

ILLINOIS CENTURY NETWORK

**NETWORK OPERATING POLICIES:  
CONNECTIONS OF FOR-PROFIT ACCREDITED EDUCATION ENTITIES  
AND NON-PROFIT RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS SERVING ILLINOIS  
CITIZENS**

**Submitted for:** Action

**Summary:** The Illinois Century Network Act, PA 91-21, lists constituents eligible to connect to the Network. Nonetheless, the legislation leaves many details to the Policy Committee and ICN staff. This item seeks to further determine what types of entities the Network is to serve.

**Action Requested:** The Illinois Century Network Policy Committee is requested to approve connection of for-profit accredited education institutions as well as religious organizations providing services to Illinois citizens.

**Recommended Motions:** *The Policy Committee adopts staff recommendations to allow for-profit accredited education entities authorized to operate in the State of Illinois by the applicable education board to connect to the network subject to current policies and future cost recovery policies.*

*The Policy Committee adopts staff recommendations to allow religious organizations providing not-for-profit services to Illinois citizens to connect to the network subject to current policies and future cost recovery policies.*

## ILLINOIS CENTURY NETWORK

### **NETWORK OPERATING POLICIES: CONNECTIONS OF FOR-PROFIT ACCREDITED EDUCATION ENTITIES AND NON-PROFIT RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS SERVING ILLINOIS CITIZENS**

The Illinois Century Network Act, PA 91-21, lists constituents eligible to connect to the Network. Specifically, the Act states that the Network shall be *a high speed telecommunications network that provides reliable communication links to and among Illinois schools, institutions of higher education, libraries, museums, research institutions, State agencies, units of local government, and other local entities that provide services to Illinois citizens*. Nonetheless, the legislation leaves many details to the Policy Committee and ICN staff. This item seeks to further determine the intent as to what types of entities the Network is to serve.

In its short history, the Network has fostered a small number of pilot programs with for-profit Internet Service Providers and has explored potential partnerships with other entities. Today, there are increasing requests to connect for-profit entities such as colleges and universities, hospitals, research and industry parks, and Internet Service Providers. While there are no pilots in operation currently, in accordance with the direction approved by the Policy Committee on June 1, 2001, staff is in the process of refining long-term cost recovery policies for the network. These policies will focus on providing the lowest cost service possible to the primary education constituency of the Network. In addition, staff is in the process of working with legal experts and the Illinois Commerce Commission to define available options in order to better inform the Policy Committee as to the best long-term course of action regarding what entities and organizations may connect to the Network.

Clearly, the Network was intended to serve educational institutions. For that reason, staff recommends allowing for-profit accredited educational institutions recognized by appropriate education boards as legitimate educational providers in the state of Illinois to connect to the Network. For-profit accredited education providers would be required to abide by the same participation agreement terms as other constituents of the Network and would not be allowed to resell ICN services or Internet access in such a manner as to make a profit for the institution.

As the ICN seeks to encourage community networks, requests have routinely been received by the ICN that involve the connection of religious organizations offering services for Illinois citizens. These services are often in the form of community training or after school programs and some receive state or federal support through various grant

programs. The programs are usually housed in church facilities that are made available to the public regardless of denomination or affiliation. If the church organization connects directly to the Network, the expense of the customer premise equipment and access circuit is borne by the connecting entity. If connecting through a community network, the connection may be provided through a community network, however, the ICN may provide the aggregate access connection in which the church organization would be one of many participants. Regardless of how the entity connects, bandwidth utilization is generally minor. Ultimately, the cost recovery policy under development will address the long-term baseline services and resulting pricing structure. As such, unless there are other considerations that become known during the legal research currently under way, staff recommends allowing such entities to connect to the network subject to future cost recovery policies.

The staff recommends the following resolutions:

*The Policy Committee adopts staff recommendations to allow for-profit accredited education entities authorized to operate in the State of Illinois by the applicable education board to connect to the network subject to current policies and future cost recovery policies.*

*The Policy Committee adopts staff recommendations to allow religious organizations providing not-for-profit services to Illinois citizens to connect to the network subject to current policies and future cost recovery policies.*