

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

**Project Title:** Broadband for State Veterans Homes

**Project Type:** Sustainable Adoption

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### **Executive Summary**

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The Broadband for State Veterans Homes program will bring broadband access to 1,500 residents at the six state veterans' homes in Pennsylvania. Broadband service will enable these residents, many of whom are elderly and have disabilities, to engage in new and stimulating activities; stay abreast of current events; communicate with loved ones; and share their valuable knowledge and experience gained while serving our country in the armed forces. By introducing them to the internet and providing the necessary training and education for its use, veterans and their spouses who live in the homes can see faraway lands or visit with friends and relatives without leaving the confines of their wheelchairs or desk chairs.

This initiative will provide eight computers, peripherals, and ancillary devices for each of the six veterans' homes; offer focused, practical training to the residents on how to use computers and the internet; and provide on-site technical support and troubleshooting to make sure the broadband service, computers and software are maintained and updated as needed.

Implementation and oversight of this project will be a collaborative effort by the fiscal, program, administrative and information technology personnel in the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The staff working on this initiative have experience implementing complex programs, maintaining oversight of multiple vendors, administering grant programs and complying with extensive reporting requirements. The Commonwealth Procurement Code ensures fair competition in purchasing. Competitively-bid contracts will be used to augment the staffing requirements for information technology support and training. Accountability of vendors, invoices, reimbursements and accounts will be maintained through the Commonwealth's comprehensive fiscal tracking system.

The total budget to implement this project is \$476,700, which includes the 20% match provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the 80% funded by federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act appropriations. This investment will provide a solid foundation for a program that will be sustained by each veterans' home following the grant funding.