

HAWAII NEWS

DHHL receives over \$72 million for broadband connectivity expansion

By Victoria Budiono
Today • Last updated 11:10 p.m.

Business Editors' Picks

The state Department of Hawaiian Home Lands has received a more than \$72 million grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program to expand high-speed internet access for Native Hawaiian households.

The \$72.7 million, combined with a \$17 million grant awarded to DHHL earlier this year by the NTIA, brings a total of \$89 million to expand broadband access for thousands of underserved households on Hawaiian home lands.

The funding, part of the nearly \$3 billion Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program within the Biden-Harris administration's Internet for All Initiative, supports the development of telecommunications infrastructure, workforce training and digital equity initiatives specifically for DHHL lessees.

WELLS FARGO ACTIVE CASH
Earn unlimited 2% cash back on purchases.
Learn more

The connectivity program will enable fast fiber-optic internet connections for thousands of DHHL lessees across the state. The funding will support telecommunications infrastructure on Hawaiian home lands with limited broadband access and will be used to establish connections in upcoming housing developments.

The \$72.7 million award will support both infrastructure deployment and adoption projects to connect unserved Native Hawaiian households to high-speed internet.

The grant funds will be distributed over a four-year period, with projects scheduled through 2028. The initiative will primarily benefit Molokai, Kauai and Hawaii island as well as rural communities across the Hawaiian Islands.

Don't miss out on what's happening!
Stay in touch with top news, as it happens, conveniently in your email inbox. It's FREE!
Enter your email Sign Up

Native Hawaiian households will gain crucial access to telehealth, remote education and job training through the grant, providing them with essential resources to fully participate in the digital economy.

"Reliable broadband opens doors to new opportunities for job creation, entrepreneurship and economic growth," Doug Kinkoph, associate administrator of the NTIA Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, said Tuesday at a news conference. "Local businesses will have the ability to expand their reach; new industries will emerge through the meeting strengths and talents of the people here," he said.

Infrastructure efforts include an investment of over \$26.1 million to deploy middle-mile fiber-optic lines to Hawaiian homestead communities, \$15.45 million to construct community digital innovation centers for workforce development and digital literacy training, and the management of wireless telecommunications towers across the islands to ensure stable connections.

"Coming out of the struggles of the pandemic, we realized connectivity and reliable internet is not just something that is nice to have, but it's a necessity, whether it is for online learning, whether it is for opportunity or work from home," Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke — who is also the leader of Connect Kakou, Hawaii's high-speed internet initiative — said. "In rural communities even health care access depends on reliable internet."

Adoption initiatives will provide digital literacy classes for Native Hawaiians on several islands, distribute computers to participants and offer workforce development opportunities, including hands-on training and certification in telecommunications. New outreach coordinators will also be created to support these efforts within the DHHL.

"In today's world, digital access is a fundamental right. Whether it's for school, work, or health, broadband connectivity is essential to daily life, but sadly, too many families especially in rural areas are living without it," U.S. Rep. Jill Tokuda said in a statement. "That's why this award to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands is urgently needed and essential for our beneficiaries. It will provide more Native Hawaiian families with the tools needed to thrive online and beyond while supporting digital equity. We must continue to move forward in this digital age by equipping everyone with equal access to a brighter future."

The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, funded by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 — \$980 million — and the Biden-Harris administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law — \$2 billion — continues to expand internet access in underserved communities. Additional grants will be announced on a rolling basis.

Projects funded through this program are either completed or under construction across 27 tribal communities, and over 4,600 households now have access to free or low-cost high-speed internet services. The initiative represents a major step in closing the digital divide, providing more communities with the connectivity necessary for economic, educational and health opportunities.

We apologize for the inconvenience; our commenting system is currently undergoing some technical issues. Our team is working to resolve the problem, and hope for it to be back up soon. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

DevoCo
The DevoCo team is currently working on a project to improve the user experience on our website. We will be back online soon.

Save up to 35%\*
Start here to anywhere.
Book now
Hertz

SUBSCRIBER FAVORITES

- 1 Police arrest 2 men for allegedly racing on Moanalua Freeway
2 Trump picks John Ratcliffe to be CIA director
3 Pearl City man, 26, arrested for allegedly stabbing father
4 Hawaii health officials detect bird flu in wastewater for first time
5 Man, 70s, serious after car crashes into Mililani home

Quiz Time: How much do you know about Index Funds?
Test your knowledge with Schwab.
TAKE THE QUIZ
Charles Schwab
Own your tomorrow.

MORE BUSINESS

- DOH: Woman impersonated health inspector at Kahala supermarket
Tesla recalls 2,400 Cybertrucks, marking 6th this year
Bitcoin rises above \$90,000 on Trump euphoria
Hawaii County Council considers competing cell tower bills
Tech View: Passkeys offer latest means to effective online security

MIAMI
Try Our Authentic Szechwan Style Noodles.
15% off Any Entree!

Upcoming Events

- Wed, Nov 27 @7:00pm Sponsored
A Christmas Nightmare Rave
Artistry Honolulu
Wed, Nov 13 @8:45am
Fall Decor Workshop: Pumpkin Potted Succulents Plantoem
Wed, Nov 13 @9:00am
Recovery Retreat
New Horizons Counseling
Wed, Nov 13 @9:30am
Safety Check
Five-0 Motors MCBH Kaneohe Bay

Going
Save up to 90% on flights
SIGN UP

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT