

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Application of Clay County)
Connect, Inc. for Designation as an) **Case No. DA-2026-0062**
Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the)
State of Missouri)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

COMES NOW the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, by and through counsel, and for its *Recommendation* in this matter hereby states:

1. On September 9, 2025, Clay County Connect, Inc. (Clay County) filed an application for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) for the purpose of receiving federal low-income universal service fund support.

2. On September 10, 2025, the Commission issued its *Order Directing Notice, Setting Intervention Deadline, and Directing Staff to File a Recommendation* in which the Commission ordered Staff to file a recommendation no later than October 1, 2025.

3. Clay County is presently certificated in the state of Missouri as an interconnected voice over internet protocol (IVoIP) services provider.¹

4. Federal authority enables state commissions to grant ETC status to a company.² Missouri's ETC application requirements are contained in Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016. As explained in Staff's *Memorandum*, attached hereto as Appendix A, Staff reviewed Clay County's request for compliance with Missouri's Rules as well as federal requirements and finds that Clay County has adequately met all requirements. Consequently, Staff supports Clay County's application for ETC status.

¹ See Case No. DA-2021-0026. The company wholly owned by Clay County Electric and its principal office is located in Corning, Arkansas.

² 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2) and FCC rule §54.201.

WHEREFORE, Staff recommends that the Commission grant ETC status to Clay County Connect, Inc. for the purpose of receiving federal low-income universal service fund support; and grant such other and further relief as the Commission considers just in the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Mark Johnson

MARK JOHNSON

Missouri Bar No. 64940

Chief Staff Counsel

Missouri Public Service Commission

P.O. Box 360

Jefferson City, MO 65102

573-751-7431 (Voice)

573-751-9285 (Fax)

mark.johnson@psc.mo.gov

Attorney for the Staff of the

Missouri Public Service Commission

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served by electronic mail, or First Class United States Postal Mail, postage prepaid, on this 1st day of October, 2025, to all counsel of record.

/s/ Mark Johnson

MEMORANDUM

To: Missouri Public Service Commission Official Case File
Case No. DA-2026-0062

From: Kari Salsman
Telecommunications Department

Subject: Staff's Recommendation to Approve Clay County Connect, Inc.'s Request
for ETC Designation

Date: October 1, 2025

On September 9, 2025, Clay County Connect, Inc. (Clay County) filed an application for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) for the purpose of receiving federal low-income universal service fund support. The company is registered by the Missouri Commission to provide IVoIP service.¹

Federal authority enables state commissions to grant ETC status to a company.² Missouri's ETC application requirements are contained in existing Missouri Commission rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016. Staff reviewed Clay County's request for compliance with Missouri's rule as well as federal requirements. In Staff's opinion the company has adequately met all ETC application requirements. Consequently, Staff supports Clay County's application for ETC status.

Staff recommends the Commission grant ETC status to Clay County Connect, Inc. for the purpose of receiving federal low-income support for the Lifeline program in the area identified in Exhibit B of its application.

¹ Case No. DA-2021-0026. The company wholly owned by Clay County Electric and its principal office is located in Corning, Arkansas.

² 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2) and FCC rule §54.201.