BEAD Challenge Process Webinar

Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)

June 12th, 2024

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BEAD Challenge Overview

The state of Massachusetts received $147 million funding allocation for its BEAD program. The goal of the BEAD program is to achieve universal service – which means 100% of broadband serviceable locations (BSL's) have the internet available.

MBI objectives from BEAD program

01 **Unserved Locations (below 25Mbps / 3Mbps)**

02 **Underserved Locations (below 100Mbps / 20Mbps)**

03 **Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)**

BEAD activities Completed to date

☑ **Five-Year Action Plan Approved**

☑ **Stakeholder engagement and community outreach**

☑ **Initial Proposal Volume I approved including Challenge Process.**

☑ **Initial Proposal Volume II under review by NTIA**

BEAD Challenge Process

The State Challenge Process will identify unserved and underserved homes, businesses and institutions in the state to ensure they can get connected to high-speed internet through the BEAD program.
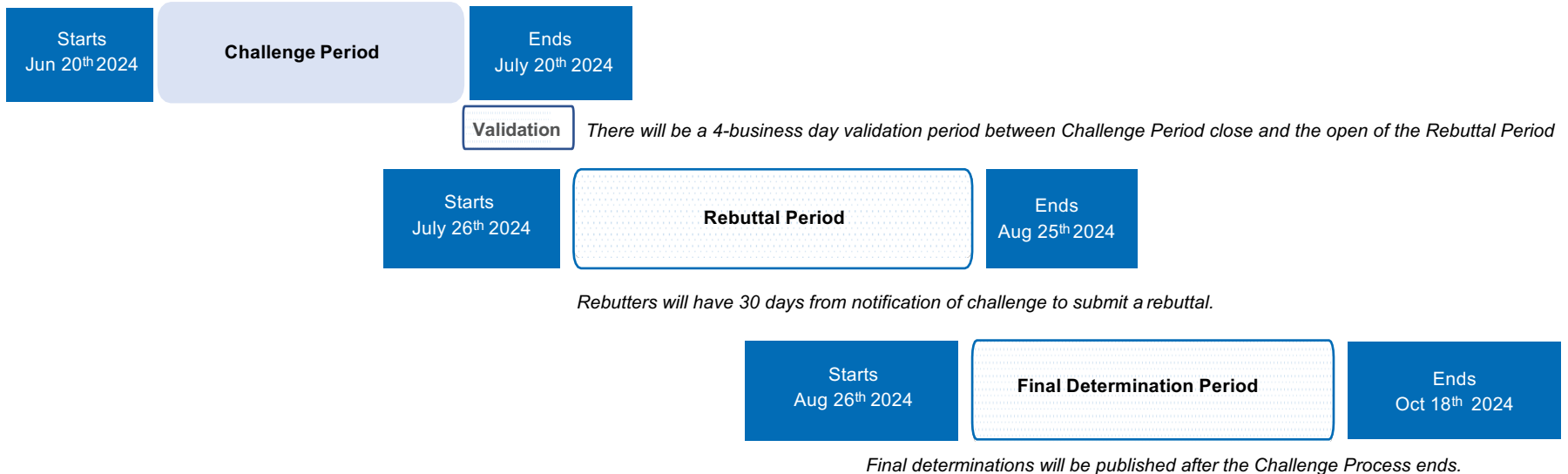
Eligible Challengers

While not all CAI's can submit challenges, they are able to track and rebut challenges made to their addresses.

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Challenge Process Timeline

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) publishes a National Broadband Map. The National Broadband Map is the starting point for BEAD funding eligibility. A location must be marked as unserved or underserved on the FCC map to be eligible for BEAD funds.

The Challenge Process will occur over a 120-day period based on the below timeline:

Starts Jun 20th 2024	Challenge Period	Ends July 20th 2024

Validation — There will be a 4-business day validation period between Challenge Period close and the open of the Rebuttal Period

Starts July 26th 2024	Rebuttal Period	Ends Aug 25th 2024

Rebutters will have 30 days from notification of challenge to submit a rebuttal.

Starts Aug 26th 2024	Final Determination Period	Ends Oct 18th 2024

Final determinations will be published after the Challenge Process ends.

The Challenge Process begins ahead of the deployment subprogram which is expected to launch in the last quarter of 2024.

Community Anchor Institution Definition

MBI has applied the definition of "community anchor institution" to mean a **school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization** (including any public housing agency, HUD-assisted housing organization, or Tribal housing organization), **or community support organization** that facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, children, the incarcerated, and aged individuals.

In addition to the above, MBI includes the following in their definition of CAIs

- Senior centers
- Community centers
- Veteran centers

- Job training centers
- Homeless shelters in all locations, including Tribal Lands

Challenge Types

Challenge types that impact CAI eligibility in terms of classification and availability of qualifying broadband, include the following:

Code	Challenge Type	Description
C	Location is a CAI	The location should be classified as a CAI.
R	Location is not a CAI	The location is labeled as a CAI but is: - A residence - A non-CAI business or - Is no longer in operation.
G	CAI qualifying broadband available	The CAI can obtain qualifying broadband (not less than 1 Gbps/ 1Gbps and latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds)
Q	CAI qualifying broadband unavailable	The CAI cannot obtain qualifying broadband (not less than 1 Gbps/ 1Gbps and latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds)

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Evidence Requirements

MBI may accept a wide range of data sources to substantiate challenges, as long as any potential source of evidence used to substantiate challenges is documented and verifiable by a third party.

