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Schools and Libraries News Brief

June 12, 2009

> **TIP OF THE WEEK:** **If you haven't already submitted your FY2009 Item 21 attachment, be sure to do so now.** Remember that if your PIA reviewer has asked you for your attachment, you should submit it within 15 days of the request, either by sending it directly to your reviewer or by filing it online and then notifying your reviewer. Failure to respond by the deadline could result in denial of funding.

Commitments for Funding Years 2009 and 2008

Funding Year 2009. USAC will release FY2009 Wave 8 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) June 16. 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 June 12, FY2009 commitments total just under $382 million.

Funding Year 2008. USAC will release FY2008 Wave 56 FCDLs June 15. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 88% and above and denials at 86% and below. As of June 12, FY2008 commitments total just under $2.29 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.

Tips for Filing Form 486 Online

With each FY2009 funding wave, more and more applicants become eligible to file the Form 486 **early**, that is, before services have started. Remember that to file early, all of the following statements must be true:

- USAC has issued a positive funding commitment for at least one Funding Request Number (FRN) on an FCDL.
- You have confirmed with the service provider featured on that FRN that services will start in July.
- You can accurately make all of the certifications on Block 4 of the form, which include certifications on compliance with the technology planning requirements and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- You file the Form 486 online or on paper on or before July 31.

Check the box in Item 6a if you are filing early.

Filing Form 486 early is an option if you meet the requirements listed above. Remember that you must check the box in Item 6a to notify USAC that you meet those requirements so that the system can process your form. You must also check this box if you are filing on paper.

- If you are filing after services start, you are not filing early and Item 6a will be disabled online.
- If you are using the Form 486 Interview online and you are unable to access the early filing box or enter a service start date, try exiting and reopening the form. (Remember to make a note of your Form 486 application number and security code before you exit the form.) You should be able to then reopen your form from the Apply Online page (see below) and continue entering your data.

List FRNs from different Forms 471 on the same Form 486.

The Form 486 is specific to a funding year. That is, if you have just received a commitment for an FRN from FY2008 and another FRN from FY2009, you must file two separate Forms 486. However, if you filed several FY2009 Forms 471 and you have commitments for FRNs that

appeared on more than one of those forms, you can file one Form 486 and list all of the committed FRNs on that one form.

In Item 5, identify the contact person that should get program letters.

USAC issues certain letters to the contact person in Item 5 of the Form 486. Specifically, USAC will issue both the applicant version of the Form 486 Notification Letter and the Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form Notification Letter to that contact person. If the contact person at your organization changes, you can update your form by following the instructions in the Contact Information Change guidance.

Following are some tips for filing your Form 486 online quickly and correctly.

Use Internet Explorer 6.0 or above.

The forms developed for online use on the USAC site work best with Internet Explorer 6.0 or above. We recommend that Mac users use Netscape 7.0 or above. Other web browsers – such as Safari or Mozilla – are **not** supported on either PCs or Macs.

Here are a few more tips about system requirements:

- **Make sure your computer's operating system is Windows 2000 or higher for PCs or OS 10 or higher for Macs.** Earlier operating systems may not allow all of the online form functions to work correctly.
- **Clear your Internet cache and temporary Internet files.** These may contain data that could replace or add to the data you enter.
- **Allow popups.** Many of the warning and error messages that help you through the form are formatted as popups.
- **Enable cookies.** This preserves certain information that makes subsequent filings easier and also can help USAC diagnose problems.
- **Use the "Tab" key to move from one field to the next on a page.** You can also use your mouse to click in the fields where you will enter information.
- **Don't use your browser's "Forward" and "Back" buttons.** Instead, use the navigation buttons in the form.

For more information and tips on online filing, refer to the Tips and Troubleshooting document posted on the USAC website.

Try the Form 486 interview version if you have trouble with the standard version.

Data you enter in an online Form 486 is saved in USAC's database and can be accessed through the Apply Online page by both the standard version and the interview version of the form (the "Create Form 486" button and "Form 486 Interview" button respectively). In the standard version, you enter information directly into the form, while the interview version asks you a series of questions and then enters your answers in the appropriate form fields. If you wish, you can start with one version of the form, save your work before you push the Submit button, and later complete the form using the other version.

- To continue an incomplete form using the interview version, click on the "Form 486 Interview" button in the Form 486 column of the Apply Online page.
- To continue an incomplete form using the standard version, click on the "Continue Incomplete" button in the Form 486 column of the Apply Online page.
- Remember that you must have your Form 486 application number and your security code to access an incomplete form. (Tip: You can print the page that contains these numbers after you complete Block 1 of the form online and then save the printout for reference.)
- Note to Mac users: Applicants using a Mac generally have more success with the standard version of the form.

Pay attention to any popups or warning messages that occur.

The online system has built-in popups to notify you of errors and provide certain other helpful information. This allows you to make necessary corrections before you submit your form. The system also populates some information in the form based on information you have already entered.

However, many applicants that file forms on paper fail to provide all necessary entries or include entries that are inconsistent. They must then wait for USAC to contact them because the

missing or inconsistent information prevents USAC from completing data entry. Moreover, if USAC cannot reach the applicant to get the correct information, the form may be rejected.

If you are having difficulty with online filing, you can Submit a Question or call the Client Service Bureau at 1-888-203-8100 to get help.

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