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TIP OF THE WEEK: If you are filing or have filed a BEAR Form online for FY2011 recurring services, make sure your service provider will be able to approve your form by the **October 29 invoice deadline**. BEAR Forms approved by service providers after October 29 will be rejected, and an [invoice deadline extension request](#) must be processed by USAC before the BEAR Form can be resubmitted.

Commitments for Funding Years 2012 and 2011

Funding Year 2012. USAC will release FY2012 Wave 16 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) October 23. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance) requests at 90% and denials at 89% and below. As of October 19, FY2012 commitments total over \$1.37 billion.

Funding Year 2011. USAC will release FY2011 Wave 66 FCDLs October 24. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 requests at 88% and above and denials at 87% and below. As of October 19, FY2011 commitments total just under \$2.43 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.

Entity Numbers

An entity number is a unique identifying number assigned by USAC to each entity that (1) is eligible to receive discounts under the E-rate program and/or (2) files program forms.

An eligible entity can be an individual school, a library outlet/branch, a school district, a library system, or a [non-instructional facility](#) (NIF) such as an administrative office. Entity numbers for eligible entities can appear in Block 1 of a program form and/or in a Form 471 Block 4 worksheet that lists the recipients of service for a funding request.

Here are some examples of entities that have entity numbers but that are not eligible for (or do not request) discounted services:

- A state procurement agency that files an FCC Form 470 to open a competitive bidding process. The agency enters its entity number in Item 3 of the form.
- A city or town that controls the budget of a library and pays the bills for the library. The city or town enters its entity number in Block 1 of all appropriate program forms.
- A consortium leader that is not itself eligible for discounts but applies on behalf of its consortium members. The consortium leader enters its entity number in Block 1 of all appropriate program forms.
- A school district, if the district is not applying for funding itself but an applicant (e.g., a consortium) is completing one or more FCC Form 471 Block 4 worksheets featuring the district's individual schools. The applicant enters the school district entity number wherever it is requested in Block 4 worksheet entries. (Note that a library enters the entity number of the school district in which the library is located.)
- A library system, if the system is not applying for funding itself but an applicant (e.g., a consortium) is completing one or more FCC Form 471 Block 4 worksheets for the system's outlets/branches. The applicant enters the library system entity number wherever it is requested in Block 4 worksheet entries.

Billed Entity Numbers (BENs)

If an entity pays a service provider for products and/or services delivered to eligible schools and/or libraries, that entity is called a billed entity. USAC assigns that entity a Billed Entity Number or BEN. There is no visible difference between a number assigned as a BEN and a number assigned as an entity

number, and the terms "entity number" and "BEN" are now generally used interchangeably. (An eligible entity that pays the bills and also requests discounts does not need two numbers.)

A billed entity is not required to be – but may be – an eligible entity. For example, an ineligible entity such as town or city government may be assigned a BEN if it pays the bills to service providers for eligible services on behalf of eligible entities.

Locating an entity number

You can [search for BEN information](#) from the [Search Tools](#) web page on the USAC website. You can limit your search by entity type (school district, school, library, or all types), and then search by **one** of the following:

- Full or partial name (remember to add a "%" sign after a partial name)
- Zip code
- State/territory
- Entity number

Your search may return a single entity or a list of entities. For specific information about an entity, click on the Billed Entity Number in the search results.

Requesting an entity number

To request an entity number, contact our Client Service Bureau (CSB) either through [Submit a Question](#) (choose "Entity Number" from the Topic Inquiry list and then "I need an entity number for a new entity") or by calling 1-888-203-8100.

CSB needs specific information to create a new entity. For assistance in preparing your request for an entity number or for more information about entity numbers, refer to the [Entity Numbers](#) web page on the USAC website.

- NOTE: Multiple buildings on the same campus – i.e., you do not have to cross a public right-of-way to get from one building to another – do not need separate entity numbers if they serve the same student population. For example, a school bus garage and an administrative building on a high school campus that serve only the students in that high school do not need separate entity numbers. However, if the administrative building serves other schools in the school district not located on that campus – or the school bus garage also serves students from the junior high school located several blocks away – those facilities would need separate entity numbers.

If you are requesting three or more entity numbers, please use [Submit a Question](#) to submit your request. Be sure to include all of the information listed on the [Entity Numbers](#) web page. You can also fax your request to CSB at 1-888-276-8736. Please request entity numbers as soon as you know you will need them.

Correcting the information on an entity number

Contact CSB as described above to update any information associated with an entity number that is incorrect or that has changed. Before you call, be sure you have the entity number of the entity you want to update handy along with the information to be corrected.

Please note that, when CSB changes the entry in the database, any future forms you file will reflect the new information. You will not see a change in forms that you have already filed.

- NOTE: To change information on a form that has already been filed, follow the guidance in the [Updating Contact Information](#) web page on the USAC website. Remember to identify the form or forms to be changed by including the six- or seven-digit application number assigned by USAC to each form.

In a future issue of the SL News Brief, we will provide additional guidance on specific issues involving entity numbers.

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