



ESSER Bulletin

August 2024 ESSER Compass Update

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



ESSER Close-Out Process began in July 2024, contact Kimberly Kelly at kimberly.kelly@mt.gov or (406) 594-9295 to schedule an appointment. Note this process is different than the E-Grants Final Expenditure Report (FER). It includes a full review of ESSER I, II & III Budget Pages and other relevant documentation. Please complete a [Return Funds form](#) if you are returning awarded funds for any reason.

- An email on ESSER spending and compliances for each District was sent in July to start the Close-Out Process.
- If you did not receive an email by July 15, 2024 check spam and contact [ESSER Meet the Team](#).

ESSER III Closeout Deadlines

- [Amendments](#) due by September 30, 2024.
- [Cash Requests](#) (final request for reimbursements) due by October 25, 2024.
 - *ESSER III FERs do not permit embedded expenditures.*
- [Final Expenditure Reports](#) (FERs) due by November 10, 2024.

ESSER System of Support includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

- ESSER Team regularly sends out reminder/status district reports. On the OPI website is posted a [Monthly District Status Report](#) on allocation and remaining balance.

ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

- Schools can NOT submit expenditures/Cash Requests embedded in **Final Expenditure Reports (FER)**
- Cash Requests are due by the 25th of each month and paid on the following 10th
- Cross-reference E-Grants Cash Requests and FERs with onsite accounting. Excel File provided by Corvallis Business Manager may be helpful: [E-Grants Prep & Processing - Amendments & Cash Requests OPI Oct22](#) (pdf), ([video](#)), ([Excel workbook](#))

ESSER III 20% Set-Aside - Schools cannot return Lost Instructional Time (LIT) funds

- Schools are required to spend 20% of ESSER III on Lost Instructional Time (LIT).

ESSER Compliances (delays may occur in ESSER III if below are incomplete)

Thank you to all entities that have completed their ESSER Compliances.

- [Self-Assessment](#) is past due November 30th, 2023.
- [ESSER Budget pages](#) detailing salaries and large projects/purchases
- [Annual Data Collection](#) past due April 15th, 2024. Thank you for submitting, we are currently reviewing the data.

[ESSER ELO \(Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity\) Grant](#) (Summer 2024, Math/Reading Literacy).

- Please contact Allison Agostino at allison.agostino@mt.gov.
- See additional [examples here](#).



LE Name	ELO History	ELO Funding	Student Participation	Average Weekly Participation	Program Topic
Panther Math and Reading Program	Afterschool 21' - 23' Summer 24'	\$97,423	26	7 hours	Math
Afterschool Club House	Afterschool & Summer 21' - 24'	\$173,382	767	10 hours	Reading
Real World Book Club	Afterschool & Summer 21' - 24'	\$177,999	288	28 hours	Math/Reading
Hamilton Players	Summer 23' - 24'	\$50,000	50	25 hours	Reading
Get Your Game On	Afterschool 21' - 23' Summer 23' - 24'	\$136,256	3115	3 hours	Math
Mango Math	Afterschool & Summer 21' - 24'	\$157,269	363	28 hours	Math
Code Girls United	Afterschool & Summer 21' - 24'	\$152,784	336	4 hours	Math
Educatio Learning Studio	Afterschool '21 Afterschool & Summer 22' - 24'	\$146,293	230	5 hours	Math

OPI Posted Resources:

- Broadband: [OPI Broadband Information](#) or [Digital Opportunity Plan](#) or Connectmt@mt.gov
- [OPI ESSER webpage](#)
- Department of Education [ESSER FAQs](#)
- All previous Compass newsletters ([2021-22](#)) ([2023](#)) ([2024](#))
- The liquidation extension for CARES, CRRSA, has been extended to ARP ([CCSSO Summary of DOE Liquidation](#), Department of Education [FAQs for liquidation extensions](#) and [Template](#)).

