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## Schools and Libraries News Brief

October 8, 2010

**TIP OF THE WEEK: Gather your customer bills and other invoice-related documents to complete invoicing (BEAR Forms 472 or SPI Forms 474) for FY2009 recurring services.** Remember that the deadline to submit a properly completed invoice for these services is October 28, 2010.

### Commitments for Funding Year 2010

**Funding Year 2010.** USAC will release FY2010 Wave 21 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) October 12. This wave will include commitments for approved Priority 2 (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance) requests at 85% and above. As of October 8, FY2010 commitments total over \$1.43 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.

### SERVICE PROVIDERS: Special Training Sessions for FY2010

USAC will hold two service provider training sessions this fall. These 1/2-day trainings will provide information to service providers about the [Sixth Report and Order \(FCC 10-175\)](#), released on September 28.

Following are the dates and locations for these training sessions. Note that there is not a conference room rate at the hotel, so attendees can make their own arrangements. The training sessions will start at 1:00 pm and finish by 4:30 pm.

November 4, 2010 – Renaissance Concourse Atlanta Airport Hotel

- Atlanta, Georgia

November 9, 2010 – Albuquerque Marriott

- Albuquerque, New Mexico

Online registration for both training sessions is available on the [fall 2010 training sessions page](#) on the USAC website.

### SERVICE PROVIDERS: Get Ready for FY2011

Although we are a few months away from the FY2011 application filing window, applicants and service providers should be working on any remaining issues from the current and/or previous funding years in order to simplify their preparations for the FY2011 window. Below are some tips for service providers; in the [September 17 SL News Brief](#) we provided tips for applicants.

#### File Forms 473 for FY2009 and FY2010 if you have not already done so.

[Form 473, Service Provider Annual Certification \(SPAC\) Form](#), must be filed each funding year before invoices for that funding year can be paid.

If you have not yet filed this form for one or more funding years, you should do so as soon as possible. One copy of the form must be filed for each Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN). If you have filed the form but you are not sure if USAC has successfully processed it, search for your SPIN in the [SPIN Contact Search tool](#) and review the list of funding years in the "SPAC Filed" (far right-hand) column of the search results.

SPAC Forms must be filed on paper using the version of the form dated April 2007.

#### Verify that USAC has your current information on Form 498.

Service providers file [Form 498, Service Provider Identification Number \(SPIN\) and Contact Information Form](#), to get a SPIN and to provide USAC with correct contact and remittance information. The original form must be filed on paper but Form 498 can be updated through the [E-file System](#).

It is important to keep the information on this form current.

- To review the contact information on your Form 498 that is available to applicants, go to the [SPIN Contact Search tool](#).
- To review other information on the Form 498, you will have to log in to the [E-file System](#) with your E-cert ID and password. If you need help, call the USAC Billing, Collections, and Disbursement Department at 1-888-641-8722 (choose the "Form 498" option rather than the "Schools and Libraries" option) for assistance.

Note that in some cases you may have to file a revision to your Form 498 on paper before USAC can issue an E-cert ID and password. Once you are able to log in to the E-file System, your company officer of record can update your information online.

#### **Finish filing SPI Forms for FY2009 recurring services.**

The invoicing deadline for FY2009 recurring services is October 28, 2010 – less than three weeks from now. We generally receive a large number of both Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Forms 472 and Service Provider Invoice (SPI) Forms 474 close to the invoicing deadline, which results in longer processing times and may necessitate [filing an invoice deadline extension request](#) if an invoice is rejected.

All service providers can [file SPI Forms online](#). Service providers that invoice USAC frequently and would like to file invoices electronically can follow the [instructions for setting up e-invoicing](#). Service providers that file SPI Forms on paper must use the April 2007 version of the form.

#### **Finish approving BEAR Forms for FY2009 recurring services.**

Whether applicants file BEAR Forms online or on paper, you must approve those forms before USAC can review them. Following are some tips to assist you in the approval process:

- **Tell your customers how long it will take you to review and approve BEAR Forms.** Applicants that file BEAR Forms often wait until close to the USAC invoicing deadline to file online or to send paper BEAR Forms to service providers for approval. If you clearly communicate to your customers how much lead time you need to review and approve the forms before the deadline, both you and your customers will have a much better chance of meeting the invoicing deadline and avoid having to request an invoice deadline extension.
- **Approve BEAR Forms online.** Service providers with an E-cert ID and a password can [approve BEAR Forms online](#). If you don't know your E-cert ID and password, call the USAC Billing, Collections, and Disbursement Department (see above) for assistance.
- **If you are approving BEAR Forms online, log in to the [E-file System](#) once each week to see if any forms are awaiting your approval.** USAC sends an email to both the applicant and the service provider when a BEAR Form is filed online, but service providers are not required to wait for an email to arrive before approving a BEAR Form. If you log in to the E-file System once a week, you will be able to review BEAR Forms in a timely manner.
- **If the applicant files on paper, check the footer date on your signature page.** If the applicant does not submit all four pages using **the April 2007 version** of the form, USAC will request a new submission, which delays processing.
- **Use your current contact information and update where necessary.** If USAC has questions about your invoice, we will use the contact information on the invoice to get in touch with you. If we can't get answers to our questions, your invoice may be denied and you will have to resubmit.
- **Don't file duplicate invoices or line items.** First check your customer bills (the bills sent by the service provider to the applicant) and any previous invoices so that you invoice USAC only for amounts that have not yet been invoiced.

#### **Check the status of FY2009 non-recurring services.**

September 30 following the funding year is generally the deadline for delivery and installation of non-recurring services. While September 30, 2010 is the deadline for most FY2009 non-recurring services, it can also be the extended deadline for services from other funding years.

Again, here are some tips:

- **Check the expiration date on your contract and, if necessary, extend your contract and ask your customer to notify USAC of the new contract expiration date using a Form 500.** USAC will not pay for services delivered after the contract expiration date on file or after the original (or extended) service delivery deadline. Note, however, that if September 30 was your service delivery deadline and you did not request an extension of this deadline, it is now too late to do so.
- **If September 30, 2010 was the last date to receive non-recurring services, then January 28, 2011 is the last day to invoice USAC for those services.** Don't wait until the last minute to gather customer bills and prepare SPI Forms or approve BEAR Forms.

**Verify that your customers have submitted Forms 486 for FY2010.**

If an applicant's FY2010 FCDL is dated on or before July 1, 2010 and the service start date is July 1, the deadline to file Form 486 is October 29, 2010. Applicants that wait until the last minute to file Form 486 may cause delays in processing and review at USAC.

Applicants that wait until the last minute are also likely to get confused by USAC's Form 486 Reminder Letter. USAC now sends out reminder letters to applicants that miss the Form 486 deadline because they either:

- fail to file a Form 486 by the deadline, or
- file a Form 486 online and then fail to certify it by the deadline.

USAC uses (1) the service start date reported in Item 19 of the Form 471 and (2) the FCDL date to determine when a reminder letter should be sent. USAC tries to identify late filers as soon as possible after the calculated Form 486 filing deadline date so that Forms 486 can be filed or certified promptly. This means that applicants that wait until the last minute to file or certify a form will probably receive one of these letters and become concerned that USAC has not received their form or their certification.

Because USAC will not pay invoices until a Form 486 is on file, it is important to check with your customers to make sure that they have filed the form. Once USAC has reviewed and approved the form, USAC will issue a [Form 486 Notification Letter to the service provider](#) and the applicant.

Once you have covered or resolved any remaining issues from the current or previous funding years, it will be time to start thinking about FY2011. Future News Briefs will cover the application process from start to finish.

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