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Schools and Libraries News Brief

October 2, 2009

TIP OF THE WEEK: If you are filing a program form on paper, print a copy of the form from the [Required Forms page](#) of the USAC website so that you don't use an outdated version of the form by mistake. Specifically, look for the date of April 2007 in the lower right-hand corner before you file Forms 472, 473, 474, 479, 486, and 500.

Commitments for Funding Years 2009 and 2008

Funding Year 2009. USAC released FY2009 Wave 21 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) October 1 and will release Wave 22 FCDLs October 6. These waves include commitments for approved Priority 2 requests (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections) at 85% and above and denials at 60% and below. As of October 2, FY2009 commitments total just under \$1.03 billion.

Funding Year 2008. USAC will release FY2008 Wave 68 FCDLs October 7. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 requests at 88% and above and denials at 86% and below. As of October 2, FY2008 commitments total just under \$2.35 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.

Fall Applicant Training

The training sessions we have held so far have been well received and informative. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all of those who have attended a training session or who plan to attend a future session. We realize that applicant and service provider schedules are very full, and we appreciate the efforts of everyone who is taking the time to come to training.

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 about eligibility.

Schools

To be eligible for E-rate discounts, a school:

- must provide elementary and/or secondary education as determined under state law.
- must not operate as a for-profit business.
- must not have an endowment 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. For more information, review USAC's guidance on [Non-traditional Elementary and Secondary Education](#). USAC has 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 sends letters to state departments of education asking for official confirmation of the status of these types of entities and other matters related to eligibility. We expect to send the next set of these letters out in the very near future,

and request that letter recipients respond on or before the deadline indicated. 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, a library:

- must be eligible for assistance from a state library administrative agency under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).
- must not operate as a for-profit business.
- must have a budget 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.” Generally, providers of Telecommunications Services and providers of 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 either (1) at least the first three letters of a service provider’s name and a percent sign (%) immediately following those letters or (2) a SPIN, click "Next" to view the results of your search. In the column marked "Form 498 Filer" you will see a "Y" if USAC has determined that the service provider is eligible to provide Telecommunications Services and/or Interconnected VoIP services under that SPIN.
- Note that some service providers can provide these services even though they are exempt from filing a Form 499. You can refer to the text above your search results for more information about these providers. If you still have questions, contact the Client Service Bureau at 1-888-203-8100.

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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