/9/20, effective 10/14/20; ARC 5658C, IAB 6/2/21, effective 5/7/21]

129—20.2(8B,427) Scope. This chapter interprets relevant provisions of Iowa Code sections 8B.1, 8B.10, and 8B.11; implements Iowa Code section 427.1(40); and applies to the office's determinations of whether a broadband block is a targeted service area and to persons who wish to challenge the office's finding on whether a broadband block is a targeted service area. References to Iowa Code chapter 8B or its subparts refer to Iowa Code chapter 8B as amended by 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 848, and as will be codified in the 2022 Iowa Code.

[ARC 2782C, IAB 10/26/16, effective 11/30/16; ARC 4606C, IAB 8/14/19, effective 9/18/19; ARC 5173C, IAB 9/9/20, effective 10/14/20; ARC 5658C, IAB 6/2/21, effective 5/7/21]

129—20.3(8B,427) Broadband availability maps and data sources.

20.3(1) To determine whether a communications service provider facilitates broadband service in a particular broadband block at or above the tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 download and upload speeds specified in the definition of targeted service area as of the as of date, the office may utilize the following data sources:

a. Fixed broadband availability maps and corresponding data sources made available by the FCC online.

b. Broadband availability maps and corresponding data sources developed or produced by contractors or third parties retained or utilized by the office for such purpose.

c. For purposes of identifying or verifying the number and location of broadband units within a broadband block, next generation (NG) 911 structure data, statewide address location data, or United States census data.

d. Other data sources made available by or through federal or state agencies, directly or indirectly.

20.3(2) In accordance with Iowa Code section 8B.10(3), all data sources relied on by the office in making the determination(s) contemplated by this rule and rule 129—20.4(8B,427) shall exclude mobile wireless or satellite data, capabilities, and delivery mediums.

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129—20.4(8B,427) Targeted service area determination.

20.4(1) The office will create a statewide map divided into broadband blocks. Based on the maps and data sources referenced in rule 129—20.3(8B,427), the statewide map will designate broadband blocks that qualify as tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 targeted service areas as of the as of date. The office will publicize the statewide map, which may include publishing online at ocio.iowa.gov/broadband.

20.4(2) In accordance with Iowa Code section 8B.10(1), the office shall periodically make renewed determinations of whether a communications service provider facilitates broadband service at or above the tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 download or upload speeds specified in the definition of targeted service area by publishing an updated version of the statewide map. Such updates shall be made, to the extent updated maps and data sources are available at the time, no less frequently than prior to each round of grant applications solicited by the office pursuant to Iowa Code section 8B.11. The office is not required to make renewed determinations of whether a communication service provider offers or facilitates broadband service at or above the tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 download and upload speeds specified in the definition of targeted service area more frequently than once per year.

20.4(3) As of the date of the office's publication of each version of the statewide map online at ocio.iowa.gov/broadband, targeted service area designations as shown on the statewide map shall be considered the office's final determination and finding of whether a particular broadband block constitutes a targeted service area, unless a person or party successfully challenges the office's determination pursuant to the appeals and contested case process outlined in this chapter, in which case the office will update the statewide map to reflect the outcome of such challenge(s). For the sake of clarity, failure to challenge the office's determination and finding of whether a particular broadband block constitutes a tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 targeted service area by filing a notice of appeal within the 20-day period established by subrule 20.5(1) shall render the office's determination and finding with respect to that particular broadband block final and no longer subject to challenge. A party's failure to challenge the office's determination and finding of whether a particular broadband block constitutes a targeted service area by filing a notice of appeal within

the 20-day period established by subrule 20.5(1) shall be deemed a failure to exhaust administrative remedies.

20.4(4) The office will designate all projects as addressing difficult to serve targeted service areas based on the office's determination, made in its sole discretion, of whether a proposal will result in the installation of broadband infrastructure in areas meeting the conditions set forth in Iowa Code section 8B.11(7). For the sake of clarity, the office will identify all tier 1 TSAs as difficult to serve targeted service areas.

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129—20.5(8B,427) Appeals.