For further information please contact:

Wendi Fawns, ESSER/EANS Director at wendi.fawns@mt.gov (406) 437-8595

Rebecca Brown, ESSER Program Manager at rebecca.brown@mt.gov (406) 437-4795

Allison Agostino, Project Communication Specialist and Broadband at allison.agostino@mt.gov (406) 202-7685

Kimberly Kelly, Administrative Specialist at Kimberly.Kelly@mt.gov (406) 594-9295

July 2024 ESSER Compass Update

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



ESSER Close-Out Process begins July 2024, contact Kimberly Kelly at kimberly.kelly@mt.gov or (406) 594-9295 to schedule an appointment. Note this process is different than the E-Grants Final Expenditure Report (FER). It includes a full review of ESSER I, II & III Budget Pages and other relevant documentation. Please complete a [Return Funds form](#) if you are returning awarded funds for any reason.

- A report of ESSER spending and compliances for each District will be sent in July to start the Close-Out Process.
- If you do not receive one by July 15, 2024 check spam and contact [ESSER Meet the Team](#).

ESSER **System of Support** includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

- ESSER Team regularly sends out reminder/status district reports. On the OPI website is posted a Monthly District Status report on allocation and remaining balance. Districts were sent a Remaining Allocation reminder on April 26, 2024.

ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

- Schools can NOT submit expenditures/Cash Requests embedded in **Final Expenditure Reports (FER)**
- No Cash Requests can be processed in July due to Fiscal Year-end
 - Standard Cash Requests are due by the 25th of each month and paid on the following 10th



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL AA 2024

- Cross-reference E-Grants Cash Requests and FERs with their onsite accounting. Excel File provided by Corvallis Business Manager may be helpful: [E-Grants Prep & Processing - Amendments & Cash Requests OPI Oct22](#) (pdf), ([video](#)), ([Excel workbook](#))

ESSER III 20% Set-Aside - Schools cannot return Lost Instructional Time (LIT) funds

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June 2024 ESSER Compass Update



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL AA 2024

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



ESSER Close-Out Process will begin in June, contact Kimberly Kelly at kimberly.kelly@mt.gov or (406) 594-9295 to schedule an appointment. Note this process is different than the E-Grants Final Expenditure Report (FER). It includes a full review of ESSER I, II & III Budget Pages and other relevant documentation. Please complete a *Return Funds form* if you are returning awarded funds for any reason.

ESSER System of Support includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

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 - Standard Cash Requests are due by the 25th of each month and paid on the following 10th
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ESSER Compliances (delays may occur in ESSER III if below are incomplete)

Thank you to all entities that have completed their ESSER Compliances.

- Self-Assessment is past due November 30th, 2023.
- ESSER Budget pages detailing salaries and large projects/purchases
- Annual Data Collection past due April 15th, 2024. Thank you for submitting, we are currently reviewing the data.

ESSER ELO (Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity) Grant (Summer 2024, Math/Reading Literacy).

- Please contact Allison Agostino at allison.agostino@mt.gov.
- See additional [examples here](#).

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- The liquidation extension for CARES, CRRSA, has been extended to ARP ([CCSSO Summary of DOE Liquidation](#), Department of Education [FAQs for liquidation extensions](#) and [Template](#)).



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May 2024 ESSER Compass Update

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



ESSER **System of Support** includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

- Schools can NOT submit expenditures embedded in **Final Expenditure Reports (FER)**.
- Schools can cross-reference E-Grants FERs with their onsite Accounting (Black Mountain, Foxy Lady, etc.)

ESSER Compliances (delays may occur in ESSER III if below are incomplete)

- Self-Assessment is past due November 30th, 2023
- ESSER Budget pages detailing salaries and large projects/purchases
- Annual Data Collection past due April 15th, 2024. Similar to last year, excel spreadsheet **blue** cells

ESSER ELO (Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity) Grant (Summer 2024, Math/Reading Literacy).

- Please contact Allison Agostino at allison.agostino@mt.gov . See [examples here](#).

