

Presentation to the Third Meeting of the  
**Science, Technology and  
Telecommunications  
Committee**

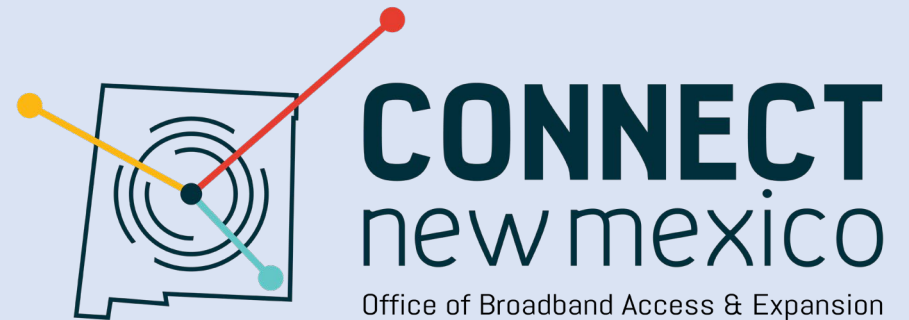
Office of Broadband Access & Expansion

Jeff Lopez, Director

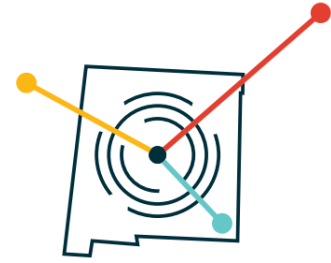
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August 25, 2025

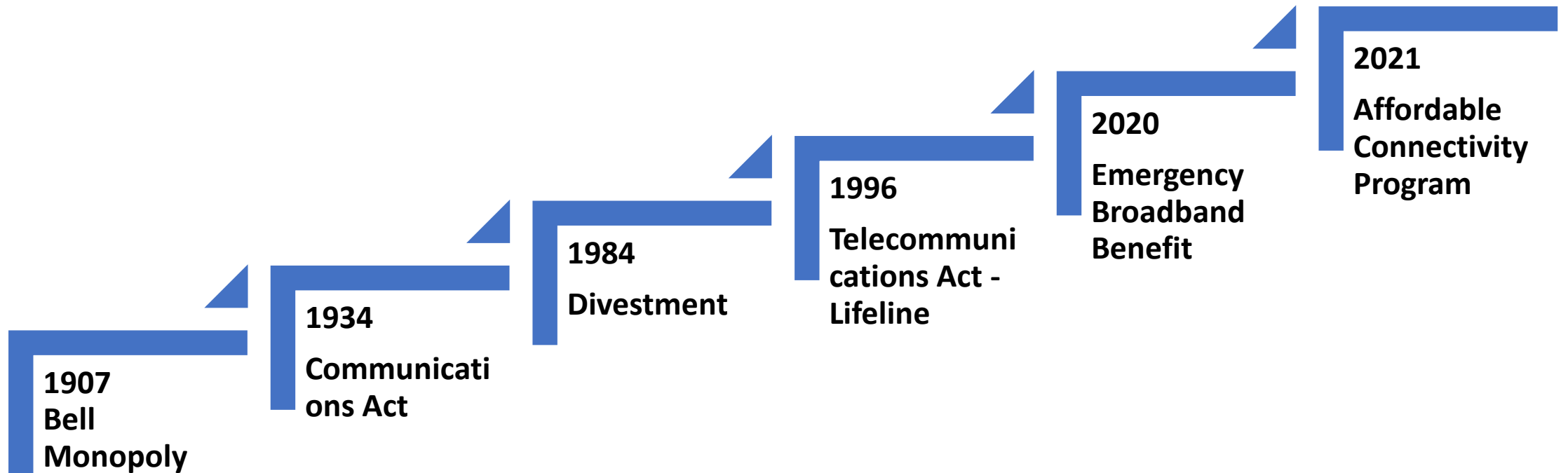
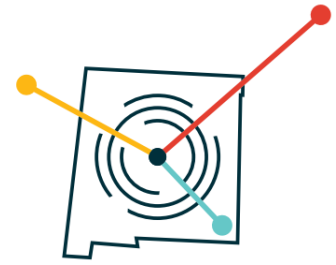


