

[Back](#)

USAC IT Upgrade

August 13, 2009

General Information

USAC is in the process of improving its Schools and Libraries Program information technology (IT) systems. As part of this effort, we will be conducting a major upgrade of our IT infrastructure in the first two weeks of September in order to allow us to begin to make additional improvements in the future. The infrastructure upgrade is essential, but it will require us to take down the interactive areas of the USAC website in which applicants and service providers file forms and conduct searches of Schools and Libraries Program data. Commitment waves and disbursements will also be suspended during the infrastructure upgrade. One important exception is that FY2010 Forms 470 posted on or after July 21, 2009 will be available on the USAC website so as to not interfere with any applicant's competitive bidding process. Applicants will also have the ability to manually post new Forms 470 during this period (see FAQs below). In addition, static areas of the website, such as the Reference Area, training materials, important announcements, and the downloadable paper forms will continue to be up and running.

We recognize the potential impact on all of you and are doing all we can to minimize any inconvenience, and we will do this as quickly as possible with the least impact on you. While not able to process paper or electronic forms during the upgrade, we will continue to accept them, and the Client Service Bureau will continue to provide program information and guidance. Upon completing the upgrade, we will fully process any forms received during the service outage and ensure that all applicants' and service providers' standing in the application cycle remains intact and uncompromised.

This infrastructure move is necessary because our systems, like all systems, need to be upgraded periodically to maintain reliability and to enhance our capacity to serve customers in the best possible manner. In addition, this upgrade will allow us to bring more innovative solutions to the application process in the future as well as to reduce the volume of paper we exchange with program participants. We have scheduled this work so as to minimize the inconvenience to applicants and service providers, to avoid compromising any program deadlines, and to complete the project well before the start of the FY2010 window opening.

We currently expect this work to take place the week before Labor Day and the week of Labor Day. The exact dates will depend on testing and other activity that is currently being conducted. As the exact dates are finalized, we will provide more information to you through a variety of channels, such as the Schools and Libraries News Brief, conference calls, the website, and other available channels. Please be assured that we intend to communicate information regarding the situation to you frequently and thoroughly in the coming weeks.

Following is a list of FAQs that we will build on each week. If you have additional questions, please call the Client Service Bureau at 1-888-203-8100.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Upgrade

General

I am an applicant or service provider. What steps should I take as a result of the upgrade?

- Submit anything that you can either before the upgrade or after the upgrade.

Funding Commitments and Payments

Will Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs), Revised FCDLs, and Administrator Decision Letters (ADLs) be issued during the upgrade?

- No. PIA and appeals funding commitments and ADLs will not be issued during the upgrade.

Will service providers receive payments during the upgrade?

- Payment files will not be run during the upgrade.

Posting and Viewing Forms 470

Can I post a Form 470 ONLINE during the upgrade?

- No. The ONLINE system will not be available during the upgrade. If you want to post a Form 470 online, we suggest that you complete your posting during the month of August.

Will posted Forms 470 be visible during the upgrade?

- USAC will post Forms 470 filed on or after July 21, 2009 as *.PDF files to the USAC website to allow applicants' 28-day clocks to continue to run. We will also remind service providers to take advantage of the Form 470 Download Reports tool to download information in bulk before the upgrade begins.

How can I get a Form 470 posted during the upgrade?

- You can submit your Form 470 ON PAPER and mail it to us, following the instructions in the form. USAC will review the information on your form, perform any necessary problem resolution, create a *.PDF copy of the form, and then post it on the USAC website.

What should I expect when I submit a paper Form 470?

- Paper Forms 470 received after the upgrade starts will be reviewed. If data are missing or inconsistent, the applicant will be contacted and asked to make corrections. Once any corrections have been made, the form will be posted to the USAC website in a *.PDF format with the other posted forms and the applicant's 28-day clock will start.

My 28-day waiting period ends during the upgrade; will service providers be able to see my Form 470?

- Yes. Your Form 470 will be posted on the USAC website in a *.PDF format, and your 28-day clock will continue to run. However, USAC will not issue Form 470 Receipt Notification Letters until after the upgrade is complete.

Filing Forms Online

I am a service provider. Can I submit forms online?

- You will be able to submit Form 498 and Form 499 online. The system that processes these forms is not affected by the upgrade. You will not be able to submit a SPI Form 474 online or approve a BEAR Form 472 online.

I am an applicant. Can I submit ONLINE applications and invoices during the upgrade?

- No. The system will not be available for filing applications and invoices online during the upgrade.

Once I submit a program form online, will I receive a notification letter?

- In general, if you submit the form online before the upgrade, USAC will issue you a notification letter. Remember, however, that some forms undergo additional review before USAC issues the letter.

