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## Schools and Libraries News Brief

March 28, 2008

**TIP OF THE WEEK: If you have not yet submitted your Item 21 Attachment(s), please do so as soon as possible.** You can [file online](#) with your Form 471 application number and security code or you can use the email, fax, or mail options in the [Item 21 Attachment guidance](#) on the USAC website. Remember that once PIA asks for your Item 21 attachment, if you do not provide it within the required timeframe, your funding requests will be at risk for denial.

### Commitments for Funding Year 2007

**Funding Year 2007.** USAC will release FY2007 Wave 44 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) April 1. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 83% and above and denials at 79% and below. As of March 28, FY2007 commitments total just over \$2.03 billion.

On the day after the FCDLs are mailed, you can check to see if you have a commitment by using USAC's [Automated Search of Commitments](#) tool.

### Service Provider Training Registration Has Opened

Service providers can now register for the service provider training sessions to be held May 8 in Miami and May 14 in Salt Lake City. You can find detailed information on both sessions – including hotel rates and locations – on the [2008 Service Provider Training Information page](#).

The Miami training session will conclude with an information session on the Rural Health Care (RHC) Pilot Program. Service providers interested in this pilot program are encouraged to attend the Miami training, as RHC will not offer a separate training for service providers outside of this information session.

If you are interested in attending a training session, please register promptly. Once a training session is full, we will start a waiting list. If your plans change and you know you will not be able to attend a session, please be considerate and cancel your registration so that we can open a slot for someone else.

To cancel or change a registration or for more information about the training, you can [email USAC Training](#) or call 877-883-1786 ext. 408.

### Corrective SPIN Changes

USAC uses the Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) associated with a Funding Request Number (FRN) not just during the application review process, but also for post-commitment activities such as the processing and payment of invoices. Consequently, it is very important that each FRN feature the correct SPIN.

In certain situations, applicants can request a change to the SPIN associated with an FRN. [SPIN Changes](#) fall into two general categories:

- A [Corrective SPIN Change](#) is, as its name implies, a correction made because the existing SPIN on an FRN does not identify the actual service provider. This can be due to a data entry error, a merger or acquisition, or an interim SPIN used as a placeholder when a valid SPIN was not yet available. A Corrective SPIN Change can be requested at several steps in the application process, both before and after commitment.

- An [Operational SPIN Change](#) is an actual change from one service provider to another. An Operational SPIN change can be requested after a commitment has been made and can occur before or after services have started.

In this issue we will take a look at Corrective SPIN Changes.

Corrective SPIN Changes can be requested in the following situations:

1. **The SPIN associated with the FRN is a valid SPIN but, due to a data entry error, it does not identify the actual service provider.** SPINs are nine digits long and begin with "1430-." During the online application process – or during data entry of a paper form – if digits are entered incorrectly, the SPIN may belong to another service provider and therefore be accepted by the system. For example:
  - You – or a data entry operator if you filed your Form 471 on paper – could intend to enter "1430xxx73" but instead transpose two digits and enter "1430xxx37."
  - You could confuse two digits that appear similar, such as a "3" and an "8," so that the correct "1430xxxx3" could be entered as the incorrect "1430xxxx8."

If an incorrect entry is a valid SPIN that exists in USAC's database, the system will accept it and allow you to continue.

