

BEAD Challenge Process Rebuttal FAQs

Updated 6/21/2024.

General Process

Q: What is "de-duplication"?

A: To explain at a high level, right at the end of this Challenge Process, everything must go back through another check. This may involve looking at the newer version of the fabric and making sure that there aren't any enforceable commitments that are getting missed so that we are not duplicating funds or overfunding. Essentially, the deduplication is the process to make sure everything is cleaned up.

Q: When do you anticipate the first TN BEAD dollars being distributed?

A: The grant window is expected to open during the fall of 2024, and the ECD Broadband Office is expecting that contracting will begin between summer and fall of 2025.

Q: How confident are you that these dollars will provide broadband to 100% of the unserved/underserved locations in TN?

A: Since the time of writing, the office has administered grants working to close the digital divide which has gotten ahead of many areas needing connectivity. Through these efforts, ECD has gained confidence in reaching the goal of reaching all unserved/underserved locations.

Q: What happens if you have "leftover" dollars?

A: Any dollars leftover can be used for nondeployment, including initiatives around boosting broadband adoption and increasing take rates and subscribership in our communities. Leftover dollars would go toward our current ARPA-funded programs around digital skills training and community facilities.

Q: Is it true that this leftover money could be used to make existing ISPs more resilient?

A: Our office is awaiting additional guidance on this.

Acceptable Evidence

Q: Is a screenshot from the ISPs website showing that service is available to a particular address acceptable rebuttal evidence for an Availability challenge?

A: ECD didn't explicitly identify those qualifiers as acceptable rebuttal evidence. However, if you have that and it rebuts the challenge made against the provider, that can be included, but should not stand on its own. Please feel free to include that, but also refer to the acceptable rebuttable rebuttal evidence for availability.

Q: What type of evidence is needed if someone submits a Rebuttal?

A: Acceptable rebuttal evidence differs depending on the Challenge Type. This information can be found in the guidebook and on the portal by selecting "[Click here to view acceptable rebuttal evidence](#)" on the home page.

Notifications

Q: What does the following email mean? "This email is to inform you that your organization has been challenged through the Tennessee BEAD Challenge Process"

A: Multiple emails went out from the ECD Broadband Office informing portal users that the rebuttal phase has launched. Please find an explanation of the emails below:

1. All users in the Challenge Portal received this email informing that rebuttal is open. The challenge types listed can be rebutted in the All View by any portal user.

Hello,

This email is to inform you that the below challenge types are now open for rebuttal in the Tennessee BEAD Challenge Portal on the [Challenges-Rebuttal- All View](#).

- C. This location should qualify as an eligible CAI
- R. This location is not an eligible CAI
- E. Enforceable Commitment
- N. Not part of an enforceable commitment
- P. Planned Service

To rebut any of the published challenges, please take action before **7/9** as 25 days are allocated to the rebuttal phase. There is only one opportunity to rebut each challenge, so please ensure that you are familiar with the acceptable evidence for rebuttals.

Thank you for your participation in the BEAD Challenge Process. If you have any questions, please contact ECD.Broadband@tn.gov. We highly encourage you to register for either the [ISP Rebuttal Webinar](#) on 6/17 or the [Local Government & Nonprofit Rebuttal Webinar](#) 6/18. For additional support, ECD is also hosting a [Challenge Process office hour](#) 6/20.

- ECD Broadband Office

2. This email went to all ISP contacts of organizations that have been challenged under Challenge Types E, N, and P. This includes any challenges submitted by you regarding your organization under for types E, N, and P.

Hello,

This email is to inform you that your organization has been challenged through the Tennessee BEAD Challenge Process under one or more of the below challenge types:

- E. Enforceable Commitment
- N. Not part of an enforceable commitment
- P. Planned Service

Challenges are open to be rebutted by any registered user on the [Challenges-Rebuttal- All View](#). To rebut any of the published challenges, please take action before **7/9** as 25 days are allocated to the rebuttal phase. There is only one opportunity to rebut each challenge, so please ensure that you are familiar with the acceptable evidence for rebuttals.

Thank you for your participation in the BEAD Challenge Process. If you have any questions, please contact ECD.Broadband@tn.gov. We highly encourage ISPs to register for the [ISP Rebuttal Webinar](#) on 6/17 and the [Challenge Process office hour](#) 6/20.

- ECD Broadband Office

3. This email went to primary contacts of organizations that have been challenged under Challenge Types A, B, D, and T. This includes any challenges submitted by you regarding your organization under types A, B, D, and T.

Hello,

This email is to inform you that your organization has been challenged through the Tennessee BEAD Challenge Process under challenge type A. Availability, B. Business Service Only, D. Data Cap, or T. Technology.

As the primary contact, you may see the challenge in the Rebuttal view of the portal [here](#).

Please take action before **7/9** as you have 25 days to either sustain or rebut this challenge on behalf of your organization. You will have one opportunity to rebut each challenge, so please ensure that you are familiar with the acceptable evidence for rebuttals.

Thank you for your participation in the BEAD Challenge Process. If you have any questions, please contact ECD.Broadband@tn.gov. We highly encourage ISPs to register for the [ISP Rebuttal Webinar](#) on 6/17 and the [Challenge Process office hour](#) 6/20.

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Q: An ISP submitted Planned Service challenges for locations that they are currently serving with documentation reflecting this. This ISP received an email stating the challenges were not accepted because “Evidence needs to show that the service will meet the BEAD definition and requirements of reliable and qualifying broadband and will be deployed and available at locations challenged by June 30, 2024.” Since these locations are being served, how should the ISP further prove this service?

A: ECD is flagging Planned Service challenges that should go through but cannot because of the June 30th date for review in the true up process.

Additionally, if the provider is already reporting these locations or has been reporting these locations, this should be available on the new December FCC data. If this is true, we will capture those in deduplication. ECD strongly encourages organizations to report as soon as possible so that the information can be captured during the true up process. If neither of these options are suitable, please have the provider participate in the Public Comment Period to make our office aware of these locations.

Portal

Q: There have been two uploads of challenges. Are we expecting any more?

A: No, all challenges have been published now. Challenges processed early were published on 6/2 and the remainder were published 6/14. This is why there are two due dates as each date is 25 days after it was published in the portal.

Q: If I filter the challenges by provider and all of the challenges listed for our company were submitted by us, does that mean that we have nothing to rebut?

A: If all of the challenge IDs associated with your organization on the Rebuttal view align with the IDs of the challenges you submitted, then all of the challenges open for rebuttal were submitted by you. No action is required unless you disagree with information you submitted during the Challenge Phase.

Q: If our challenge is rebutted, would the rebuttal be in the Rebuttal View?

A: Challenges rebutted from the [Rebut Challenges - All](#) page will be moved to the [View Rebutted Challenges - All](#). Challenges rebutted or sustained from the [Rebut Challenge - ISP](#) page will be moved to the [View Rebutted/Sustained Challenges - ISP](#) page. Items on the ISP views are only visible to the ISP's primary contact if challenges were submitted under types A, B, D, and T.

Q: Should the challenges be the same between the two emails as they are in the Map View?

A: Yes, information in the portal reflects what is published on the [BEAD Challenge Map](#). Information in blue on the map represents details from the challenge.

Q: Is there a quick way to see who submitted a challenge? We have locations that we have challenged to show availability and planned service for ourselves, but would love to filter what other ISPs have challenged?

A: The ECD Broadband Office has not published who submitted challenges during this phase. The [BEAD Challenge Map](#) includes details on what organization type submitted the challenge, and users can reference their submitted challenges against the challenge IDs on the rebuttal views to understand if the challenge was submitted by themselves.