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Schools and Libraries News Brief

June 3, 2011

> **TIP OF THE WEEK:** **If you file BEAR Forms – and especially if you file one BEAR Form for the entire year – start collecting customer bills and other necessary information for your FY2010 recurring services.** If you miss the October 28, 2011 invoicing deadline, you will have to request an invoice deadline extension before you can complete the invoicing process.

Commitments for Funding Year 2010

Funding Year 2010. USAC will release FY2010 Wave 52 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) June 7. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance) requests at 81% and above and denials at 79% and below. As of June 3, FY2010 commitments total over $2.52 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 2011 Applicant Training Dates - Registration Reminder

USAC has started waiting lists for the fall applicant training sessions in Washington, DC; Newark, NJ; Los Angeles, CA; and New Orleans, LA. We encourage you to sign up for one of the other training sessions, although we will continue to work the waiting lists as we receive cancellations. Please email USAC Training if your plans change and you are unable to attend a session so that we can open up a space for someone else.

You can register and make hotel reservations by following the appropriate links on the Training Sessions and Presentations page on the USAC website.

What Should I - the Applicant - Be Doing this Summer?

Both applicants and service providers can, with a few simple steps, make sure applications continue to be reviewed, invoices continue to be paid, and documents continue to be processed during the summer months. Here are a few tips on how you can help speed these forms and requests along:

1. Monitor the contact information you provided on program forms.

Applicants and service providers provide contact information on each program form and also on each program request, e.g., for a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) change, service substitution, or invoice deadline extension. USAC uses this information to contact the person that submitted the form or request if any questions arise during processing and/or review.

If your contact information is incorrect or outdated, USAC's attempts to contact you may be unsuccessful. This may result in USAC putting your form or request on hold or processing it with the information at hand, which may in turn lead to a denial or a rejection.

To provide alternate contact information on your Form 471 for the summer, follow the guidance in the May 20, 2011 SL News Brief.

2. Respond to any PIA review questions.

PIA continues to review applications during the summer. If you do not respond to a request for information by the deadline on the PIA request, PIA will review your application with the information you provided, which may lead to a reduction or denial lof funding.

The contact procedures for the summer period – which are defined in the Deadline for Information Requests guidance document – are now in effect. When we follow these procedures, if our first attempt to contact you is on or after May 27 and we are unable to make a successful

two-way contact with you or someone able to answer our questions, we will put your application on hold and attempt to contact you again on or after September 9.

If you do not want your application placed on hold, you can respond to the PIA request or contact your reviewer to keep the review process moving. If you don't have your reviewer's name or contact information, you can contact the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 1-888-203-8100. To determine if your application is on hold, go to the Form 471 Application Status tool, enter your Billed Entity Number and Funding Year, and click "Search."

- If the status of your Form 471 is "Unable to Contact," your form is on hold.
- If the status of your Form 471 is "Awaiting Applicant Documentation," contact your reviewer as soon as possible to find out what information PIA has requested from you.

Note, however, that if PIA's first attempt to contact you was before May 27 and was successful, you are still subject to the 15-day response deadline unless you requested and were granted an extension. You can refer to the May 27 SL News Brief for more information, including the definition of a successful contact.

3. Respond to any Problem Resolution (paper form processing) questions.

USAC continues to process paper forms during the summer as well. If USAC cannot enter data from your paper form, someone from Problem Resolution will contact you to obtain the information we need to complete the processing of your form.

As above, if Problem Resolution cannot make a successful contact with you, we will put the processing of your paper form on hold until after September 9. If it appears that a paper form has not yet been processed, you can ask about the status of your form by using Submit a Question or calling the Client Service Bureau at 1-888-203-8100.

4. Submit your BEAR Forms for services already received for FY2010.

Applicants submit a Form 472, *Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form,* to request reimbursement of the discount amount from USAC after paying for services in full. Although some applicants wait until the end of the funding year and then submit one BEAR Form for the entire year, you can submit BEAR Forms monthly, quarterly, or at other intervals as long as you don't file duplicate requests for services received during the same period.

If you submit a BEAR Form now, make sure someone is in the office to either deposit the reimbursement check from your service provider or to work with the service provider to give you a credit on your bill. Remember that you can submit BEAR Forms both online and on paper.

