

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately **80.6% of households in Kentucky cities had some form of broadband access (cellular, landline, or satellite)** in 2019. When looking specifically at landline services (**cable, fiber optic, DSL**), **66.9% of households in Kentucky cities have broadband access.**

HB 348 HCS repeals and reenacts KRS 246.010 alphabetizing definitions and **adding definitions for "broadband" or "broadband service," "broadband deployment fund," broadband deployment project", "broadband deployment project area," "census block," "shapefile," "underserved area," and "unserved area".**

It amends KRS 246.030 to **add an Office of Broadband Innovation to the Department of Agriculture;** and creates a new section of KRS Chapter 246 **establishing an Office of Broadband Innovation** and provides for the duties and responsibilities of the office. HB 348 HCS creates a new section of KRS Chapter 246 **establishing a broadband deployment fund in the Office of Innovation;**

The bill repeals KRS 224A.1121 and reenact as a new section KRS Chapter 246, amending all references of the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority to the Office of Broadband Innovation, and **authorizing the Department of Agriculture to promulgate administrative regulations for a broadband deployment fund program.**

HB 348 HCS amends KRS 154.15-020 to require that the Kentucky Communications Network Authority obtain written permission from the Office of Broadband Innovation before applying for federal funds, and amends KRS 18A.115 to exempt Office of Broadband Innovation employees from classified service under KRS 18A.005 to 18A.200.

Below is a list of municipal broadband providers:

1. Frankfort Electric Plant Board
2. Owensboro Municipal Utilities
3. Barbourville Utility Commission
4. Bardstown Municipal Utilities
5. Bowling Green Municipal Utilities
6. Franklin Electric Plant Board
7. Glasgow Electric Plant Board
8. Henderson Municipal Power & Light
9. Hopkinsville Electric System
10. Mayfield Electric & Water System
11. Murray Electric System
12. Paducah Power System
13. Princeton Electric Plant Board
14. Russellville Electric Plant Board
15. Williamstown Utility Commission

The following telephone cooperatives provide high-speed Internet service to rural Kentucky:

Ballard Rural Telephone Cooperative; Duo County Telephone Cooperative; Foothills Rural Telephone Cooperatives; Highland Telephone Cooperative; Logan Telephone Cooperative; Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative; North Central Telephone Cooperative; Peoples Rural Telephone Cooperative; South Central Telephone Cooperative; and West Kentucky Rural Telephone Cooperative.

Part III: Differences to Local Government Mandate Statement from Prior Versions

The fiscal impact of HB 348 HCS is the same as for HB 348. HB 348 HCS retains the original provisions of HB 348 and amends KRS 246.010 to **change the definition for "broadband"** and **adds a definition for a "broadband deployment project"**. The substitute amends KRS 246.030 to **add an Office of Broadband Innovation** to the Department of Agriculture and **amends the duties and responsibilities of the office and the reporting requirements of the office to the Legislative Research Commission.**

Data Source(s): Kentucky Telecom Association; Kentucky Municipal Utilities Association; Kentucky League of Cities; LRC staff.

Preparer: H. Marks **Reviewer:** KHC **Date:** 2/22/21