



REPORT FACT SHEET: “Iowa Broadband: Current Market Analysis & Initial Recommendations for Acceleration of Iowa’s Broadband Market”

Framing

- The completed report is a major step forward in increasing Iowa’s high-speed Internet access and adoption across the state.
- It is critical to understand why people who have broadband service available to them are not using it. The “adoption gap” is a primary focus of the report.

Key Findings

- 95.36% of households are served by 768 Kbps download speeds and faster.
- 4.64% of households, or approximately 53,000, are unserved across Iowa.
- 87.60% of Iowa households are served by download speeds of 3 Mbps and faster.
- 12.40%, or approximately 142,000 households, are unserved or underserved.
- While Iowa broadband inventory is growing at speeds comparable to other states, there remains an availability gap of approximately 53,000 unserved households in Iowa.
- 95% of households in Iowa have broadband available; county availability estimates range from 68.73% in Ringgold County to 99.98% in Pocahontas County.
- There is a big gap between the availability of broadband and the adoption of high-speed Internet service in Iowa’s households.
- While 95% of Iowa households have broadband available, only 66% are subscribing to the service.
- 34% of Iowa households do not use the life-impacting technology in broadband that is available to them.
- Approximately 337,000 households in Iowa have broadband available, but for various reasons do not subscribe.
 - Of the 34% of Iowans without a home broadband connection:
 - 45% - Cite lack of interest
 - 31% - Don’t have a computer
 - 21% - Say it’s too expensive
 - 10% - Lack broadband availability at their home

- Iowa Population Groups most at risk of “digital exclusion:”
 - Older people
 - Ethnic minorities
 - People with disabilities
 - People with low income or low education

- Unlike national trends, the Iowa adoption gap is not a rural versus non-rural phenomenon. Broadband adoption among rural residents is not significantly lower than their urban or suburban counterparts. Both have 65% to 66% adoption rates. By contrast, the FCC estimates that nationally 50% of rural households subscribe to broadband compared with 68% of non-rural households.

Background

- The report is a product of the partnership between the Iowa Utilities Board and the national nonprofit Connected Nation through its subsidiary, Connect Iowa.

- The U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration, or NTIA, awarded Connect Iowa approximately \$1.7 million for the mapping portion of the project over a two-year period. Additionally, there’s almost \$500,000 set aside for broadband planning activities over a five-year period in Iowa, bringing the total grant award to approximately \$2.2 million.