# Content

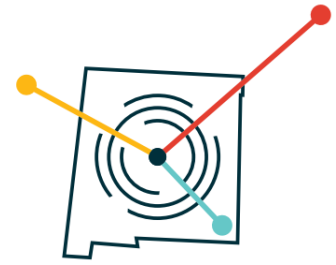


- History of Affordable Communications
- Universal Service Under Monopoly
- Universal Service Under the 1996 Telecommunications Act
- Federal Universal Service Fund
- State Universal Service Fund
- Affordable Connectivity Program
- Current Broadband Affordability Programs

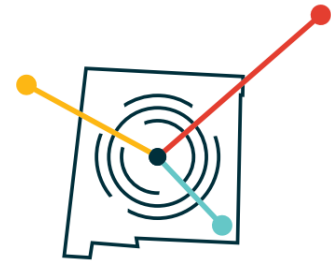
# History of Affordable Communications



# Universal Service Under “Ma Bell” Monopoly



# Universal Service under the 1996 Telecommunications Act



Collect “contributions” (i.e. tax/fee) from telecommunications services

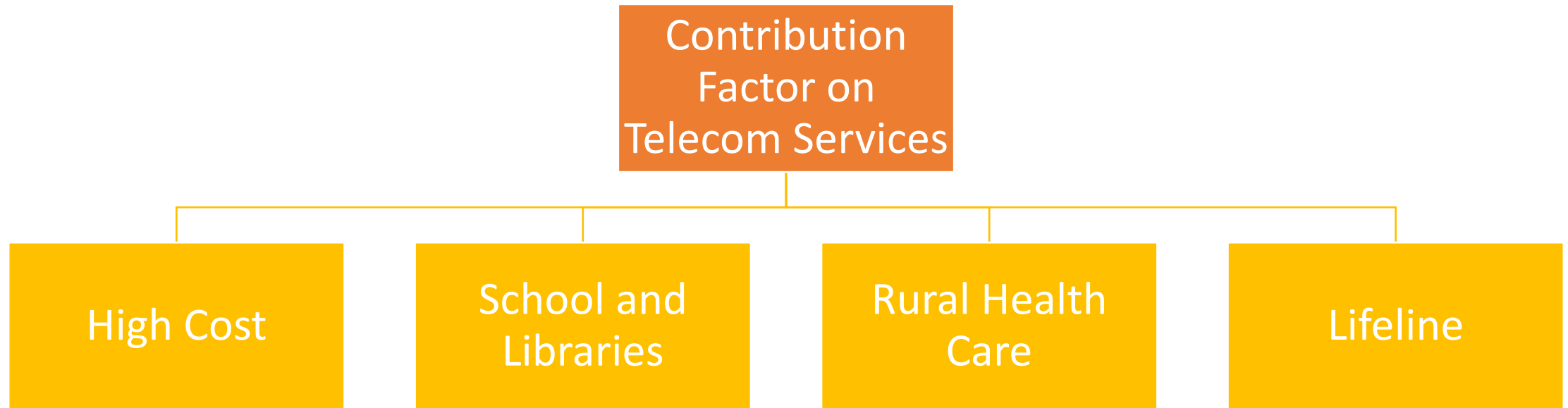
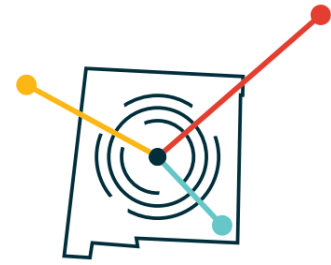
## 4 Factors to Determine Subsidies