Illustratively, these acceptable challenge evidence include (but not limited to):

C **Location is a CAI**

Evidence that the location falls within the definition of CAI's set by MBI. Evidence may include:

- Registration documents
- Contact information to confirm CAI Status

R **Location is Not a CAI**

Evidence that Institution does not fall within the definitions of CAI's set by MBI or is no longer in operation. Evidence may include:

- Property records or real estate listing showing the property as a single-family or multi-family dwelling.
- Screenshot of business's website including their location (address)

G **CAI: Qualifying Broadband Unavailable**

Evidence that the CAI has tried to acquire qualifying broadband but has been unsuccessful. Evidence may include:

- Screenshot from a provider's website indicating 1Gbps/1Gbps service is not available at the challenged location and/or fiber is not located within 500 feet of the challenged location.

Q **CAI: Qualifying Broadband Available**

Evidence that the CAI can acquire symmetric gigabit service. Evidence may include:

- A recent bill/invoice and photo of the provider gateway.

Rebuttal Types

Once challenges are submitted and determined valid by MBI's evaluators, the challenged CAIs have an opportunity to provide a rebuttal within 30 days. A challenge will be upheld if there is no rebuttal filed within the allotted time.

CAIs can rebut the following challenges:

Location is a CAI	**Location is <u>not</u> a CAI**	**Qualifying Broadband <u>Unavailable</u>**	**Qualifying Broadband Available**
▪ Submit documentation that demonstrates the location is a CAI, as defined in Initial Proposal Volume I.	▪ Submit documentation that demonstrates the location is **not** a CAI, as defined in Initial Proposal Volume I.	▪ Submit documentation that demonstrates qualifying broadband service (1 Gbps/1Gbps, less than 100ms latency) is **not** available to the CAI.	▪ Submit documentation that demonstrates qualifying broadband service (1 Gbps/1Gbps, less than 100ms latency) is not available to the CAI.

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Rebuttal Types

Once challenges are submitted and determined valid by MBI's evaluators, the challenged CAIs have an opportunity to provide a rebuttal within 30 days. A challenge will be upheld if there is no rebuttal filed within the allotted time.

CAIs can rebut challenges in the "Open Rebuttals Dashboard" which will go live at the beginning of the Rebuttal Period on July 26th:

Rebuttal Evidence Requirements

MBI may accept a wide range of data sources to substantiate rebuttals, as long as any potential source of evidence used to substantiate rebuttals is documented and verifiable by a third party.

Illustratively, these acceptable rebuttal evidence include (but not limited to):

C **Location is a CAI**

Property records or real estate listing showing the property as a single-family or multi-family dwelling.

R **Location is Not a CAI**

Official entity name; explanation of how institution facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations.

G **CAI: Qualifying Broadband Unavailable**

Screenshot from a provider's website indicating 1Gbps/1Gbps service is available at the challenged location and/or fiber is located within 500 feet of the challenged location.

Q **CAI: Qualifying Broadband Available**

Screenshot from a provider's website indicating 1Gbps/1Gbps service is not available at the challenged location and/or fiber is not located within 500 feet of the challenged location.

Challenge Portal

All challenges and rebuttals must be submitted through the MBI portal. If your CAI is a non-profit or local government and you plan to actively engage in the Challenge Process, request an account in the Portal.

If you are updating your organization's CAI status or service level, registration is not required. You may work through an Eligible Challenger including MBI's partner Connected Nation.

MBI Challenge Portal

Challenge Portal

All challenges and rebuttals must be submitted through the MBI portal.

MBI Challenge Portal

The MBI portal classifies locations as either served, unserved, or underserved. Additionally, it differentiates between CAIs and residential or business locations by using a triangle-shaped indicator at the BSL level. The left- hand side of the screen includes a description of the location in terms of type, service, funding, and provider.

CAIs are encouraged to:

- Review the map and associated locations

- Work with non-profit organizations or units of local government to submit a "Location is a CAI" challenge type in case their location is not classified as CAI.

- Work with non-profit organizations or units of local government to submit a "Qualifying Broadband unavailable" challenge type in case they have been unsuccessful in acquiring qualifying broadband service.

