

DIGITAL CONNECTION COMMITTEES

WHAT ARE DIGITAL CONNECTION COMMITTEES?

Under the federal Digital Equity Act, Office of Broadband Development (OBD) is developing a statewide plan to strategize improvements in internet affordability, access to internet-enabled devices, and access to digital skills training. Digital Connection Committees serve as key partners in ensuring the plan reflects the goals and needs of all Minnesotans.

Digital Connection Committees are self-selected, voluntary workgroups that can be formed by a wide variety of entities, including but not limited to political subdivisions, tribes, non-profits, anchor institutions, faith-based organizations, Minnesota-based businesses, and more – or any combination of these. Digital Connection Committees representing one or more of the following populations are especially encouraged to participate:

- People age 60 or older
- People who are incarcerated
- Veterans
- People with disabilities
- People from low-income households
- People learning to speak or read English
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
- People living in rural communities

WHAT ARE DIGITAL CONNECTION COMMITTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES?

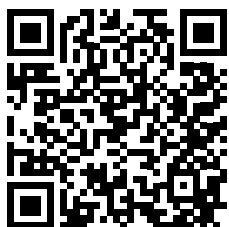
The workload is deliberately flexible. Digital Connection Committees have two **required** responsibilities: (1) receive and share updates about OBD's digital equity planning process and (2) allow OBD to list your Committee on our website.

Committees have several **optional** responsibilities: (1) gather local information about digital inclusion assets, needs, and goals to shape the Digital Equity Plan from April 3 to June 30; (2) attend virtual networking sessions to learn from other Committees; (3) provide feedback on a draft of the Digital Equity Plan between August 21 and September 29; and (4) be a network of partners for OBD to rely on as Digital Equity Act work progresses beyond 2023. No Committee is too small to participate.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE?

DATE	ACTIVITY
April 3	OBD begins supporting Committees in gathering information about digital inclusion assets and needs.
April 12	Virtual networking hour for all Digital Connection Committees. Details forthcoming.
June 14	Virtual networking hour for all Digital Connection Committees. Details forthcoming.
June 30	Digital inclusion information due to OBD. Further instructions will be provided.
August 21	Draft plan posted online for public comment. OBD begins in-person regional gatherings.
September 29	Last day for public comment. OBD concludes in-person regional gatherings.
November 30	Final plan submitted to federal government for review.

While Digital Connection Committees may choose to disband after November 30, additional opportunities to carry out activities from the plan will be available in 2024.



HOW DO I REGISTER OR JOIN A CONNECTION COMMITTEE?

Visit OBD's Digital Inclusion website and submit the Digital Connection Committee registration form. Committees registering by April 7 will be able to participate fully in gathering information.

mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/adoption

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