



BROADBAND OFFICE

1401 Main Street
Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 737-0800
ors.sc.gov/broadband

MEMORANDUM

TO: South Carolina Internet Service Providers

FROM: Jim Stritzinger
Director, SC Office of Broadband Coordinator (“SC Broadband Office”)

DATE: February 1, 2022

RE: Spring 2022 Data Request

In preparation for the efficient deployment of federal funding that may become available, we are requesting that all Internet Service Providers (ISP) and middle-mile infrastructure owners promptly submit their most recent information so that we can quickly develop the next set of SC Broadband Maps.

A central goal for our office is to keep the maps as current as possible and we are focused on achieving a bi-annual cadence. Unfortunately, that also means we need to make bi-annual data requests.

That said, we know how hard you all work deploying broadband across South Carolina and we aim to create as little burden as possible. We are also working hard to deliver value back to all the ISPs and the citizens of South Carolina.

With the release of the newly enhanced www.scdigitaldrive.org on January 18, 2022, we think we have precisely done that. The website now features an extraordinary set of broadband maps and interactive tools that was made possible by the 100% contribution of ISP data in September 2021 in combination with nearly 7 million Ookla® Speedtest® records. Best of all, ISPs and other stakeholders are now able to access the map layers after they are granted secure access with their Esri user ID.

This data request is extremely important because it marks the official switch from Census 2010 to Census 2020 geography. From this point forward, all data flowing to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the SC Broadband Office **must be coded using the new line files**. We are providing ample notice for this data request because **improperly coded data will not be accepted**.

As a reminder, this request is made pursuant to Section 10 of Act 142 that provides as follows:

The SC Office of Broadband Coordinator (a.k.a. SC Broadband Office) is required to contact the appropriate entities to provide information necessary to compile the statewide county-by-county mapping plan that shows the location and broadband facility capabilities. Proviso 73.7 of 2021 further clarifies that to facilitate the provision of information necessary to this task, all information provided by a broadband service

provider or other entity providing information for the purpose of creating a South Carolina broadband map shall be maintained by the Office of Broadband Coordinator and any other agency as confidential, proprietary, and a trade secret as defined in Section 30-4-40 of the 1976 Code, and subject to exemption from disclosure under state and federal law. The information shall not be subject to disclosure under Chapter 4, Title 30 of the 1976 Code, except in the form of a map where information that could be used to determine provider-specific information about the network of the broadband service provider or other providing entity is not disclosed. Except as otherwise provided in this provision, such broadband provider-specific information shall not be released to any person other than to the broadband service provider or other entity providing information, employees of the Office of Broadband Coordinator, agents designated to assist in developing the South Carolina broadband map, entities contracting with the Office of Broadband Coordinator, and other state agencies administering funds for broadband deployment without express permission of the submitting broadband service provider or other entity providing information. Such information shall be used solely for the purposes stated under this provision. The Office of Broadband Coordinator shall ensure that any such agents, entities, or agencies with whom the information is shared are aware of the confidential nature and restricted purposes for which the information may be used and that any such agents or entities that are not state agencies execute an appropriate nondisclosure agreement protecting the information from public disclosure before receiving the information. Entities providing broadband service or middle-mile infrastructure in South Carolina shall, on an annual basis, provide to the Office of Broadband Coordinator deployment data in a format specified by the office to provide the most accurate and granular representation of currently available broadband infrastructure. These same entities, when they serve residential or business customers, shall also provide the type of technology deployed together with the sustainable download and upload speeds available at each serviceable location. Entities failing to provide such data on an annual basis may be disqualified from state funding opportunities for the current fiscal year. Annually, the office shall compile this information, analyze, and update statewide broadband deployment information.

As such we are requesting six different data elements:

- 1) Updated Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 477 information; and,
- 2) Current Residential Service Area; and,
- 3) Recent Federal awards; and,
- 4) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) County/Municipal Project awards; and,
- 5) Residential Node Boundaries; and,
- 6) Response to Lack of Broadband Indications in your service area.

1) FCC Form 477 (December 31, 2021) – Please submit your most recent Form 477 information, in the exact same format as you submit to the FCC. We are expecting to see Excel (CSV or XLSX) for both your broadband deployment and subscription files for all entities that you own and operate (both ILEC and CLEC if appropriate). Subscription information must be provided in CSV file format. In addition, we would also require a copy of your submission confirmations (PDF) from the FCC.

Please submit this information to broadband@ors.sc.gov by **March 1, 2022**. It is due to the FCC on the same day.

Subscription Audit: Please note that the SC Broadband Office will be, once again, auditing FCC Form 477 Subscription Data against your FCC Form 477 Deployment filing. Since our goal is to create the most accurate residential Access maps, commercial-only deployments will not reflect on the residential maps.

We perform this audit by verifying that there are **a minimum of 10 residential customers, receiving at least 25/3 service** levels in each **Census Tract**. Since Census Tracts are much larger than Census Blocks and typically have between 1,200 and 8,000 residents in South Carolina, all Census Blocks within the Tract area will be marked as unserved when the conditions are not met. Challenges to this audit will not be accepted so please verify your subscription data before filing.

2) Residential Service Area – please provide a detailed shapefile of your current residential delivery area. When complete, this should be a collection of polygons, with donut holes removed, that will clearly show the extent of your service area.

Please submit this information to broadband@ors.sc.gov by **March 1, 2022**.

3) Federal Grant Awards – If appropriate, please provide a detailed shapefile (full 2020 census block resolution) of any USDA ReConnect or FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund areas that are designated and fully authorized/approved for future construction. Do not include any census blocks where construction was completed by December 31, 2021 and are currently being reported to the FCC.

Please submit this information to broadband@ors.sc.gov by **March 1, 2022**.

4) ARPA County/Municipal Project Awards - If appropriate, please provide a detailed shapefile (full 2020 census block resolution) of any county or municipal ARPA projects that are designated and fully authorized/approved for future construction.

Please submit this information to broadband@ors.sc.gov by **March 1, 2022**.

5) Residential Node Boundaries - Please provide detailed residential shapefiles for each FCC technology type (Fiber, DOCSIS 3.1, VDSL, etc.) deployed in your network. Each shapefile should show a detailed polygon outline, by technology, for your residential service area as of December 31, 2021. Do not merge polygons. We are looking for the detailed boundaries of your network with donut holes removed (not census block boundaries). When you deploy two different technologies in the same area, we expect to see overlapping polygons when multiple layers are enabled. Do not include commercial deployments.

Please submit this information to broadband@ors.sc.gov by **March 31, 2022**.

6) Lack of Broadband Indications – The SC Broadband Office is now capturing detailed name and address information whenever a citizen reports that they cannot receive Internet at their home. If we have evidence of a consumer reporting no available service as of January 31, 2022, when your deployment filings suggest the area is served, we will require a detailed response for each resident. Since this situation does not exist for all ISPs, we will communicate separately – by email – for follow-up. ISPs that have consumer complaints will receive their email by Friday, February 4, 2022. If you do not receive an email by this date you may ignore this section.

Please submit this information to broadband@ors.sc.gov by **March 31, 2022**.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Pursuant to Section 10 of Act 142 of 2020, timely data submission is required to participate in fiscal year funding opportunities and/or challenge processes.

Please email broadband@ors.sc.gov if you have any questions or need further clarification. Once again, we appreciate early submissions and individual data components as they become available. There is no need to wait for a complete set.

Thank you, in advance, for your support and cooperation!