

§ 1703.129

one has been designated for the State, at the same time it submits an application to RUS. All applications must include the information required by § 1703.125.

§ 1703.129 Appeals.

All qualifying applications under this subpart will be scored based on the criteria contained in § 1703.126. Awards will be made by RUS based on the highest ranking applications and the amount of financial assistance available for grants. All applicants will be notified in writing of the score each application receives, and included in this notification will be a tentative minimum required score to receive financial assistance. If the score received by the applicant could result in the denial of its application, or if its score, while apparently sufficient to qualify for financial assistance, may be surpassed by the score awarded to a competing application after appeal, that applicant may appeal its numerical scoring. Any appeal must be based on inaccurate scoring of the application by RUS and no new information or data that was not included in the original application will be considered. The appeal must be made, in writing, within 10 days after the applicant is notified of the scoring results. Appeals shall be submitted to the Administrator, RUS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1590, Washington, DC 20250-1590. Thereafter, the Administrator will review the original scoring to determine whether to sustain, reverse, or modify the original scoring determination. Final determinations will be made after consideration of all appeals. The Administrator's determination will be final. A copy of the Administrator's decision will be furnished promptly to the applicant.

Subpart F—Distance Learning and Telemedicine Combination Loan and Grant Program

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§ 1703.130 Use of combination loan and grant.

(a) A combination loan and grant may be used by eligible organizations

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as defined in § 1703.103 for distance learning and telemedicine projects to finance 100 percent of the cost of approved purposes contained in § 1703.131 provided that no financial assistance may exceed the maximum amount for the year in which the combination loan and grant is made.

(b) Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility requirement for determining the extent to which the project serves rural areas as determined in § 1703.126(b)(2) (the applicant must receive at least 20 points to be eligible to receive financial assistance under this subpart).

§ 1703.131 Approved purposes for a combination loan and grant.

The approved purposes for a combination loan and grant are:

(a) Acquiring, by lease or purchase, eligible equipment or facilities as defined in § 1703.102;

(b) Acquiring instructional programming;

(c) Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment, including any related software; developing instructional programming; providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or expansion of the phase of the project that is being financed with a combination loan and grant (this purpose shall not exceed 10 percent of the total requested financial assistance);

(d) Paying for medical or educational equipment and facilities that are shown to be necessary to implement the project, including vehicles utilizing distance learning and telemedicine technology to deliver educational and health care services. The applicant must demonstrate that such items are necessary to meet the purposes under this subpart and financial assistance for such equipment and facilities is not available from other sources at a cost which would not adversely affect the economic viability of the project;

(e) Providing links between teachers and students or medical professionals who are located at the same facility, provided that such facility receives or provides distance learning or telemedicine services as part of a distance learning or telemedicine network