

Q: What is the Arkansas PBS Signal Expansion Project?

A: The Arkansas PBS Signal Expansion Project will add five transmitters to the public broadcasting network, allowing it to achieve near universal public television broadcast coverage in the state by mid-2022. The project will extend airwaves to part or all of 31 counties that previously received a very weak or no signal – an increase from 76% of the state to 99.5%. The expansion was made possible by \$6.4 million from the Federal CARES Act COVID Fund awarded to Arkansas PBS by the Arkansas CARES Act Steering Committee following the vital role Arkansas PBS played in providing school on TV through “Arkansas AMI” during shutdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: How much of the state currently receives Arkansas PBS over the air?

A: According to 2020 Census estimates, Arkansas has a population of 3,017,804. At the beginning of 2021, the Arkansas PBS signal reached 76% of the state, or more than 2,000,000 Arkansans (2,293,331 to be exact).

The first transmitter near Russellville at Lee Mountain is now operating at full power and accounts for a 4.2% increase in coverage and reaches an additional 124,289 people, bringing the current reach to approximately 80% of the state.

Q: How much of the state will receive Arkansas PBS when the Signal Expansion Project is complete?

A: With the addition of 5 transmitters, Arkansas PBS will reach 99.5% of the state, including part or all of 31 counties that previously received a very weak or no signal.

Q: Where will additional transmitters be placed to expand Arkansas PBS's signal?

A: Five new transmitters will be placed at the following locations:

K11JW-D Russellville (at Lee Mountain)

TBD West Memphis (at Forrest City)

TBD Harrison (at Gaither)

TBD Yancy (at Texarkana)

TBD Mena (at Rich Mountain)

Q: What is the timeframe for completion of the Signal Expansion Project?

A: The process of adding transmitters requires time to identify available broadcast spectrum, obtain FCC permissions and acquire tower sites and transmitters, among other implementation tasks.

The first transmitter near Russellville at Lee Mountain is now operating at full power, bringing Arkansas PBS into the homes of residents in Pope, Johnson, Logan and Yell counties, and covering the cities of Russellville and Dardanelle, as well as those communities in the Arkansas River Valley from Clarksville to Atkins.

Additional transmitters are expected to be operational at the following times:

West Memphis (at Forrest City) – August 2021

Harrison (at Gaither) – November 2021

Yancy (at Texarkana) – February 2022

Mena (at Rich Mountain) – June 2022

Q: How do I find Arkansas PBS on my TV over the air with an antenna?

A: Viewers can receive Arkansas PBS channels over the air with an antenna but may need to run the scan function on their televisions to locate the new transmitters. Additional information about how to find the new channels, as well as double rescanning, is available at myarpbs.org/watch.

Q: How was the Arkansas PBS Signal Expansion Project funded?

A: The expansion was made possible by \$6.4 million from the Federal CARES Act COVID Fund awarded to Arkansas PBS by the Arkansas CARES Act Steering Committee following the vital role Arkansas PBS played in providing school on TV through “Arkansas AMI” during shutdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: What does the Arkansas PBS Signal Expansion Project mean for the state?

A: The need for additional transmitters was determined by a technical study that revealed that the network’s broadcast signal reached roughly 76% of the population of Arkansas. When schools were dismissed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Arkansas PBS worked closely with the Arkansas Department of Education to develop and produce “Arkansas AMI” (Alternative Methods of Instruction) to keep pre-K-8th grade students learning from home. These broadcasts helped fill the void for students who did not have internet access, whether due to availability or associated expense. However, because of coverage gaps, not all students were able to benefit from the programming. The Arkansas CARES Act Steering Committee recommended Arkansas PBS receive funds to expand coverage to ensure educational services are available for all in the future.

Additionally, the new transmitters are ATCS 3.0 equipped – the next gen television standard that will deliver many new advances to broadcast television in coming years. In addition to a better viewing experience, ATCS 3.0 will enable Arkansas PBS to offer robust educational opportunities and life-saving public safety information.

Q: What are all the ways I can watch Arkansas PBS?

HOW TO WATCH by platform:

TV:

Arkansas PBS is available statewide over the air and through select cable and satellite providers. See the complete schedule and all the ways to watch at myarpbs.org/watch.

ONLINE:

Broadcast content is livestreamed and is available on-demand at myarpbs.org/riseandshine.

Content is also available on the Arkansas PBS channel for YouTube TV subscribers. More information is available at myarpbs.org/watch.

APP:

Livestreaming through the Engage Arkansas PBS app. The app can be used on tablets, but it was not designed for these platforms – the experience is best on mobile devices.

OTT devices:

Users can access Arkansas PBS content through the PBS Video app and through on-demand devices where the PBS Video app is available, such as Apple TV and Roku.

Viewers can tune in depending on their location:

- KAFT-Channel 13 (Northwest AR)
- KEMV-Channel 6 (North Central AR)
- KTEJ-Channel 19 (Northeast AR)
- KETS-Channel 2 (Central AR)
- KETG-Channel 9 (Southwest AR)
- KETZ-Channel 12 (Southeast AR)
- K11JW/D Channel 2 (Arkansas River Valley)

Arkansas PBS is currently expanding transmitter coverage with funds awarded by the Arkansas CARES Act Steering Committee to ensure educational services are available for all in the future.

Q: Can I livestream Arkansas PBS if I live in another state?

A: Due to our video player restrictions, livestreaming content is geo-blocked for anyone without an IP address in Arkansas. This also affects those trying to stream it over mobile devices because many people have IP addresses showing as out of state. The best way to watch this content is through a desktop computer.

Q: Do you have more questions?

A: For help with broadcast or finding Arkansas PBS on TV, contact Arkansas PBS Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 800-662-2386 or info@myarkansaspbs.org.