- Service Essential to **Education, Public Health, or Public Safety**
- Subscribed to by a substantial majority of residential customers
- Deployed by “Telecommunications Carriers”
- Consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity

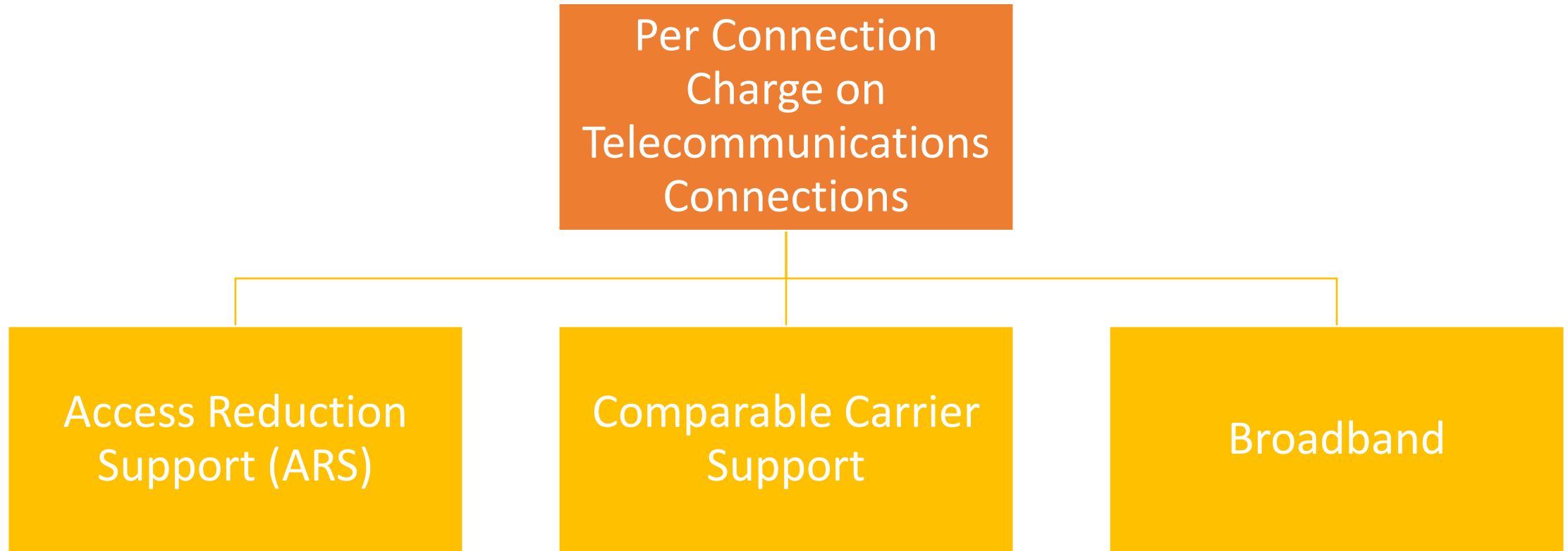
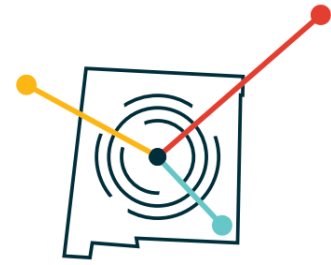
*47 U.S. Code Sec. 254(c)(1)(A)-(D)*

