



COVID 19 Makes it Time Revisit FCC's Minimum Broadband Speed

During my career working for rural broadband cooperatives, I often heard members talk about their struggles with slow internet speeds. Most were very excited to hear when we were bringing fiber broadband to their community. It was satisfying to work for an organization making a real difference for rural Americans. However, it wasn't until COVID 19 that I could *relate* to their plight with inadequate internet connections.

I live in San Antonio and commuted to the Texas Hill Country for work. As we know, fast internet speeds are readily available in most urban areas. I had service with a Fortune 10 company but in my neighborhood the fastest I could get with this provider was 24 Mbps. About once or twice a year, I would call and ask about plans to increase speeds in our aea. I was always told, "sorry, not at this time." With a family of four we got by with a decent online experience. But, once we were all forced to stay home and do remote work and learning at the same time, we quickly found out 24 Mbps wasn't cutting it. After 10 years of being what I would call a premium customer, we left Fortune 10 for a smaller company that gives us 750 Mbps. The difference was immediate and noticeable. This brought me back to American families impacted by the digital divide. I could now personally understand all those stories of the spinning connection wheel, slow downloads and sketchy video streaming. Thankfully, I had an option. Too many consumers do not.

The FCC considers 25 Mbps the minimal acceptable broadband speed, but from my experience, it's time to update that baseline. The COVID 19 paradigm shift with remote work and learning requires faster minimum speeds to handle the significantly increased bandwidth being used during the workday. The [FCC's Household Broadband Guide](#) needs to be adjusted to reflect this reality. This also doesn't take into account the growing number of IoT devices continually part of our lives that chips away at broadband capacity. Many fiber internet providers start their packages at 100 Mbps and, in my opinion, is the speed necessary, in all corners of the United States, to fully leverage our new remote reality.

[BroadMax Group](#) specializes in helping cooperatives and telecom companies leverage their fiber network investment with our marketing, communication, strategy and product development consulting services. Working in the fiber broadband industry, we got an inside look at how quality of life improves with fast, fiber internet service. BroadMax Group looks forward to being part of the conversation and supporting those on the front-lines working to close the digital divide. Not because it's good for our business but because we know first-hand it's a necessity for life in our 21st century world. #digitaldivide, #fiberbroadband, #FCC, #BroadMaxGroup