Filing Forms on Paper

What should I expect when I submit a program form on paper (Form 486, 472, 473, 474, or 500)?

- USAC will hold your paper form until the upgrade is complete. Your postmark date will be preserved. You can contact the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 888-203-8100 or by fax at (888) 276-8736 to confirm receipt of your form if you wish to do so.

What should I expect when I submit a Form 498 or Form 499 on paper?

- USAC will process your form as usual. The system that processes these forms is not affected by the upgrade.

Once I submit a form on paper, will I receive a notification letter?

- In general, if USAC was able to complete data entry of your form before the upgrade, USAC will issue a notification letter promptly. If you submit a paper form during the upgrade, USAC will hold your form until the upgrade is complete. USAC will issue a notification letter after your form has been processed and the letter generation process has resumed. Remember that this applies also to the paper Forms 470 that USAC will be posting to the website during the upgrade.

USAC Search Tools

Will website tools be available?

- In general, website tools will not be available during the upgrade. Please note that if you have bookmarked some tools and are able to access them, the data will not be refreshed during the upgrade.

Can I use Submit a Question during the upgrade?

- The Submit a Question tool will not be available during the upgrade. You can fax your request to the Client Service Bureau at (888) 276-8736 or call (888) 203-8100.

Can I find a certified Technology Plan Approver?

- The Certified Tech Plan Approver (TPA) locator tool will not be available during the upgrade. If you need help finding a TPA, you can contact CSB.

USAC Review Processes (PIA, TPA, CIPA, Appeals, Invoicing)

My 15-day response deadline ends during the upgrade. What should I do?

- You should still submit your documents to your reviewer or requestor. If you need additional time, please request an extension prior to your deadline.

Will I still be able to view the status of my Form 471 application on USAC's website?

- The Form 471 application status tool will not be available. Your PIA reviewer and the Client Service Bureau will not have access to the system and will not be able to tell you about the status of your application.

Will extensions to respond be granted automatically?

- No, but you can request an extension from your reviewer or requestor.

Will USAC continue to review applications?

- No. Application review will not occur during the upgrade.

Will someone be available to answer questions about my application?

- Some reviewers will be available during the upgrade, and CSB can answer general program questions. However, no one at USAC will have access to USAC's systems during the upgrade. We suggest that you call after the upgrade is completed if your answer would require access to USAC's systems.

How can I find out the status of my invoice?

- Your reviewer and CSB will not be able to give you the status of your invoice. CSB can confirm receipt of a paper form.

Appeals

My appeal deadline occurs during the upgrade. How can I submit my appeal?

- Submit your appeal as you would normally do. There is no impact on how appeals are submitted.

Client Service Bureau (CSB)

I have an open question with CSB. Will they be able to respond to my question during the upgrade?

- If CSB escalates your question and receives an answer during the upgrade, they can respond to your question. Remember, however, that no one at USAC will have access to the online systems during the upgrade. We suggest that you call CSB after the upgrade has been completed.

Can CSB create a new entity number or update my entity information?

- No. CSB will not have access to the system needed to create and update entity numbers and information.

Extension Requests

My service delivery deadline for non-recurring services is September 30 and I need to request a service delivery extension. What should I do?

- We recommend you submit your request as soon as possible, but definitely on or before September 30. However, USAC will not be able to process your request until after the upgrade is complete. Remember that you cannot use Submit a Question during the upgrade. You should retain a copy of your fax confirmation or proof of postmark for your records.

I need to request an invoice deadline extension. What should I do?

- We recommend you submit your request as soon as possible, but definitely on or before October 28, 2009 if your last date to receive service was June 30, 2009. However, USAC will not be able to process your request until after the upgrade is complete. Remember that you cannot use Submit a Question during the upgrade. You should retain a copy of your fax confirmation or proof of postmark for your records.

Service Substitutions, SPIN Changes, Good Samaritans and Other Requests

Will I be able to submit requests, such as service substitutions, SPIN changes, Good Samaritans, and entity removals?

- Yes. You can fax or mail your request to USAC. However, USAC will not be able to process your request until after the upgrade is complete. Remember that you cannot use Submit a Question during the upgrade. You should retain a copy of your fax confirmation or proof of postmark for your records.

You may download and print copies of [Schools and Libraries News Briefs](#) on USAC's website. You may [subscribe](#) to or [unsubscribe](#) from this news brief. For program information, please visit the [Schools and Libraries area](#) of the USAC website, [submit a question](#), or call us toll-free at 1-888-203-8100. Feel free to forward this news brief to any interested parties.

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

1997-2009, Universal Service Administrative Company, All Rights Reserved.

[Back](#)