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Schools and Libraries News Brief

May 23, 2008

> **TIP OF THE WEEK:** **If you have completed your Item 21 attachment online, you must push the "Submit" button on the last page to send the information to USAC. PIA reviewers cannot see Item 21 attachments that are still in process.** Remember that you risk denial of a funding request if PIA asks you for your Item 21 attachment and you do not provide it within the required timeframe.

Commitments for Funding Years 2008 and 2007

Funding Year 2008. USAC will release FY2008 Wave 5 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) May 28. This wave will include commitments for approved Priority 1 requests (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) for schools and libraries at all discount levels. As of May 23, FY2008 commitments total over $508 million.

Funding Year 2007. USAC will release FY2007 Wave 52 FCDLs May 28. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 81% and above and denials at 80% and below. As of May 23, FY2007 commitments total just under $2.33 billion.

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

First FY2008 Form 500 Notification Letters Mailed

Yesterday USAC sent the first Form 500 Notification Letters for FY2008. These are USAC notifications that the Forms 500 cited in the letters were successfully processed. USAC issues both an applicant version and a service provider version of this letter.

Form 500 is filed to do one or more of the following:

- Change the service start date (within program rules) on a Funding Request Number (FRN)
- Change the contract expiration date on an FRN
- Reduce funding on an FRN
- Cancel an FRN

As you prepare to file a Form 500, remember that:

- Form 500 must be completed by an applicant.
- Currently Form 500 can only be filed on paper.
- Form 500 can only be filed after USAC has issued an FCDL with a positive funding commitment for the FRN.

Special Edition News Brief Series on Selective Reviews To Be Issued Next Week

Each year, certain applications are chosen to undergo a review process that is more extensive than the customary Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review. USAC refers to this process as Selective Review. Applicants chosen for Selective Review must provide additional information about specific aspects of their application process, such as technology planning, competitive bidding, budgeting (for non-discount share), and the Form 471 Item 25 certification (securing access to necessary resources).

USAC is preparing a series of Special Edition News Briefs containing questions and answers on the Selective Review process. This series will be emailed directly to certain applicants that USAC believes might find it helpful. In addition, the regular News Brief issued on May 30, 2008 will

contain a description of the Selective Review process and provide links to all four Special Edition News Briefs for anyone that would like to learn more about Selective Reviews.

Summer Contact Procedure Starts Today

USAC has procedures to contact applicants and service providers if more information is necessary to process a form. Below we discuss two of the most common situations where USAC needs more information:

- **Problem Resolution.** When USAC cannot data enter a paper form because information is missing or inconsistent, Problem Resolution will attempt to reach the contact person listed on the form (or in our database, if no contact information is provided on the form) to obtain the necessary information.
- **Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review.** If USAC needs more information from an applicant to complete the review of an application, a PIA initial reviewer will use the contact information provided on the form both to send questions and to inform the applicant of any correctable errors discovered on the form during review.

In these situations, USAC's customary procedure is as follows:

- USAC uses your preferred mode of contact to send you questions and to request responses. For PIA review, if your preferred mode of contact is telephone, we will call you and request an email address or fax number in order to provide you with the questions in writing.
- If we have not heard from you after seven days, we attempt to contact you again and we will also inform your state E-rate coordinator that we are attempting to contact you.
- If we have not heard from you after 15 days, we will use the information we have to complete processing of your application. For a paper form, this may mean that we will have to return the form to you without completing data entry. For a Form 471, this may mean that the funding you requested will be reduced or denied.

We realize that, during a summer period and a winter period each year, many applicants are unavailable due to extended holiday and break schedules. Problem Resolution or PIA will not continue the process described above during these periods unless we speak by telephone with the contact person or someone else who has been designated to respond to our questions.

- Our summer period is defined as the Friday before Memorial Day through the Friday after Labor Day. For 2008, the dates of the summer period are May 23 through September 5.

If our first attempt to reach you is on or after May 23, and we cannot confirm by telephone that you are available to respond to our questions, we will not begin Problem Resolution or PIA review until after September 5. However, if we have made a successful contact with you before May 23, your 15-day response clock has started and will continue to run. This means that we will act on the information we have on hand if we have not heard from you by the response deadline. We define a successful contact as:

- A sent email message with no return notification of non-delivery or out-of-office response
- A sent fax with a confirmation of successful transmission
- A voicemail left at the contact person's telephone number if the recorded greeting does not state that the contact person is out of the office
- A live person answering our call at the contact telephone number or a return call responding to our message

If you designate someone to answer questions in your absence, be sure that person has sufficient knowledge of your application to respond accurately. If you answer a call from PIA but you are not in a position to answer PIA questions, make sure the PIA reviewer understands that you are not the contact person or designee and that PIA should put its review of the application on hold until that person returns to the office.

Remember also that you can ask for more time to respond if you need it.

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Please do not reply to this email directly, as it was sent from an unattended mailbox.

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