

BEAD CHALLENGE PROCESS



What is the BEAD Challenge Process, and how does it support infrastructure build out?

In June 2023, Massachusetts received a historic \$147 million funding allocation for its Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD Program). The BEAD Program's purpose is to build high-speed internet connections to all the unserved and underserved broadband serviceable locations (BSL's) in the state. The Challenge Process is the way that those locations will be identified and verified.

The Challenge Process begins with publishing the Massachusetts Broadband Map. Challenges are additional evidence about locations that are unserved (below 25/3 Mbps), underserved (below 100/20 Mbps), and served. MBI will review each challenge to ensure that every eligible location is included in the Massachusetts BEAD program.

Who Can Submit Challenges?



Federal rules for the BEAD program allow MBI to accept challenges from:

- Local governments
- Tribal governments
- Nonprofit organizations
- Internet Service Providers (ISPs)

How Do Individuals Participate?



Massachusetts residents can play an active role in the Challenge Process by providing information about issues they face in getting access to high-speed internet service through a dedicated portal specifically developed for residents. This portal lets individuals report an issue with getting connected to the internet and/or take a speed test if the actual service speed is much slower than their subscription tier. Subscription tier should be above 100/20 Mbps.

Individuals are also encouraged to connect with their units of local or Tribal government or nonprofit organizations in order to find out whether these local leaders are already engaged in the Challenge Process and planning to file challenges that include their location.

What Type of Challenges?

- **Availability:** Service shown isn't available or service is currently available but isn't shown
- **Speed:** Service speed is slower than advertised that the location can be classified as underserved or unserved
- **Latency:** The round-trip latency of the broadband service exceeds 100 milliseconds (ms)
- **Data caps:** The only service plans marketed to consumers impose an unreasonable capacity allowance
- **Enforceable Commitment:** Federal, state, or local funding is already paying to connect this location (or this location will be left out)
- **Planned Service:** Privately-funded construction is underway to connect this location (or this location will be left out)
- **Community Anchor Institution:** Location is (or is not) in one of the CAI categories defined in the Massachusetts State Challenge Process

How Do Eligible Challengers Participate?



1. Eligible Challengers must first register for an account in the Challenge Portal on MBI's [BEAD website](#).
2. Once your account is approved, login to the Challenge Portal. **Challenges can be submitted starting at 12:00 am on June 20th, 2024.** Search for an address or navigate on the map to find the location (or locations) you wish to challenge, click on "Submit Challenge" and provide information about which type of challenge you are filing.
3. Provide evidence in a .pdf, .doc, .jpg, .png, or .bmp file format to support your challenge. This evidence must clearly identify the location(s) being challenged and support your claim. Additional details about supporting evidence can be found in the Evidence Guidance document.
4. Submit your challenge. **The deadline to submit challenges is 11:59 pm on July 20th, 2024.**

Challenge Process Timeline

The challenge process will last no more than 120 days in total.

Starts
Jun 20th 2024

Challenge Period

Ends
July 20th 2024

Validation

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

Starts July 26st 2024

Rebuttal Period

Ends Aug 25th 2024

Rebutters will have 30 days from the 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.