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Schools and Libraries News Brief

December 19, 2008

FY2009 WINDOW COUNTDOWN

Days to window close	**55**
Forms 470 filed to date	**19,861**
Forms 471 filed to date	**1,313**

TIP OF THE WEEK: **If you have not yet filed a Form 470 for FY2009, we suggest that you do so before you leave for the holidays.** January 15, 2009 is the last possible day to POST a Form 470 to the USAC website and wait 28 days before posting a Form 471 on the last day of the filing window.

Please note that USAC will not issue a News Brief next Friday, December 26, due to the Christmas holiday. Also, the Client Service Bureau will be closed Thursday, December 25 and Friday, December 26.

Funding Commitments for Appeals and Prior Funding Years

USAC periodically releases waves for prior funding years, both for original commitments and for commitments on meritorious appeals. Commitments on meritorious appeals are revisions of earlier commitment decisions that result from successful appeals.

Each month, summary information for these waves is posted on the Prior Year Wave Information page in the Outreach and Training section of the USAC website.

- Original commitment waves for a funding year issued after the final weekly wave are designated by the wave number of the final weekly wave and a letter. For example, the final weekly wave for FY2006 was Wave 60, so the periodic waves of original commitments issued after that wave were designated 60A, 60B, 60C and so on.
- Appeal waves for a funding year can be issued even before the final weekly wave is run. Appeal wave numbers begin with the letter "A" and are followed by a two-digit number. Therefore, the first three appeal waves for a funding year are designated A01, A02, and A03. USAC issues **Revised** Funding Commitment Decision Letters (RFCDLs) for positive commitments in appeal waves.

Below is a list of the appeal and prior year funding waves that have been or will be released this month:

FCDL Date	Wave	Funding Year	Amount
December 12	A57	2002	$3,931,160.32
December 17	66Q	2005	$775,782.40

December 22	A41	2006	$2,953,269.93
December 23	A29	1999	$998,055.62
December 23	A47	2001	$24,956.32
December 24	60R	2006	$2,326,331.27
December 29	A60	2004	$3,289,219.35

Form 470 Reminders

In this News Brief, we are including some specific reminders to help applicants that have not yet filed their Forms 470.

- **File and certify online to reduce errors and speed processing.** If you file your Form 470 from the Apply Online page, the system checks your work and alerts you when it detects a potential error or inconsistency.
- **Pay close attention to your entry in each field.** If you provide brief and clear responses to the specific information requested, service providers can more easily understand your needs and respond to your requests for bids.
- **Review your form for accuracy before you submit it.** Although you can correct certain errors through the Receipt Notification Letter (RNL) correction process, providing complete and accurate answers on the form initially will help to avoid delays later.
- **If possible, avoid using commas in your entries.** Service providers that download Form 470 Reports get their search results in a comma-delimited file and the use of commas within a field can upset the alignment of the fields.

Here are some additional tips for specific blocks and lines on the Form 470:

Block 1: Applicant Address and Identifications

If you file online, you first search for your entity and then select the correct search result. If your entity's name, address, telephone number, or fax number is incorrect, you must use the process for Contact Information Changes to change the information in our database. You cannot change the information associated with your entity number on the online form. However, you can change the information associated with your contact person.

Item 7b – Services for which a new written contract is sought

This item provides boxes for you to check if you are seeking:

- A multi-year contract and/or
- A contract featuring voluntary extensions.

If you do not check the box indicating that you are willing to consider a contract with voluntary extensions and the contract you sign contains voluntary extensions, USAC will assume that your contract ends at the end of the original term **before any voluntary extension**. Unless you check the box for voluntary extensions, you cannot rely on the original Form 470 posting for services provided under a voluntary extension. Instead, you must post a new Form 470 for services to be delivered after the end of the original term and consider any new bids received. This can present a problem if a new bid received is more cost-effective than your original contract.

Similarly, if you do not check the box indicating that you are willing to consider a multi-year contract and then you sign a multi-year contract, you will have to file a new Form 470 and open a new competitive bidding process the following year. At that time, you would be able to consider your existing contract as a bid response but you would also have to consider any other bids you receive, and your existing contract may not be the most cost-effective solution.

Items 8, 9, 10, and 11 — Summary Description of Needs or Services Requested

Categories of service. On your Form 470, you should post for all categories of service (Telecommunications Services, Internet Access, Internal Connections, and Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections) that are appropriate to the services you describe. In some cases, this may mean posting for services in more than one category. For example:

- If a service can be requested in either Telecommunications Services or Internet Access (e.g., interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol), you should post your request in both categories. If you do, you will have more flexibility when you file your Form 471, whether you can submit both services on one funding request or you end up separating the services into two funding requests (e.g., if you change the service provider for one of the services later in the funding year). Note also that cellular service with email or Internet access should be posted in both Telecommunications Services and Internet Access.
- If you apply for On-Premise Priority 1 Equipment on a Form 471 funding request, USAC may determine that your request does not qualify as a Priority 1 service and move it from Telecommunications Services or Internet Access to Internal Connections. Again, you should post for both categories of service so that USAC can still consider funding your request if the category of service changes.

Posting in all appropriate categories of service is important because USAC will not approve funding requests in a category of service if the Form 470 cited on the funding request did not post for that category of service.

Requests for Proposals (RFPs). USAC does not require you to issue an RFP. However, you must check "YES" if you have released or intend to release an RFP and also indicate where it is available, or check "NO" if you have not released and do not intend to release an RFP. If you release your RFP after your Form 470 is posted, you must wait 28 days after the date that the RFP becomes available before selecting a service provider and signing a contract. If you indicate on your Form 470 that you do not have or intend to have an RFP and then you issue one, you must file a new Form 470 featuring that change and indicate where the RFP is available.

Choice of discounts on bills or reimbursements. You can indicate on each of these items if you prefer to receive a discounted bill from your service provider, if you prefer to pay for your services in full and then request reimbursement from USAC for the discount amount, or if you do not have a preference. This information is provided solely to assist service providers to decide if they want to submit bids. It does not lock you into an invoice method, nor is it intended as a directive to the service provider you choose through your competitive bidding process to provide the service.

Service or Function and Quantity and/or Capacity. For more information on how to complete these fields, refer to the Form 470 Instructions.

Item 14 — Basic telephone service

Be sure to review the definition of basic telephone service before you check this box. Some applicants assume that PBX services are included under basic telephone service when, in fact, they are not. If you plan to request funding for PBX services or other advanced telecommunications services, do not check this box and do make sure that you have a written technology plan that covers these services.

Item 16 — Eligible Entities

You may need to provide additional information depending on which box you check.

- If you check the box to answer “YES” to the question “Does your application include INELIGIBLE entities?” then you will need to complete Item 18.
- If you check Item 16c, you must provide the area codes and prefixes associated with those entities. You will enter each unique area code once and follow it with the unique prefixes that fall under that area code. You must also provide the number of eligible entities.

Item 17 — Billed Entities

In this item, you should list all of the entities that may be paying bills directly to a service provider. If you are not sure whether an entity will be paying bills, it’s better to include it here. For example, if your library budget is controlled by the city government, you can list both the city government and your library in this item. If you need a new entity number, you can call the Client Service Bureau at 1-888-203-8100 and they will create one for you.

Block 5: Certifications and Signature

You should read these certifications carefully so that you understand them. If you are filing online, don't forget to certify your form online or on paper. If you are filing on paper, don't forget to sign and date your form.

Remember to check your work for accuracy so that your original submission is complete and correct.

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