Broadband Project Across Montana:

- OPI Broadband Resources: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>
- The States [Digital Opportunity Plan](#) is open for public comment by sending to Connectmt@mt.gov

Many **resources** are available on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#) including but not limited to:

- Department of Education [ESSER FAQs](#)
- All previous Compass newsletters ([2021-22](#)) ([2023](#)) ([2024](#))

The liquidation extension for CARES, CRRSA, has been extended to ARP (Department’s [explanatory letter to states](#), [updated FAQs](#), and ARP ESSER and EANS [liquidation extension request template](#)).

For further information please contact:

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April 2024 ESSER Compass Update

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



ESSER **System of Support** includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

If your district has additional funding needs, please let the ESSER Team know.

- **School Planning in a Post-ESSER Era workshop April 25-27.**



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL AA 2024

The liquidation extension for CARES, CRRSA, has been extended to ARP (Department's [explanatory letter to states](#), [updated FAQs](#), and ARP ESSER and EANS [liquidation extension request template](#)).

ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

- Schools can NOT submit expenditures embedded in **Final Expenditure Reports (FER)**.
- Schools can cross-reference E-Grants FERs with their onsite Accounting (Black Mountain, Foxey Lady, etc.)

ESSER III 20% Set-Aside - Schools cannot return Lost Instructional Time (LIT) funds

- Schools are required to spend 20% of ESSER III on Lost Instructional Time (LIT).

ESSER Compliances (delays may occur in ESSER III if below are incomplete)

- Self-Assessment past due November 30th, 2023 and ARP Plan and Safe Return Plan past due June 2023
- ESSER Budget pages detailing salaries and large projects/purchases
- Annual Data Collection will be April 1 – 15th, 2024 and will be similar to last year, excel spreadsheet **blue** cells.

ESSER ELO (Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity) Grant (Summer 2024 focuses Math/Reading Literacy).

- Please contact Allison Agostino at allison.agostino@mt.gov

Broadband Project Across Montana:

- OPI Broadband Resources: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>
- The States [Digital Opportunity Plan](#) is open for public comment by sending to Connectmt@mt.gov

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- Department of Education [ESSER FAQs](#)
- All previous Compass newsletters ([2021-22](#)) ([2023](#)) ([2024](#))

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March 2024 ESSER Compass Update

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)

ESSER **System of Support** includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

If your district has additional funding needs, please let the ESSER Team know so we can work toward a solution.



ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

- Schools will NOT be able to submit expenditures embedded in **Final Expenditure Reports (FER)**. All expenditures must be requested via Cash Requests before FERs get submitted.
- The OPI ESSER Team recommends cash requests be submitted at least bi-monthly.
- Schools can cross-reference E-Grants FERs with their onsite Accounting (Black Mountain, Foxey Lady, etc.)

ESSER III 20% Set-Aside - No Schools can return Lost Instructional Time (LIT) funds

- Schools are required to spend 20% of ESSER III on Lost Instructional Time (LIT).
- Please spend the **Lost Instructional Time** first. FERS will NOT be approved with remaining LIT funds.



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL AA 2024

ESSER Compliances:

Please expect delays in processing ESSER III amendments and cash requests if the below compliances are not completed.

- ESSER II FER past due November 10th, 2023
- Self-Assessment past due November 30th, 2023
- ARP Plan and Safe Return Plan past due June 2023
- ESSER II and III budget pages detailing salaries (FTE and grade level) and large projects/purchases approved through scope process (contact wendi.fawns@mt.gov (406) 437-8595 or rebecca.brown@mt.gov (406) 437-4795)
- Annual Data Collection will be April 1 – 15th, 2024. Process will be similar to last year, involve entering data into excel spreadsheet bright blue cells, and OPI will have a two-week period of walkthrough sessions to assist.
- The liquidation extension for CARES, CRRSA, has been extended to ARP (Department's [explanatory letter to states](#), [updated FAQs](#), and ARP ESSER and EANS [liquidation extension request template](#)).