**Authorized States to collect contributions and distribute subsidies**

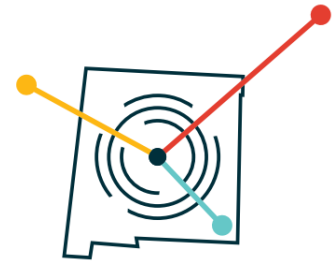
# Federal Universal Service Fund



# State Rural Universal Service Fund



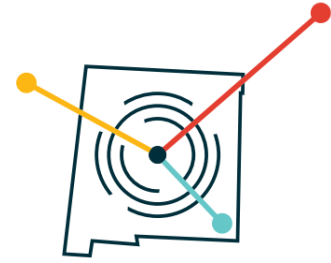
# Affordable Connectivity Program



- 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (i.e. “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”) appropriated **\$14.2 billion**
- Subsidized monthly broadband service at **\$30 per household** or \$75 per household on Tribal lands
- One-time subsidy of **\$100 to purchase a connected device**
- Eligibility restricted to households below **200% of the federal poverty guidelines**
- **Funds expended in April 2024**



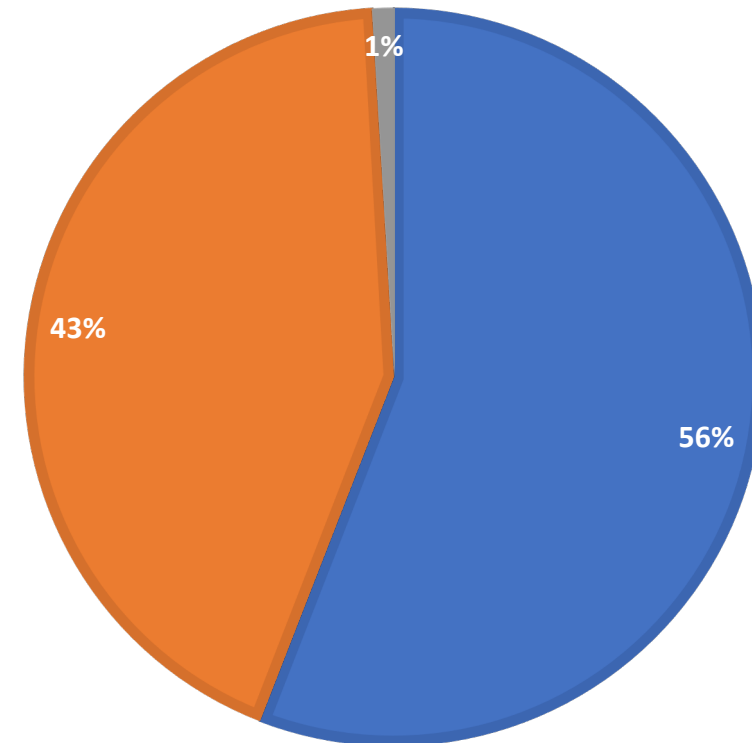
# ACP in New Mexico



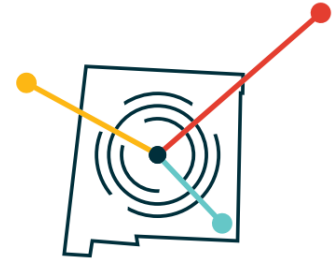
- April 2024
  - 184,131 households participated of a total of 431,000 eligible (42.7%)
  - Monthly cost of \$5,649,198 (\$67,790,376 annualized)

