

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Federal Funding Account, Last Mile
April 2023

I. Eligible Areas

1. **Q: What happened to the previously released public map?**

A: Stakeholders provided feedback to the CPUC that the previous map:

- Did not show numerous unserved locations,
- Needed to better incorporate equity into the eligibility process, including leveraging existing metrics for disadvantaged communities, and
- Should provide more data to enable applicants to better evaluate areas and develop their projects.

Based on this feedback, the CPUC implemented the following changes:

- Removed pre-defined priority areas,
- Updated the underlying data to better reflect the number of unserved locations, and
- Will now award up to 20 points in the “existing broadband service need” category based only on socio-economic indicators. (See Decision 22-04-055, [Appendix A](#), page A-7).

2. **Q: What does a “location” or “broadband serviceable location” mean?**

A: These terms refer to a structure that has or can receive broadband service. For example, a single-family housing unit, a multi-dwelling unit, a business building, or a commercial structure.

Broadband Serviceable Locations are locations determined by the FCC where mass-market fixed broadband internet access service is or could be installed. The FCC has determined that most community anchor institutions (CAIs), such as schools, libraries, and medical care facilities, are more likely to subscribe to customized, enterprise-grade internet service (as opposed to mass-market internet service), so the FCC generally does not display CAI locations unless the CAI actually does subscribe to a mass-market internet service or would subscribe to mass-market internet if it were available at the location.

3. **Q: What is an “unserved” location in FFA?**

A: CPUC [Decision 22-04-055](#), which set the Federal Funding Account rules, defines an “unserved location” as one lacking access to reliable broadband speeds of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps) downstream and 3 Mbps upstream including areas, or with access to only legacy technologies (e.g., Digital Subscriber Line and DOCSIS 2.0 or older). The FFA Public Map reflects mass-market locations meeting this criterion.

4. **Q: What is the Statewide Middle-Mile Network?**

A: The middle-mile is the physical fiber optic infrastructure needed to enable internet connectivity to end users. It is made up of high-capacity fiber lines that carry large amounts of data at high speeds over long distances. The State of California will acquire, build, maintain and operate an essential open-access statewide middle-mile network, which will be overseen by the California

Department of Technology. Please visit [State of California Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative](#) for more information.

5. **Q: Who can apply for funding through the Federal Funding Account?**

A: Appendix A of Decision [22-04-055](#), section 5 defines the following types of organizations as eligible to apply for funding:

- Entities with a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) that qualify as a “telephone corporation”, as defined under Public Utilities Code section 234
- Non-telephone corporations that are facilities-based broadband service providers
- Local governmental agencies
- Electric utilities
- Nonprofits
- Cooperatives
- California tribes (Eligible California tribal entities include California tribal governments, their wholly owned tribal corporations, and tribal nonprofits.)

II. Public Map

1. **Q: How do I leave feedback on the map?**

A: In the map, click on an area where you would like to provide comments. A window will pop-up in which you will see an “Add Comment” button. Click on this link and a feedback form will appear where comments can be provided and submitted. All comments submitted will appear on the map and will be considered with any applications that include areas for which a comment was submitted. Comments will also be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

2. **Q: How do I view information on an area in the map?**

A: Click on an area of interest in the map. A window will pop-up in which you will click on the selected area. The Search and Give Feedback tab will open with the data on the selected area displayed.

3. **Q: Where do I get the underlying data for a chosen area?**

A: The data is available at <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/ffapublicmap>

4. **Q: Whom can I contact for help with the map?**

A: Send an email with any questions to federalfundingaccount@cpuc.ca.gov.

5. **Q: What socioeconomic filters are added to the map?**

A: The map now has filters for the [Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index](#), CalEnviroScreen, [Disadvantaged Communities](#), and [Median Household Income](#). Further guidance on how the disadvantaged community indicators will be utilized in application scoring process is forthcoming.

6. **Q: What is the Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index (SEVI)?**

A: The SEVI provides a score to areas based on socio-economic indicators such as poverty, unemployment, educational attainment, linguistic isolation, and percent of income spent on housing. These factors are a subset of those used in the [CalEnviroScreen](#). A higher the SEVI score

corresponds to a more disadvantaged community. The top 25 percent of scores are considered the most disadvantaged.

7. Q: What is the CalEnviroScreen layer?

A: This layer shows communities disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution and with population characteristics that make them more sensitive to pollution. Full information and data can be accessed at the California [Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's website](#).

8. Q: What is the Disadvantaged Communities layer?

A: This layer shows CalEPA's designation of communities as disadvantaged based on the following four categories: (1) census tracts receiving the highest 25 percent of overall scores in CalEnviroScreen 4.0; (2) census tracts lacking overall scores in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 due to data gaps, but receiving the highest 5 percent of CalEnviroScreen 4.0 cumulative pollution burden scores; (3) census tracts identified in the 2017 DAC designation as disadvantaged, regardless of their scores in CalEnviroScreen 4.0; (4) and areas under the control of federally recognized Tribes.

9. Q: What is the Median Household Income layer?

A: This layer shows the distribution of Median Household Income (MHI) as measured by the US Census Bureau at the Census Block Group. The percentile ranges are measured as a percent of statewide median household income. The tabular data, however, displays Census 2020 reported MHI at the Census Block Group or county level.

10. Q: How does the Federal Funding Account Public Map differ from the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Broadband Map?

A: The maps rely on different data sources from different time periods. The Federal Funding Account map uses the FCC June 2022 Deployment Data validated with the CPUC's December 2021 service provider responses about which areas they serve. For information on the CPUC and FCC broadband data collection processes, see [Broadband Mapping Program \(ca.gov\)](#) and [Broadband Data Collection | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](#), respectively.

11. Q: Where can I find information on the previous version of the map?

A: Information on the earlier, superseded version of priority areas map is available at: <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/broadband-implementation-for-california/last-mile-federal-funding-account/archived-federal-funding-account-priority-areas>

12. Q: How is the service area data validated?

A: End of year 2021 confidential subscriber data, reported to the CPUC at the address level, was used to validate the June 2022 FCC claimed deployment. That is, if there was a subscription to a non-legacy wireline service in the block above 25/3 Mbps then the claimed FCC deployment was accepted as valid.