20.5(1) Notice of appeal. Within 20 days after the office makes its final determination of whether a particular broadband block constitutes a tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 targeted service area pursuant to rule 129—20.4(8B,427), any person or party aggrieved or adversely affected by such determination may challenge the office's finding by filing a notice of appeal with the office.

a. The notice of appeal shall set forth:

- (1) The name, address, telephone number, and email address of the person or party;
- (2) The particular broadband block(s) designation the person or party is challenging by stating:
 1. The broadband block number(s) or other unique identifier as provided on the statewide map referenced in rule 129—20.4(8B,427);
 2. The county in which the broadband block(s) is located as provided on the statewide map referenced in rule 129—20.4(8B,427);
 3. The manner in which the person or party is aggrieved or adversely affected by the office's determination; and
 4. The grounds upon which the appeal is based.

b. Accompanying the notice of appeal, the person or party shall provide the office with all evidence and information necessary to support the appeal.

20.5(2) Filing. Except to the extent that electronic filing is not feasible, a notice of appeal and all corresponding evidence and information shall be filed by email at ociogrants@iowa.gov. To the extent electronic filing is not feasible, the notice of appeal and all corresponding evidence and information shall be mailed to: Office of the Chief Information Officer, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. If the notice of appeal and corresponding evidence and information are filed by mail, such filing shall be accompanied by a written explanation of why electronic filing was not feasible.

20.5(3) Notification of and input from affected persons or parties. Within ten calendar days of receipt of a notice of appeal, the office shall provide notification to any affected persons or parties by posting the notice of appeal at ocio.iowa.gov/broadband. From the date of such posting, any affected persons or parties will have 20 calendar days to submit evidence and information in support of, or in opposition to, such appeal. Except to the extent not feasible, any such evidence and information shall be submitted by email to ociogrants@iowa.gov. To the extent electronic submission is not feasible, such evidence and information shall be mailed to: Office of the Chief Information Officer, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. If such evidence or information is submitted by mail, the evidence or information shall be accompanied by a written explanation of why electronic submission was not feasible.

20.5(4) Internal review. At the end of the time periods specified in subrules 20.5(1) and 20.5(3), the office shall consolidate all appeals involving the same broadband block(s) and conduct an internal review of the evidence and information submitted by all appellants related thereto, in conjunction with any other evidence and information submitted by any affected persons or parties pursuant to subrule 20.5(3), the maps and data sources identified and originally utilized in rules 129—20.3(8B,427) and 129—20.4(8B,427), and any other information deemed relevant by the office.

20.5(5) Final agency decision. Following the internal review set forth in subrule 20.5(4), the office will issue a final agency decision stating the reasons for the office's decision concerning the broadband block(s) in question. In issuing the decision, the office shall consider the evidence and information submitted by all appellants related thereto, in conjunction with any other evidence and information submitted by any affected persons or parties pursuant to subrule 20.5(3), the maps and data sources

identified and originally utilized in rules 129—20.3(8B,427) and 129—20.4(8B,427), and any other information deemed relevant by the office. The final agency decision will be posted online at ocio.iowa.gov/broadband. The final agency decision shall become final unless within 30 days of such posting an appellant or an affected person or party that submitted evidence in support of, or in opposition to, the appeal files a request for a contested case proceeding pursuant to rule 129—20.6(8B,427).

20.5(6) *Time of filing.* In determining the date on which an appeal or request for a contested case proceeding is filed with the office, the following shall apply: an appeal or request for a contested case proceeding delivered by mail shall be deemed to be filed on the postmark date; an appeal or any other document delivered by any other means shall be deemed to be filed on the date of receipt.

20.5(7) *Public records.* The office's release of public records is governed by 129—Chapter 2 and Iowa Code chapter 22. Persons are encouraged to familiarize themselves with 129—Chapter 2 and Iowa Code chapter 22 before submitting evidence or information to the office as part of the appeals and contested case process outlined in this chapter. The office will copy and produce public records upon request as required to comply with Iowa Code chapter 22 and will treat all evidence and information submitted by persons or parties as public, nonconfidential records unless a person or party requests that specific parts of the evidence or information submitted be treated as confidential at the time of the submission to the office.

a. A person or party requesting confidential treatment of evidence or information submitted must:

(1) Fully complete and submit to the office Form 22 (available online at ocio.iowa.gov/broadband);

(2) Identify the request in the notice of appeal or, if evidence or information is submitted pursuant to subrule 20.5(3), identify the request in the transmittal email or the written explanation of why electronic filing was not feasible;