## SUBSCRIBERS BY SERVICE TYPE

■ Mobile Broadband ■ Fixed Broadband ■ Other ■

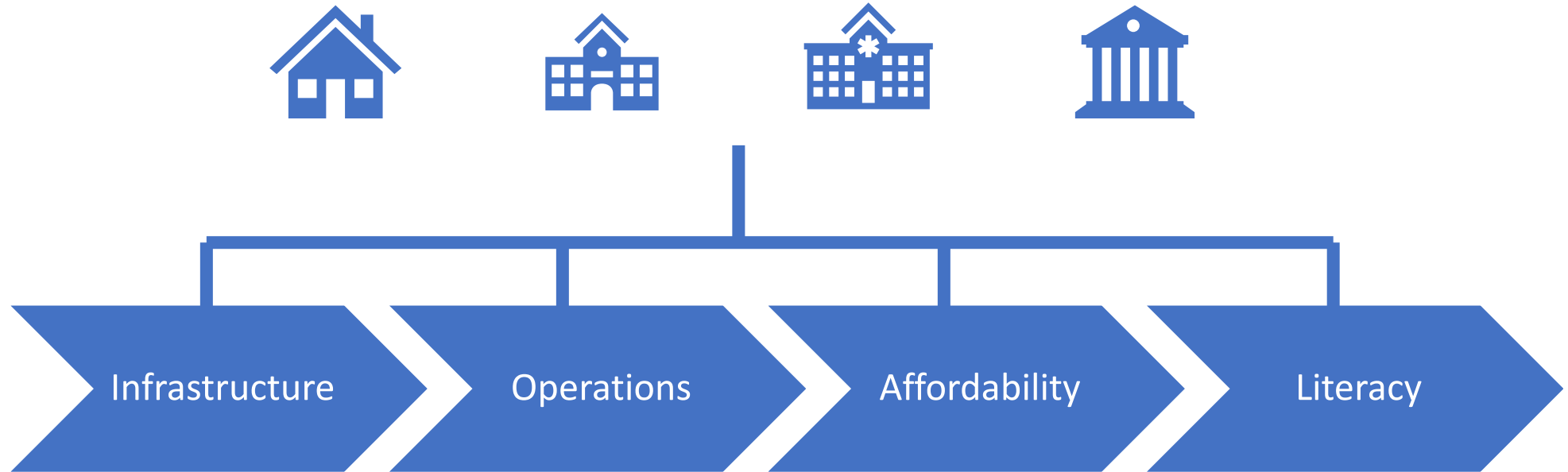
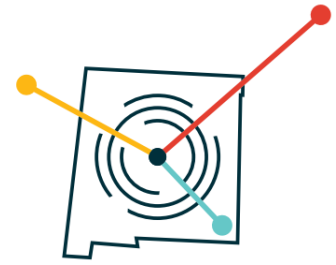


# Current Broadband Affordability Programs

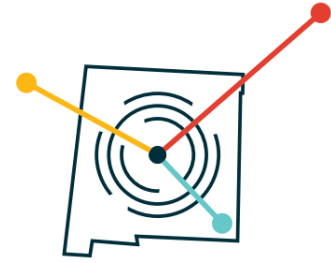


- FCC Lifeline Program
  - \$9.25 per month (\$25 on Tribal lands)
  - Eligibility limited to less than 135% of the federal poverty guidelines
  - In New Mexico
    - 56,030 monthly subscribers out of 334,610 eligible (17%) in March 2025
    - Approximately \$10.6 million per year
- Private Programs for Internet Service Providers (ISPs)
  - Range from total cost of \$10 to \$25 per month.
  - Download speeds capped at 50-150 Mbps
  - Unknown participation

# Communications Access



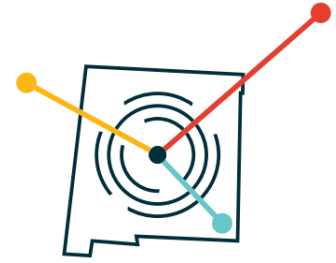
# Questions?



Jeffrey Lopez is Director of the New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion. He brings over 12 years of federal experience in support of New Mexicans. Prior to this appointment, Lopez served as senior policy advisor and state staff to U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján. Lopez managed the Senator's role as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Communications, Media, and Broadband and worked directly on legislation that created the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program, through which New Mexico is receiving \$675 million to connect unserved and underserved households across the state.



# Additional Resources



## **OBAE Homepage**

<https://connect.nm.gov/>

## **Mapping**

<https://connect.nm.gov/nm-broadband-mapping.html>

## **Broadband Project Video**

[https://youtu.be/Altg8BOP-Ww?si=v5v\\_nMbZDfGwAJwm](https://youtu.be/Altg8BOP-Ww?si=v5v_nMbZDfGwAJwm)

