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Schools and Libraries News Brief

March 4, 2011

FY2011 WINDOW COUNTDOWN

Days to window close	**20**
Forms 471 filed to date	**10,674**

Form 471 Deadline: March 24, 2011 at 11:59 pm EDT

TIP OF THE WEEK: **If you file your Form 471 online but don't yet have a PIN, you can still certify your form on paper.** To certify on paper, click the Certify Complete button on the Apply Online page, choose the Paper Certification option, and print a copy of your certification page to sign, date, and mail to USAC.

Commitments for Funding Year 2010

Funding Year 2010. USAC will release FY2010 Wave 41 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) March 8. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 requests (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections) at 81% and above and denials at 79% and below. As of March 4, FY2010 commitments total over $2.31 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.

Register for May Service Provider Training

USAC will hold two one-day training sessions for service providers in May. The materials covered will be the same at both sessions. The dates and locations are:

- Tuesday, May 3 at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott in Los Angeles, California
- Thursday, May 12 at the Renaissance Concourse Atlanta Airport Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia

Registration information – including an online registration form – has been posted on the USAC website. You can register for the training and get hotel reservation information from the Upcoming Events section of the Trainings and Presentations page on the USAC website.

Update on Letters

FY2011 RNLs

Next week, USAC will begin issuing Form 470 Receipt Notification Letters (RNLs) to applicants that filed the October 2010 version of the Form 470. These RNLs reflect the field changes featured on this version of the form. Applicants that filed using the earlier version of the form have already received their RNLs.

Applicants have 20 days from the date of the letter to submit allowable corrections to the Form 470. To submit corrections, follow the directions in the RNL.

"Form 470 But No Form 471" Letters

Today USAC issued just over 25,600 letters to applicants that had not – as of February 24 –filed a Form 471 featuring their FY2011 Form 470 application number in Item 11 of a funding request.

This letter is NOT a reminder to file a Form 471 as soon as possible. Applicants must still wait at least 28 days after the posting date of the Form 470 to close their competitive bidding process, evaluate bids received, select a service provider, sign and date a contract (if applicable), and sign and submit the Form 471. This letter is only a notification that – according to USAC's database – as of February 24, no FY2011 Form 471 has been filed that cites the timely filed Form 470 posted by the applicant named on the letter.

If you receive a "Notification of Form 470 Posted But No Associated Form 471" letter and you are planning to file a Form 471, be sure to complete all necessary actions in time to file your online Form 471 or postmark your paper Form 471 no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on Thursday, March 24, 2011.

Calculating Discounts

In Block 4 of the Form 471, applicants list the individual recipients of service for a particular Block 5 funding request and calculate the appropriate discount level for those recipients. The [Form 471 Instructions](#) provide detailed guidance on calculating discounts; below we have provided a high-level summary of discount calculations for specific situations.

As always, we encourage you to file online. Warning messages and informational pop-ups can help you through the discount calculation process and avoid the problem resolution activities that occur during USAC's data entry of paper forms.

General Information

To calculate the discount for an individual entity (recipient of service), you need two pieces of information:

- The urban or rural status of the entity, which you can determine using the physical location of the entity and the appropriate state list linked to the guidance document [Rural/Urban Classification](#).
- The percentage of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). (See below for a short discussion of alternatives to NSLP.)

You can then find your discount in the [Discount Matrix](#) posted on the USAC website. Locate the row that includes the percentage of students eligible for NSLP and find your discount in the urban or rural column, as appropriate.

Following is information on how to calculate discounts for different types of entities:

Individual school

Divide the number of students eligible for NSLP at the school by the total number of students at the school. Use this number (the percentage of students eligible for NSLP) and the urban or rural status of the school to look up the discount on the Discount Matrix.

Library outlet/branch

Divide the number of students eligible for NSLP in the public school district in which the library outlet/branch is located by the total number of students in that public school district. Use this number and the urban or rural status of the library outlet/branch to look up the discount on the Discount Matrix.