5. Review your CIPA status.

Program requirements under the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) have not changed. However, we have a few reminders for applicants reviewing their CIPA status in advance of the FY2011 start of services.

Remember that your First Funding Year for purposes of CIPA is the first funding year (starting with FY2001) in which a Form 486 was successfully processed for a funding commitment for Internet Access, Internal Connections, or Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections. (For more information on First, Second, and Third Funding Years and other aspects of CIPA, refer to the CIPA guidance document on the USAC website.)

- If you have already reported on a Form 486 in a previous funding year that you are in compliance with CIPA, review your Internet Safety Policy and verify that you are following it. Pay special attention to the technology protection measure (filter) referenced in your policy, as you should retain documentation showing that it is in place – for example, with service provider bills noting filtered access or monthly logs of blocked sites.
- If FY2011 is your Second Funding Year for purposes of CIPA and state or local procurement rules or regulations or competitive bidding requirements prevent the making of the CIPA certification, review the CIPA guidance document for specific information on requesting a waiver for that second year.
- If FY2011 is your First Funding Year for purposes of CIPA, you must be undertaking actions to be in compliance with CIPA for FY2012.
- If your First Funding Year for purposes of CIPA occurred in the past and you have not applied for discounts in the interim but did so for FY2011, note that you cannot restart

the process of CIPA compliance. (In other words, you cannot have a First Funding Year for a second time.)

- Finally, note that CIPA compliance is not required when telecommunications, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services, or fiber services are requested in the Internet Access category for telecommunications transmission purposes. However, if any other Internet access services such as basic Internet access, web hosting or email service are included or bundled with the telecommunications, VoIP, or fiber services, CIPA compliance is required.

6. Label and store program-related documents.

FCC rules require you to retain documentation related to the application process and the receipt and delivery of discounted services for five years after the last date to receive service.

Some examples of documents that you should file now – before they are lost or misplaced – include:

- A copy of your Request for Proposals (RFPs) if one was issued
- Correspondence with service providers, such as answers to questions posed by bidders during the time the competitive bidding process was open
- Winning and losing bids
- Bid evaluation matrices
- Other documentation related to the competitive bidding process.

Filing these documents now will ensure that they are available later in the event they are needed.

7. Make sure the technology plan that covers FY2011 services has been approved.

FCC rules require that Priority 2 services be covered by an approved technology plan. Because July 1, 2011 is the first day applicants can receive discounted services for FY2011, technology plans that cover services for FY2011 should have already been approved by a [USAC-certified Technology Plan Approver (TPA)](#).

- If your current technology plan expires before July 1, 2011 and you don't know if your new plan has been approved, check with your TPA.
- If your plan has been approved, be sure to keep a copy of the technology plan approval letter or other evidence – such as a printout of a TPA webpage listing approved plans – that demonstrates the approval.
- If your plan has not been approved, move quickly to get it approved before services start for FY2011. USAC cannot pay discounts for Priority 2 services not covered by an approved technology plan.

8. Subscribe to the Schools and Libraries News Brief from a personal email account.

USAC will continue to issue SL News Briefs each Friday during the summer. Along with general program guidance, the News Briefs will include updates that may request or require action before September.

You are welcome to subscribe to the SL News Brief from more than one email account – even if you subscribe from the second account only during the summer months and then unsubscribe when you return in September – by clicking on the "subscribe" link at the bottom of this page. This way you can stay informed if you do not have access to your email account at work during the summer.

9. Start making plans to attend applicant training in the fall.

Registration for fall applicant training has opened (see above). If you would like attend training and need time to obtain permission to travel or for other reasons, you can get your process started now. You may want to register with USAC if you are interested in attending a particular session, as some sessions do fill up quickly. Remember that USAC does not charge a registration fee to attend the training.

We will cover summer activities for service providers in a future SL News Brief.

You may download and print copies of <u>Schools and Libraries News Briefs</u> on USAC's website. You may <u>subscribe</u> to or <u>unsubscribe</u> from this news brief. For program information, please visit the <u>Schools and Libraries area</u> of the USAC website, <u>submit a question</u>, 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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