ESSER ELO (Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity) Grant:

- ESSER ELO (Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity) Grant funding available for the 2023-24 School Year (Afterschool) and Summer 2024 focuses on **Math and/or Reading Literacy**.
- Please contact Allison Agostino at allison.agostino@mt.gov or visit the [ELO Website page](#).

Broadband Project Across Montana:

- OPI Broadband Resources: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>
- The States [Digital Opportunity Plan](#) is open for public comment by sending to Connectmt@mt.gov
- For more information on the Broadband project contact Allison Agostino (406-202-7685) for details.

Many resources are available on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#) including but not limited to:

- Department of Education [ESSER FAQs](#)
- All previous Compass newsletters ([2021-22](#)) ([2023](#)) ([2024](#))

For further information please contact:

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February 2024 ESSER Compass Update

ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)

ESSER III Funding Requests (expenditures, cash requests, request for reimbursements):

In an effort to ensure compliant close out of ESSER III, schools will NOT be able to submit expenditures embedded in their Final Expenditure Reports (FER). The OPI ESSER Team is also recommending that cash requests be submitted at least bi-monthly to ensure funds are fully obligated and expended by the ESSER III deadline of September 30, 2024. Funds must be requested via Cash Requests before FERs get submitted.

ESSER **System of Support** includes 6 days/week via Zoom, phone, email, text, and in person.

If your district has additional funding needs, please let the ESSER Team know so we can work toward a solution.

ESSER Compliances:

Please expect delays in processing ESSER III amendments and cash requests if the below compliances are not completed.