School district

List each individual school in the school district in a Block 4 worksheet and calculate the E-rate discount for each school as described above. Then multiply the E-rate discount for each school by the number of students in the school (the "weighted product"). Add together all the weighted products and divide the result by the total number of students in the school district to get the "weighted average discount" for the school district.

Library system or library consortium

List each library outlet/branch in a Block 4 worksheet, and calculate the E-rate discount for each outlet/branch as described above. Add together all the discounts and divide that total by the number of outlets/branches to get the "simple average discount" for the library system.

Consortium of schools and/or libraries

List each consortium member on a Block 4 worksheet and calculate the E-rate discount for each member as described above. Note that you will complete a separate worksheet first to calculate the discount for a school district or library system that is a consortium member. Then calculate the simple average of the discounts of the members.

School or library non-instructional facility (NIF) without classrooms

A [non-instructional facility](#) or NIF is a school building without classrooms or a library building without public areas. (Some school NIFs do contain classrooms - see below.)

A school NIF without classrooms is eligible for the shared discount of its school district. If you have not already done so in your application, complete a worksheet for the school district calculation as described above.

- TIP: If you are filing online, enter the entity number for the NIF in a line of a Block 4 worksheet. Enter "0" (zero) in the fields labeled "Total Number of Students" and "Number of Students Eligible for NSLP" and check the box to the right of the field if "eligible for a non-matrix discount." (We call this discount a non-matrix discount because this discount is a weighted average and probably does not appear in the Discount Matrix). Then enter the school district's weighted average discount.

For a NIF in a library system, use the library outlet/branch calculation as described above.

School NIF with classrooms

If the student population in the classroom(s) is fixed (the same students are expected to attend class every day), use the calculation for an individual school as described above.

If the student population varies from day to day or over time, use a "snapshot" of the student population for your calculation. Choose a particular day and calculate the percentage NSLP eligibility for the student population in the classroom for that day and carry that percentage eligibility into the Discount Matrix. Be sure to maintain documentation of your calculation.

New school or library construction

For a school, if you know the student population of the new school, calculate the discount for an individual school as described above. If you don't know the student population of the new school, use the school district weighted average as described above. If you don't know the student population and the school is not part of a school district, the new school will be eligible for a 20% discount in its first year – that is, until the student population is known.

For a library, calculate the discount for the library outlet/branch as described above using the information from the public school district in which the new building will be located.

Head Start, pre-kindergarten, juvenile justice, or adult education

First, you must determine if the students and/or facilities in these programs are eligible in your state using the [Eligibility Table for Non-traditional K-12 Students and Facilities](#). If they are eligible, calculate the discount for an individual school (or a NIF with classrooms as appropriate) as described above. Note that all Head Start students are considered eligible for NSLP, which would result in a 90% E-rate discount.

Alternative discount mechanisms

For schools that either do not participate in NSLP or choose not to use NSLP participation numbers, there are certain acceptable [alternative discount mechanisms](#) that can be used to calculate an equivalent measure for the percentage of students eligible for NSLP. In all cases, these mechanisms must be based on or not exceed the same measure of poverty used by NSLP.

Applicants using an alternative discount mechanism must maintain complete and appropriate documentation of their calculations to support their funding requests. Remember that documentation must be retained for five years after the last date to receive service.

In general, data from alternative discount mechanisms must be collected and verifiable on an individual student basis. There is only one exception: if you send a survey to all households in your school and at least half of the surveys are completed and returned, you can project a percentage of eligibility based on the returned surveys. Here a few suggestions:

- Follow the website guidance carefully when you design your survey.

- NSLP forms CANNOT be used as surveys.
- Send one survey per household, not one per student.
- Number your surveys consecutively so that returned surveys are easier to track.
- If you do a projection, base it ONLY on returned surveys. You can combine multiple sources of data if you are verifying your data student by student, but NOT in a projection.

For detailed information on surveys and other alternatives to NSLP, refer to the Alternative Discount Mechanism Fact Sheet. For general information on calculating discounts, refer to the Form 471 Instructions.

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.

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