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Schools and Libraries News Brief

September 19, 2008

TIP OF THE WEEK: If your last day to receive non-recurring services is September 30, 2008 and you need to request an extension, file your request now. USAC cannot process [service delivery extension requests](#) received or postmarked after the last day to receive service.

Commitments for Funding Years 2008 and 2007

Funding Year 2008. USAC will release FY2008 Wave 24 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) September 23. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 90% and denials at 79% and below. As of September 19, FY2008 commitments total over \$1.23 billion.

Funding Year 2007. USAC will release FY2007 Wave 65 FCDLs September 22. 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 September 19, FY2007 commitments total over \$2.46 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.

Application Process: Eligibility

To participate in the Schools and Libraries Program, potential applicants, recipients of service, and service providers must first determine if they are eligible. Below are some points to consider for eligibility.

Schools

To be eligible for E-rate discounts, schools

- must be elementary and/or secondary schools as defined under state law.
- must not operate as for-profit businesses.
- must not have endowments exceeding \$50 million.

In general, public schools meet these requirements. Other types of schools – such as non-public schools, charter schools, and diocesan schools – should check with the state department of education in their state to see if the educational services they provide fall within that state's definition of elementary and/or secondary education.

In some states, Head Start, pre-kindergarten, adult education, and juvenile justice students and/or facilities may fall under the state definition of elementary or secondary education. If applicable, you should review USAC's guidance on [Non-traditional Elementary and Secondary Education](#). USAC also posted an [Eligibility Table for Non-traditional K-12 Students and Facilities](#) that contains current information from each state on the eligibility of these students and facilities.

- NOTE: Every two years, USAC asks state departments of education for official confirmation of the status of these types of entities and other matters related to eligibility. These letters were sent last year but we are still waiting for responses from some states. If you have received such a request in a letter from USAC recently, please respond by the deadline indicated in the letter. A prompt response may clarify eligibility issues of concern to potential applicants and service providers in your state, while the lack of a response may lead USAC to assume that these entities are ineligible.

Also, [Educational Service Agencies \(ESAs\)](#) are eligible for discounts in some states. ESAs are regional agencies authorized by state statute that provide services or programs to local educational agencies such as individual schools and school districts. ESAs may go by different names in different states, and the programs and services provided by ESAs vary from state to state. You can refer to the [Eligibility Table for Educational Service Agencies](#) for specific information.

Libraries

To be eligible for E-rate discounts, libraries

- must be eligible for assistance from a state library administrative agency under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).
- must not operate as for-profit businesses.
- must have budgets completely separate from any schools.

In general, public libraries meet these requirements. Other types of libraries – such as academic libraries, research libraries, or private libraries – should check with the state library agency in their state to see if they are eligible for assistance under LSTA. Note that they are not required to have received such assistance; they must only be eligible to receive it. As with schools, eligibility requirements may vary from state to state.

Service Providers

To be eligible to participate in the program, service providers must file a [Form 498, Service Provider Identification Number and Contact Information Form](#) with USAC and receive a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN). For providers of Internet Access other than Interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), Internal Connections, and Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections, there are no other eligibility requirements.

Providers of Telecommunications Services must provide those services on a [common carriage basis](#). Because of this requirement, such companies are often referred to as “common carriers.” Providers of Telecommunications Services and Interconnected VoIP must complete [Form 499-A, Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet](#), and in general must contribute to the [Universal Service Fund](#).

- You can check the status of a company providing these services using the [SPIN Contact Search Tool](#) on the USAC website. After you enter at least the first three letters of a service provider’s name (be sure to add a percent sign or “%” immediately following those letters) or a SPIN, click “Next” to view the results of your search. In the column marked “Eligible Telecomm Provider,” you will see a “Y” if USAC has determined that the service provider is eligible to provide these services under that SPIN.

For more information on eligibility, refer to [Step 1. Determine Eligibility](#) for applicants and [Step 1. Obtain a Service Provider Identification Number](#) for service providers.

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