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Schools and Libraries News Brief

April 16, 2010

TIP OF THE WEEK: Be sure to monitor the preferred mode of contact (phone, fax, or email) that you identified on your Form 471 Block 1 Item 6. Your PIA reviewer will use that information to attempt to contact you if he or she has questions about your application.

Commitments for Funding Year 2009

Funding Year 2009. USAC will release FY2009 Wave 49 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) April 21. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 80% and above and denials at 69% and below. As of April 16, FY2009 commitments total just under \$2.67 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.

Registration for May Service Provider Training

There is still space available for USAC's one-day training sessions for service providers. The dates and locations are:

- Tuesday, May 4 at the Hilton Los Angeles Airport, Los Angeles, California
- Tuesday, May 11 at the Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay, Tampa, Florida

You can register for a training session and obtain information on hotel reservations from the [Spring 2010 Service Provider Training](#) page on the USAC website.

Corrective SPIN Changes

USAC uses the Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) associated with a Funding Request Number (FRN) not just during the application review process, but also for post-commitment activities such as the processing and payment of invoices. Consequently, it is very important that each FRN feature the correct SPIN.

In certain situations, applicants can request a change to the SPIN associated with an FRN. [SPIN changes](#) fall into two general categories:

- A [corrective SPIN change](#) is a correction made because the existing SPIN on an FRN does not identify the correct service provider. This can occur, for example, because of a data entry error, a merger or acquisition, or an interim SPIN used as a placeholder when a valid SPIN was not yet available. A corrective SPIN change can be requested at several steps in the application process, both before and after commitment.
- An [operational SPIN change](#) is an actual change from one service provider to another. An operational SPIN change can be requested only after a commitment has been made and can occur before or after services have started.

In this issue of the SL News Brief we will cover corrective SPIN changes.

Corrective SPIN changes can be requested in the following situations:

The SPIN associated with the FRN is a valid SPIN but it does not identify the correct service provider. During the online application process – or during data entry of a paper form – if one or more digits of a SPIN are entered incorrectly, the SPIN entered may belong to another service provider and therefore be accepted by the system. However, this SPIN must be corrected because it does not identify the actual service provider.

Your service provider has more than one SPIN and you entered the wrong one. Some service providers have a separate SPIN for each state in which they provide services or for each type of service they provide. It is always a good idea to check with your service provider to verify the SPIN that you should enter on your FRN. If you use the [SPIN Contact Search tool](#) to find your service provider's SPIN and the search returns a number of results, you should ask your service provider which SPIN to use.

Your service provider has been involved in a merger or acquisition and the SPIN on the FRN must be changed to reflect this situation. A merger (where two or more service providers are combined) or an acquisition (where one service provider is acquired by another) may necessitate a corrective SPIN change. This also can occur if a single service provider is either consolidating or splitting its SPINs.

- If a merger or acquisition affects all FRNs featuring the SPIN, the service provider can initiate the corrective SPIN change request. We call this a "global SPIN change." Affected service providers can call USAC's Billing, Collections, and Disbursement Department at 1-888-641-8722 (choose the "Form 498" menu option) to request information on this process.
- If a merger or acquisition affects some FRNs featuring the SPIN but not others, each affected applicant must request the corrective SPIN change. For example, one service provider may acquire part but not all of a territory covered by another service provider's SPIN. In such cases, USAC cannot simply replace one SPIN with another but must correct individual FRNs through applicant requests for corrective SPIN changes. The applicant should include documentation of the merger or acquisition, such as information copied from a website or a letter or email from the new SPIN that cites both service providers, together with the other required information (see below).

The service provider did not have a SPIN at the time the Form 471 was filed. An applicant can file a Form 471 even if the chosen service provider does not yet have a SPIN.

- Online filers can use USAC's "interim SPIN" (143666666) to complete data entry for a funding request if their service provider does not yet have a SPIN. The interim SPIN is generally available for online use only during the last week of the filing window.
- Paper filers can enter the name of the correct service provider in Item 14 of their paper forms. USAC will then use the interim SPIN to complete the data entry process.

At the time of Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review, your reviewer will ask you for your service provider's SPIN. After you have provided the SPIN, PIA can update and review your application. USAC cannot make a funding commitment for a funding request featuring the interim SPIN.

The applicant is using a state replacement contract for all or part of a funding year. A state replacement contract is a state master contract that will replace an existing state master contract before or during a funding year but that is not yet signed at the time the Form 471 is filed. In order to apply for funding, the state and the affected applicants must follow every step in the [state replacement contract guidance](#) on the USAC website carefully and completely. As part of this process, an applicant filing under this guidance enters the SPIN 143999999 on the appropriate FRN. This SPIN acts as a placeholder for the SPIN of the service provider that signs the state replacement contract.

After the state replacement contract has been signed, the applicant then files a corrective SPIN change (see below) to change the SPIN 143999999 to the service provider's SPIN. In this case, USAC can make a funding commitment on the FRN but USAC cannot process an invoice until the SPIN 143999999 is changed to the SPIN of the service provider featured on the state replacement contract.

Timing of corrective SPIN change requests

Corrective SPIN changes can be made at a number of steps in the application process. The earlier you realize a corrective SPIN change is necessary and submit a request to USAC, the better.

Here are the steps in the application process where you can make a corrective SPIN change and the best method to make your request for each step:

- **When you receive your RAL.** Review your [Form 471 Receipt Acknowledgment Letter \(RAL\)](#) as soon as it arrives. USAC issues a RAL for each Form 471 considered timely filed and timely certified. The RAL includes a summary of the data you provided on the Form 471 and a means to make allowable corrections. You can use the RAL correction process to request allowable changes to the SPIN. Remember that an actual change in service provider is not a corrective SPIN change but may be requested as an operational SPIN change after an FCDL has been issued.
- **During PIA Review.** Talk with your reviewer during PIA review. Allowable corrective SPIN changes can still be made at this time. Your PIA reviewer will also notify you if you have applied for Telecommunications Services but the SPIN you entered is not eligible to provide these services. You will then have an opportunity to correct that SPIN.
- **After the funding decision.** Once USAC has issued an FCDL, you must submit a written request for a corrective SPIN change. Note that you should always include the Form 471 application number for each FRN that features a change. USAC cannot process a SPIN change request if funding for your FRN was denied; however, if you win an appeal and receive a positive commitment, you can then request a corrective SPIN change. Please refer to "Section 2. To correct a SPIN after commitment has been made" in the [Corrective SPIN Change guidance](#) on the USAC website for a list of details required by USAC to process the request. This guidance also contains additional information on corrective SPIN changes, including the email, fax, and mail options you use to submit your request.

We will cover operational SPIN changes in an upcoming SL News Brief.

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