- Final Expenditure Reports for all ESSER II past due November 10th, 2023

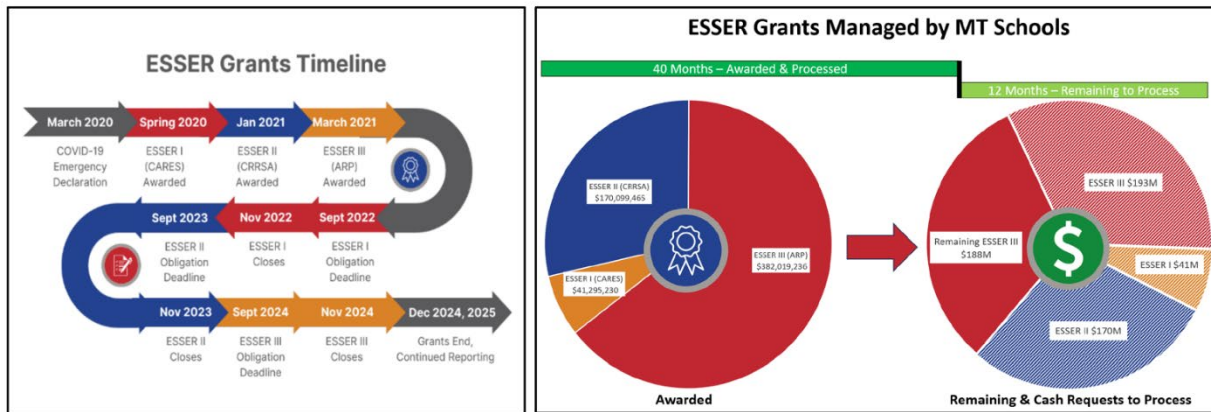


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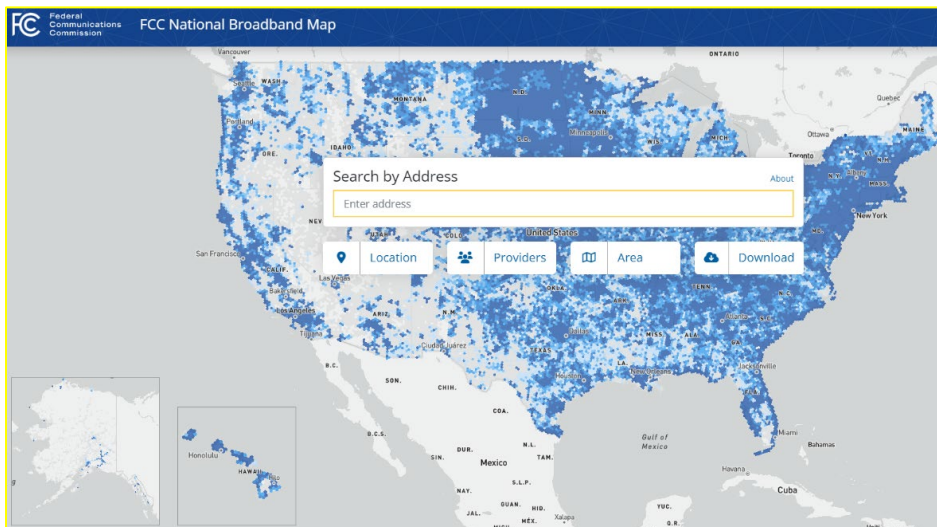
- [Self-Assessment](#) past due November 30th, 2023
- [ARP Plan and Safe Return Plan](#) past due June 2023
- [ESSER II and III budget pages](#) updating/detailing salaries (FTE and grade level) and large projects/scopes/pre-approval through [Amendment](#) process
- [Capital Expenditure AND/OR Large Project/Item purchase](#) Scopes
- [Annual program/data reporting](#) (data collection) April 2024. Process will be similar to Year 3 (FY2022) involving an Excel data collection file largely populated through OPI data pulls. Districts will need to retrieve the file and update missing data by inputting into bright **blue** cells. OPI will have a two-week period of walkthrough sessions.

Accountability



District Monthly Status Reports (allocated and expended) can be viewed on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#).

Broadband Project Across Montana: Click on the map for details on Montana Broadband availability in your area



- OPI Broadband Resources: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>
- The States [Digital Opportunity Plan](#) is open for public comment by sending to Connectmt@mt.gov
- For more information on the Broadband project contact Allison Agostino (406-202-7685) for details.

OPI ESSER Review/Monitoring Process: As part of [federal ESSER compliance](#) OPI is performing several monitoring activities. OPI has been assisting LEAs in mitigating risks to avoid audit findings by **reviewing requests for funding** and providing **assistance with compliance**.

The process to request a liquidation extension for CARES, CRRSA, has been extended to ARP. You can access the Department's [explanatory letter to states](#), [updated FAQs](#), and ARP ESSER and EANS [liquidation extension request template](#).



ESSER ELO (Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunity) Grant:

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E-Grants Budget and Cash Request Descriptions must be reviewed to ensure there is adequate detail provided. For more information and specific guidance, please [click here](#) and see [Amendment](#) and [Cash Request](#) guidance.

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January 2024 ESSER Compass Update

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In an effort to ensure compliant close out of ESSER III, schools will NOT be able to submit expenditures embedded in their Final Expenditure Reports (FER). The OPI ESSER Team is also recommending that cash requests be submitted at least bi-monthly to ensure funds are fully obligated and expended by the ESSER III deadline of September 30, 2024. Funds must be requested via Cash Requests before FERs get submitted.

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ESSER Compliances:

Please expect delays in processing ESSER III amendments and cash requests if the below compliances are not completed.