2. **Your service provider has more than one SPIN and you entered the wrong one.** Some service providers have a SPIN for each state in which they provide services. Others have a SPIN for each type of service they provide (for example, one SPIN for landline service and a different SPIN for cellular service). It is always a good idea to check with your service provider and verify the SPIN that you should enter on your FRN. If you use the [SPIN Contact Search tool](#) to find your service provider's SPIN and the search returns a number of results, you should ask your service provider which SPIN to use rather than trying to guess the correct choice.
3. **Your service provider has been involved in a merger or acquisition and the SPIN on the FRN must be changed to reflect this situation.** A merger (where two or more service providers are combined) or an acquisition (where one service provider is acquired by another) may necessitate a Corrective SPIN Change. This also can occur if a single service provider is either consolidating or splitting its SPINs.
  - If the merger or acquisition affects all FRNs featuring the SPIN – that is, if SPIN 1430xxxx1 can be changed on every FRN that features it to SPIN 1430xxxx2 – the service provider can initiate the SPIN change request. USAC refers to this situation as a "global SPIN change." Affected service providers can call USAC's Customer Relations Management Center at 1-888-641-8722 (choose the "FCC Form 498" option, **NOT** the "Schools and Libraries" option) to request information on this process.
  - If the merger or acquisition affects some FRNs featuring the SPIN but not others – that is, if SPIN 1430xxxx3 can be changed to SPIN 1430xxxx4 on some FRNs but not on others – each affected applicant must request the SPIN change. For example, one service provider may acquire part but not all of a territory, or some but not all of the customers, covered by another service provider's SPIN. In such cases, USAC cannot simply replace one SPIN with another but must correct individual FRNs through applicant requests for Corrective SPIN Changes.
4. **The service provider did not have a SPIN at the time the Form 471 was filed.** An applicant can file a Form 471 even if the chosen service provider does not yet have a SPIN. Each year, about a week before the Form 471 window closes, USAC activates an interim SPIN that allows online filers in this situation to complete their Forms 471. (USAC uses the same interim SPIN to data enter paper applications for those situations when a SPIN is not yet available.)

At the time of Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) Review, your reviewer will ask you for your service provider's SPIN. After you have provided the SPIN, PIA can review your

application. If you have not provided USAC with a valid SPIN prior to the issuance of an FCDL, your FRN will be denied.

5. **The applicant is using a state replacement contract for all or part of a funding year.** In general, a state replacement contract is a state master contract that will replace an existing state master contract before or during a funding year but that has not been signed at the time a Form 471 is filed. In order to apply for funding, the state and the affected applicants must follow every step in the [state replacement contract guidance](#) on the USAC website. An applicant filing under this guidance enters the SPIN 143999999 on the appropriate FRN. This SPIN acts as a placeholder for the SPIN of the service provider on the state replacement contract.

After the state replacement contract has been signed, the applicant then files a Corrective SPIN Change (see below) to change the SPIN 143999999 to the service provider's SPIN. In this case, USAC can make a funding commitment on the FRN but USAC cannot process an invoice until the SPIN 143999999 is changed to a valid SPIN.

Corrective SPIN Changes can be made at several steps in the application process. The earlier you realize a Corrective SPIN Change is necessary and submit a request to USAC, the better. If services have already started, a Corrective SPIN Change request may be more difficult for USAC to successfully process and may therefore take more time to complete.

Here are the steps in the application process where you can make a Corrective SPIN Change together with the best method to make your request:

- **Before you file.** Review your Form 471 before you submit it. If you are filing online, pay particular attention to the service provider's name that appears in Item 14 of the Form 471 after you enter the SPIN in Item 13. If it is not the name you expect to see, talk to your service provider, use the [SPIN Contact Search tool](#), or [Submit a Question](#) to request assistance before you submit the form to USAC.
- **When you receive your RAL.** Review your [Form 471 Receipt Acknowledgment Letter \(RAL\)](#) as soon as it arrives. USAC issues a RAL for each Form 471 that is timely filed and timely certified. The RAL includes a summary of the data you provided on the Form 471 and a means to make allowable corrections. You can use the RAL correction process to request allowable changes to the SPIN and the Service Provider Name fields. Again, if the name in Item 14 is unfamiliar, make sure the SPIN in Item 13 is correct.
- **During PIA Review.** Talk with your reviewer during PIA review. Allowable Corrective SPIN Changes can still be made at this time.
- **After the funding decision.** Once USAC has issued an FCDL, you must submit a written request for a Corrective SPIN Change. These requests cannot be processed if funding for your FRN was denied. However, if you appeal and receive a positive commitment from an appeal decision, you can then request a Corrective SPIN Change. Please refer to "Section 2. To correct a SPIN after commitment has been made" in the [Corrective SPIN Change guidance](#) on the USAC website for a list of details required by USAC to process the change. This guidance also contains additional information on Corrective SPIN Changes, including the email, fax, and mail options you can use to submit your request.

In an upcoming News Brief, we will cover Operational SPIN Changes.

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