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## Schools and Libraries News Brief

June 24, 2011

**TIP OF THE WEEK:** You can check the status of a Form 471 by using the [Form 471 Application Status tool](#). Form 471 status information is also available on the [Form 471 Display tool](#) (at the top of the first page of each form), from the [Data Retrieval Tool](#) (choose 471 Application Status as a data point in Section A), through [Submit a Question](#) (choose Form 471 from the Form Inquiry menu), or by telephone from the Client Service Bureau.

### Commitments for Funding Years 2011, 2010, and 2009

**Funding Year 2011.** USAC will release FY2011 Wave 2 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) June 28. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 1 (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) requests at all discount levels. As of June 24, FY2011 commitments total just under \$398 million.

**Funding Year 2010.** USAC will release FY2010 Wave 55 FCDLs June 29. 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 24, FY2010 commitments total over \$2.57 billion.

**Funding Year 2009.** USAC will release FY2009 Wave 88 FCDLs June 27. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 requests at 77% and above and denials at 76% and below. As of June 24, FY2009 commitments total over \$2.86 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 Registration Continues

Some of the fall training sessions still have openings, and we continue to work the waiting lists for those that are full. To register online and to locate information on reserving a room at a conference hotel, go to the [Training Sessions and Presentations page](#) on the USAC website and click on the link for the training session you wish to attend. You can continue to send questions, cancellations, or requests for information about the fall applicant training to [USAC Training](#).

### Guidance for Completing the FY2011 Form 486 Technology Plan Certification

Beginning with FY2011, technology plans are required for Priority 2 services only. Because the certification on the Form 486 has not yet been updated, applicants filing FY2011 Forms 486 featuring funding requests **for Priority 1 services only** should complete Block 4, Item 8 of the form as follows:

- If you are filing online using the Form 486 Expert, check the box next to Item 8, choose "Other" from the dropdown menu, and enter "NONE" in the resulting text box.
- If you are filing online using the Form 486 Interview, check the box next to Item 8 and click on "I agree," then choose "Other" from the dropdown menu and click "Go," then type "NONE" in the resulting text box.
- If you are filing Form 486 on paper, check the box next to Item 8 and write "NONE" in the space below the Item 8 certification.

### What Should I – the Service Provider – 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. In the [June 3 SL News Brief](#) we discussed tips for applicants; below are some tips for service providers.

### **1. Monitor the progress of any paper forms you submit to USAC.**

USAC continues to process paper forms during the summer. For service providers, this includes the [Form 473, Service Provider Annual Certification \(SPAC\) Form](#) and the [Form 474, Service Provider Invoice \(SPI\) Form](#). If you have not already filed Form 473 for FY2011, now is a good time to do so. Be sure to use the April 2007 version of the form. Remember that USAC will not pay invoices for FY2011 unless the service provider has successfully filed a Form 473 for FY2011 and the applicant has successfully filed a Form 486.

If USAC cannot complete data entry of your paper form because of inconsistent or missing information, someone from Problem Resolution will contact you to obtain the information we need to finish processing your form.

[Contact procedures for the summer period](#) are now in effect. This means that if Problem Resolution attempts to contact you on or after May 27, 2011 and that contact is unsuccessful, your paper form will be put on hold and we will not attempt to contact you again until after September 9. Although these procedures were established to avoid penalizing school applicants when schools are in recess, they apply to other applicants and also to service providers.

If you were on vacation or otherwise unavailable on or after May 27 and you believe we have put your paper form on hold, you can respond to our original request or you can call the Client Service Bureau at 1-888-203-8100 and ask us to locate and process your paper form.

You can also file Form 474 [electronically](#) or [online](#) and obviate the filing of a paper form.

### **2. Complete your activities related to billing customers and invoicing USAC for any remaining FY2010 recurring services.**

June 30, 2011 is the last day to receive recurring services for FY2010. The deadline to invoice USAC for those services is October 28, 2011.

If you provide discounted bills to your customer and then file SPI Forms:

- Send out all remaining customer bills for the non-discount portion of the services.
- Remind your customers that they are expected to pay your bills within 90 days.
- Respond promptly to USAC requests for information, e.g., service certifications.

If you bill your customer in full and your customer files the [Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement \(BEAR\) Form](#):

- Bill your customer for the full cost of the service and remind your customer to pay your bill in full before filing a BEAR Form.
- Remind your customer not to wait until the last minute to file a BEAR Form so that you have enough time to review and approve it.
- Respond promptly to USAC requests for information, e.g., service certifications.
- Pass the BEAR Form reimbursement amount to your customer within 20 business days of receiving it.

Reminders for BEAR Forms filed online:

- If you log in to the E-File system once a week to check for BEAR Forms filed online that are awaiting your approval, you will not miss any that would otherwise age out of the system. Although USAC sends you an email immediately after an applicant certifies a BEAR Form online, it is not necessary to wait for the email before taking action.
- **To approve all or part of a BEAR Form, you must check the box to the right of each line that you approve. (If the entire form meets with your approval, you can check the box that approves all lines.)** If you click the button at the bottom of the form with no lines checked, the form will be rejected and the applicant will be required to resubmit the form.

### **3. Assist applicants with responses to PIA review questions if asked.**

Applicants may need your help responding to technical or contractual questions from Program Integrity Assurance (PIA). Often a network diagram or other technical information supplied by the service provider will clarify a situation and allow the PIA reviewer to proceed with the application review process.

- If you are on a conference call with the applicant and a PIA reviewer, it would help the applicant if you can summarize the information you provide in an email or other written format. You could also remind the applicant to take notes.
- If you happen to contact a PIA reviewer without the applicant present, send the applicant a summary of the information you provide.
- If you send any documentation to a PIA reviewer, copy the applicant on your response.

#### **4. Review USAC's website for posted Forms 470.**

The FY2012 online option for Form 470 will become available shortly. Although most applicants will wait until this fall to post their Forms 470 for FY2012, applicants with long procurement cycles, state replacement contracts, or other situations may decide to post their forms once the FY2012 option becomes available. In addition, some applicants that intend to sign contracts for FY2012 services – and/or FY2011 services under a [State Replacement Contract](#) – may also post FY2011 Forms 470 on the USAC website.

- Applicants can file a Form 470 online or on paper that features FY2011 in Item 2 and indicates in Item 13 that they are posting for FY2012 services.
- However, applicants that want to post a Form 470 for FY2012 non-contracted services MUST post a Form 470 that features FY2012 in Item 2.

You can use the [Form 470 Search Posted tool](#) to display individual posted forms or the [Form 470 Download tool](#) to download a comma-delimited file containing certain blocks or all blocks of data on posted forms. You can find both of these tools on the [Search Tools page](#) on the USAC website.

#### **5. Label and file program-related documents.**

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

Most of the documentation needed by auditors and for other program reasons is maintained by applicants. However, service providers have copies of contracts, evidence of payment of customer bills, SPI Forms, and other useful program information. Remember that you can store information electronically – for example, by scanning paper documents or by saving electronic files.

If you store files electronically, keep in mind that you should use naming conventions that allow you to easily identify and retrieve documents that relate to a particular customer, application, and/or funding year.

#### **6. Consider attending applicant training in the fall.**

USAC generally provides service provider training at two locations in the spring and applicant training at a number of locations in the fall. This year, USAC conducted service provider training in May and has scheduled applicant training in eight locations around the country this September, October, and November.

While the focus of the training is on applicant issues, service providers are welcome to attend training as well. For a list of training locations and hotel information, you can visit the [Training Sessions and Presentations page](#) on the USAC website.

Remember that USAC does not charge a registration fee to attend the training.

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