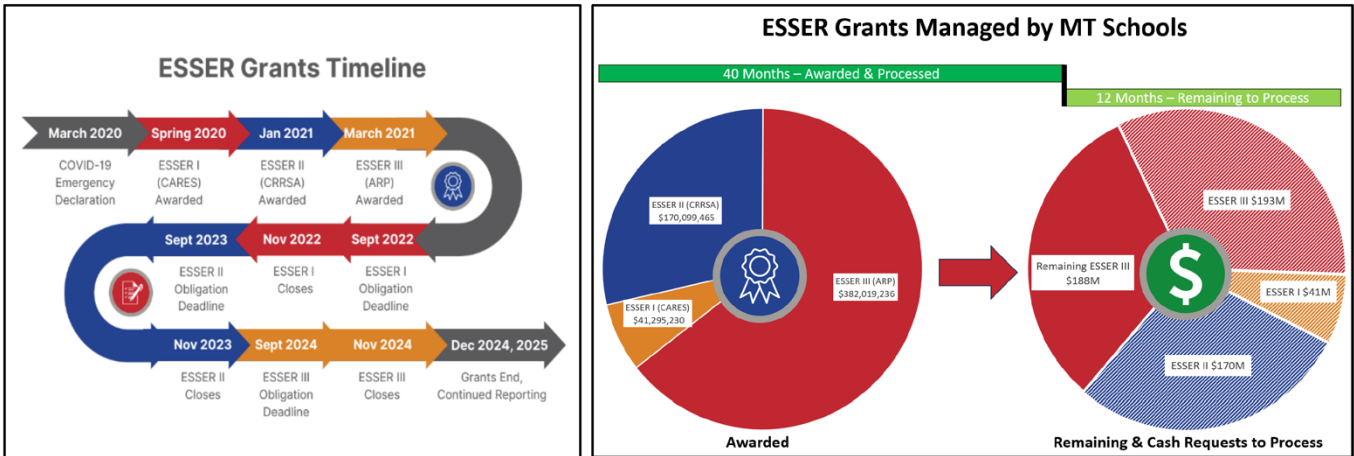
- [Final Expenditure Reports](#) for all budgets in ESSER II
- [Self-Assessment](#) due by November 30th, 2023 (different than annual data collection).
- [ARP Plan and Safe Return Plan](#) revised/updated June 2023 (last revision needed)
- [ESSER budget pages](#) updated in an [Amendment](#) with details on salaries and Scope
- [Capital Expenditure AND/OR Large Project/Item purchase](#) Scopes



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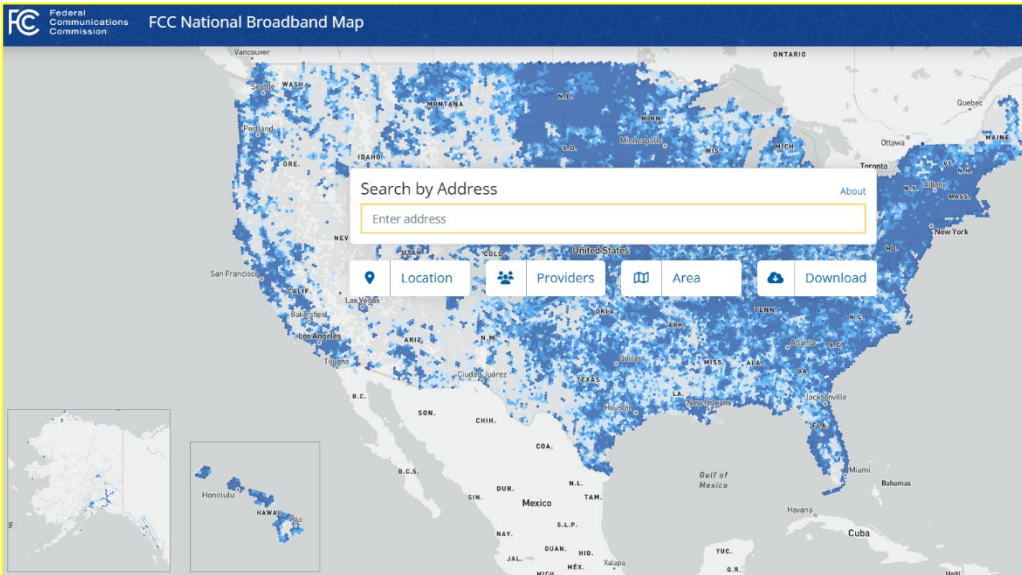
- [Annual program/data reporting](#) - data collection (TBA expected in spring)

Accountability



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Notices: [updated technical FAQs for liquidation extensions](#) and CRRSA [liquidation extension request template](#).

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E-Grants Budget and Cash Request Descriptions must be reviewed to ensure there is adequate detail provided. For more information and specific guidance, please [click here](#) and see [Amendment](#), and [Cash Request](#).

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