(3) Conspicuously mark the outside of any submission as containing confidential evidence or information;

(4) Mark each page upon which confidential evidence or information appears; and

(5) Submit a public copy from which claimed confidential evidence and information has been excised. Confidential evidence and information must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the evidence and information removed and to retain as much of the otherwise public evidence and information as possible.

b. Form 22 will not be considered fully complete unless, for each confidentiality request, the person or party:

(1) Enumerates the specific grounds in Iowa Code chapter 22 or other applicable law that support treatment of the specific evidence or information as confidential;

(2) Justifies why the specific evidence or information should be maintained in confidence;

(3) Explains why disclosure of the specific evidence or information would not be in the best interest of the public; and

(4) Sets forth the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the individual authorized by the person or party submitting such evidence and information to respond to inquiries from the office concerning the confidential status of such evidence and information.

c. Failure to request that evidence or information be treated as confidential as specified herein shall relieve the office and state personnel from any responsibility for maintaining the information in confidence. Persons may not request confidential treatment with respect to a notice of appeal or other similar documents. Blanket requests to maintain all evidence and information submitted as confidential will be categorically rejected.

20.5(8) *Probative evidence and information.* Examples of evidence and information the office would consider particularly probative of broadband service at or above the tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 download and upload speeds specified in the definition of targeted service area as of the as of date for purposes of adjudicating an appeal of the office's determination of whether a particular broadband block constitutes a tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 TSA include:

a. Signed attestations submitted to the office under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the office that the applicable broadband block(s) was or was not served as of the as of date with broadband service at

or above the tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 download and upload speeds specified in the definition of targeted service area.

b. Bills or invoices provided to or received by customers in the applicable broadband block(s) which identify the specific download and upload speeds provided or received as of the as of date.

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129—20.6(8B,427) Contested cases. A contested case initiated pursuant to this chapter shall be a contested case proceeding and shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the office's rules governing contested case proceedings (129—Chapter 6) unless the provisions of this rule provide otherwise. The definitions in rule 129—6.2(8B,17A) shall also apply to this rule.

20.6(1) Notice of hearing. Upon receipt of a request for a contested case proceeding, the office shall inform the department of inspections and appeals of the filing and of relevant information pertaining to the appeal in question. The department of inspections and appeals shall send a written notice of the date, time and location of the hearing to all affected persons or parties who initiated a contested case related to the broadband block(s) forming the basis of the contested case, or appealed the office's determination of the broadband block(s) forming the basis of the contested case pursuant to subrule 20.5(1), or submitted evidence or information to the office pursuant to subrule 20.5(3) directly related to the broadband block(s) forming the basis of the contested case. The presiding officer shall hold a hearing on the matter within 60 days of the date the notice of appeal was received by the office.

20.6(2) Consolidation. In the event any contested cases concerning the same broadband block(s) are initiated separately, such matters shall be consolidated.

20.6(3) Discovery. The parties shall serve any discovery requests upon other parties at least 30 days prior to the date set for the hearing. The parties must serve responses to discovery at least 15 days prior to the date set for the hearing.

20.6(4) Witnesses and exhibits. The parties shall contact each other regarding witnesses and exhibits at least 10 days prior to the date set for the hearing. In order to avoid duplication or the submission of extraneous materials, the parties must meet, either in person, by telephone, or by electronic means, prior to the hearing regarding the evidence to be presented.

20.6(5) Telephone hearing. If the hearing is conducted by telephone or other electronic means, the parties must deliver all exhibits to the office of the presiding officer at least 3 days prior to the time the hearing is conducted. Telephone hearings shall be strongly encouraged.

[ARC 2782C, IAB 10/26/16, effective 11/30/16; ARC 5173C, IAB 9/9/20, effective 10/14/20]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 8B.1, 8B.10, and 427.1(40).

[Filed ARC 2782C (Notice ARC 2699C, IAB 8/31/16), IAB 10/26/16, effective 11/30/16]

[Filed ARC 4606C (Notice ARC 4505C, IAB 6/19/19), IAB 8/14/19, effective 9/18/19]

[Filed ARC 5173C (Notice ARC 5110C, IAB 7/29/20), IAB 9/9/20, effective 10/14/20]

[Filed Emergency ARC 5658C, IAB 6/2/21, effective 5/7/21]