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Schools and Libraries News Brief

February 8, 2008

TIP OF THE WEEK: If your Form 471 was submitted online or postmarked after 11:59 p.m. EST on February 7, you must file for a waiver from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) if you want to ask that your form be considered in-window. USAC cannot waive the filing window requirement, so any appeals filed with USAC on this issue will be referred to the FCC.

Commitments for Funding Year 2007

Funding Year 2007. USAC will not release a funding wave for FY2007 next week. As of February 8, FY2007 commitments total just under \$1.94 billion.

Now That the Window for FY2008 Has Closed...

The FY2008 Form 471 application filing window closed last night, February 7, at 11:59 p.m. EST. While it may be tempting to relax or return to other pressing concerns, you should take a few minutes now to prepare for the next steps in the application process.

Organize your documents.

As part of your application filing process, you may have produced or accessed a number of documents such as:

- Technology plans
- Requests for Proposals (RFPs)
- Winning and losing bids
- Bid evaluation grids and other evaluation documents
- Contracts
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) data reports
- Alternative discount mechanism surveys
- Draft or final budgets

You may be asked to provide some or all of these documents during Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) reviews, appeal reviews, audits, or other program activities. We suggest you take the time now to organize and file all documents related to your application in a manner that will allow you to easily locate and retrieve them for any future needs.

If you would like guidance on how to organize your documentation, review the [E-rate Binder Table of Contents](#) in the Reference Area of the website under the heading "Checklists and Samples."

Certify any Form 470 that you cited on a Block 5 funding request.

Each Form 470 cited in Item 12 of a Form 471 Block 5 funding request must be certified. Because a Form 470 can be posted to the USAC website without being certified, applicants sometimes forget to complete this important step. Although you will be reminded during PIA review if a Form 470 needs to be certified, we suggest that you take the time now to certify any Forms 470 that you have cited.

To verify the status of a Form 470, click on the Search Posted button in the Form 470 column on the [Apply Online](#) page. Choose the appropriate funding year and, on the following screen, provide the application number or other details that will allow you to locate your Form 470. If the status on the third line of the form display is "COMPLETE," return to the Apply Online page, click on the "Certify Complete" button in the Form 470 column, and follow the instructions to certify your form.

Certify your Form 471.

In about two weeks, USAC will issue a letter to applicants identifying any Form 471 that was submitted online before the close of the window but that has not yet been certified. Applicants will have 20 days from the date on that letter to certify a Form 471 and still have the form be considered in-window. Forms 471 certified after that date will be considered out-of-window. Again, we encourage you to certify your Form 471 before the reminder letters are sent.

If you certify on paper, be sure to postmark your certification on or before the due date in the letter. The status of your form will change from "COMPLETE" to "CERTIFIED - IN WINDOW" after USAC successfully processes your paper certification.

You can also certify your form online on or before the due date. However, be advised that the status of your application will be "CERTIFIED - OUT OF WINDOW" until USAC is able to identify all applications certified online within this grace period and change their status en masse.

To verify the status of a Form 471, click on the "Application Status" button in the Form 471 column of the [Apply Online](#) page. Enter the Billed Entity Number and choose the funding year, then click on the "Continue" button on the following page to pull up a list of Forms 471 and statuses filed by that Billed Entity. You can also view an individual form by starting from the Form 471 "Display" button.

Review your RNL and RAL and submit any allowable corrections.

USAC issues a [Form 470 Receipt Notification Letter \(RNL\)](#) to each applicant that posts a Form 470 and a [Form 471 Receipt Acknowledgment Letter \(RAL\)](#) to each applicant that timely certifies a Form 471. These letters contain instructions for identifying and submitting allowable corrections to these forms after they have been submitted. We suggest that you review your filed forms carefully and, if you notice any errors, submit those corrections to USAC as soon as possible using the process described in the appropriate letter.

File your Item 21 attachments.

An Item 21 attachment is a detailed description of the products and services requested in a Form 471 Block 5 funding request. Applicants include the attachment number in Item 21 of the funding request and follow up by providing the attachment itself. Item 21 attachments can be filed online, electronically, by fax, or on paper.

Although the Item 21 attachment does not need to be filed before the window closes, the review of your application cannot begin until your PIA reviewer has access to your attachment. We recommend that you file your attachment as soon as possible instead of waiting for PIA to contact you and set a deadline for your response.

You can [file your Item 21 Attachment online](#) if you have your Form 471 application number and security code. You can also refer to the [Item 21 Attachments](#) guidance document for more information and other filing options.

Prepare for PIA review.

If you have all of your documentation in order, you should be in good shape for PIA review. Remember to respond promptly to any PIA requests for information or documentation. You can ask for additional time to respond if you need it. We will cover PIA review in more detail in a future edition of the SL News Brief.

Audit Presentations Available

Last year, audits were conducted on 155 beneficiaries under the Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA). These audits focused on individual Funding Request Numbers (FRNs) for Funding Years 2002 through 2004.

In the Understanding Audits area of the website, USAC has posted the [most common auditors' observations from those IPIA audits](#) and recorded two presentations to assist applicants. These presentations – "If Audited, What Documents Should I Keep?" and "How to Develop and Maintain an E-Rate Asset Register" – provide useful information on document maintenance and proper records retention.

To access the presentations, go to the [Audit Presentations](#) page on the website and follow the instructions. Please note that the files are large so they may take more than a few minutes to download.

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