- Track approved challenges for rebuttals

- Rebut challenges if needed
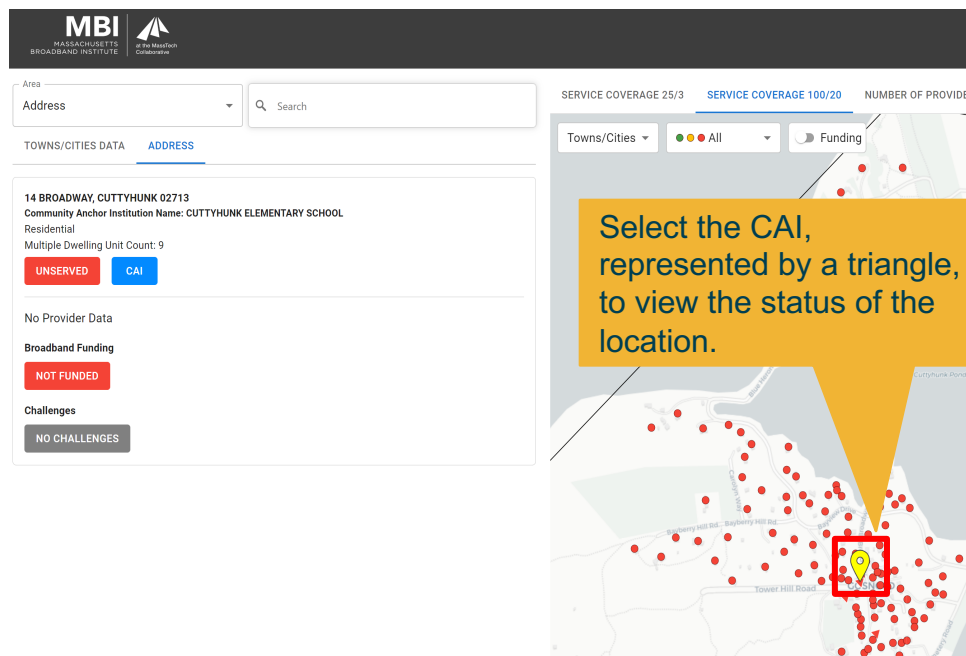
Note: *If your address is not included in the map, please email MBI at the following address: mapfeedback@mastech.org with a subject line: "CAI – Location addition".*
MBI recommends submitting the address and the coordinates for the location in question.

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Challenge & Rebuttal Outcomes

MBI will review the submitted evidence by the CAI to arrive at a final determination of the challenge.

There are two outcomes from the evidence review

Rebuttal is considered "Valid"	Rebuttal is Rejected

The evidence submitted is valid based on the allowable evidence guidance and supports the submitted rebuttal.

The evidence submitted is not valid based on the allowable evidence guidance OR the document submitted is illegible. Rejected rebuttals can be resubmitted within the allowable window.

Once the challenge has gone through the challenge period and the rebuttal window has closed, MBI will announce whether a challenge is "Sustained" or "Rejected" 60 days following the end of the rebuttal phase.

MBI will publish an initial list of the eligible locations on their website at the end of the final determination phase

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Resources

MBI is partnering with...

Upcoming Webinars

BEAD Challenge Process - CAI Overview - Wed., June 12 11:00 a.m.
Register

BEAD Challenge Process - ISP Overview - Wed., June 12 2:00 p.m.
Register

Office Hours

June 11 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Join Here

June 21 | 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Join Here

June 27 | 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Join Here

Volume I & Resources

Massachusetts Initial Proposal Volume 1 (PDF) **Download Here**

Underserved Locations (CSV) **Download Here**

Unserved Locations (CSV) **Download Here**

Community Anchor Institutes (CSV) **Download Here**

FCC Broadband Serviceable Locations by Municipality (PDF) **Download Here**

Past Webinars

The Bead Challenge Process

May 22, 2024
Download Presentations (PDF)

April 4, 2024
View Recording (Video)
Download Presentation (PDF)

June 5, 2024
View Recording (Video)
Download Presentation (PDF)

Technical Assistance

FAQs, April 2024 (PDF)

Challenge Portal User Guide (PDF)

Evidence Submission Guidelines (PDF)
Coming Soon

Area & Multiple Dwelling Unit (MDU) Challenges Flyer (PDF)

BEAD Challenge Process Overview Flyer (PDF)

Community Anchor Institutions Flyer (PDF)

Contact Us

If you would like support from MBI's contracted partner Connected Nation email: **mabeadsupport@connectednation.org**.

To contact MBI directly with questions email: **mapfeedback@masstech.org**.

Bookmark this page and **subscribe** to our email newsletter for updates.

Next Steps – Invitation to Participate

- Share key details with stakeholders using MBI's Communication Toolkit

- Keep an eye out for more Technical Assistance materials that will be posted to the MBI BEAD Challenge Process Webpage
  - Evidence Submission Guidelines – Coming soon!

- Know Your Numbers and Develop a Local Strategy

- Be ready to participate!
  - As a challenger
  - As resident support

- Contact MBI
  - mapfeedback@masstech.org

- Attend Office Hours
  - June 21 at 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
  - June 27 at 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Cherylene Coss
Manager, Digital Equity, Outreach & Engagement
MBI

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Q&A

Additional Resources

Challenge Process resources can be found at MBI's website:
Massachusetts BEAD Challenge Process | MBI (masstech.org)

For portal or challenge related questions email us at:
mapfeedback@mastech.org

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MassBroadband

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