July 10, 2015

TIP OF THE WEEK: If you are using a consultant, DO NOT add the consultant as an employee of your school or library in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC). Instead, add the consulting firm to your organization's record in EPC through the Manage Organization Relationships link on your landing page (For details, watch a video or refer to the July 6 Special Edition News Brief.)

Commitments for Funding Years 2015 and 2014

Funding Year 2015. USAC released Funding Year (FY) 2015 Wave 7 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on July 6 and will issue Wave 8 FCDLs on July 17. These waves include commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of July 10, FY2015 commitments total over $615 million.

Funding Year 2014. USAC released FY2014 Wave 58 FCDLs on July 1 and Wave 59 FCDLs on July 9, and will release Wave 60 FCDLs on July 15. These waves include commitments for approved Priority 1 (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) requests at all discount levels. As of July 10, FY2014 commitments total over $2.24 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.

Preparing to File FCC Form 470 for FY2016

The FCC Form 470, Description of Services Requested and Certification Form, is the program form applicants file to open the competitive bidding process and is the first program form applicants file to begin the process of requesting discounts under the E-rate program.

- Applicants describe the services they are requesting on the FCC Form 470.
- Service providers can review FCC Forms 470 by logging in to their accounts in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) and choosing FCC Forms 470 from the Records tab. They can also use the publicly available FCC Form 470 search tools on the Search Tools page of the USAC website. (Note that one tool is specific to FY2016; the other tools are for FY2015 and previous funding years.) If they wish to submit bids, service providers should follow the instructions on the FCC Form 470 and/or the associated Request for Proposal (RFP) if instructions are provided, or submit directly to the applicant if no instructions are provided.

In the July 2 Special Edition News Brief, we announced that the FY2016 FCC Form 470 is now available in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC). Note that this form must be filed online through EPC; there is no longer a paper form.

In preparation for filing in the form in EPC, applicants should take the following steps:

1. The account administrator should log in to EPC, set his or her password, and accept the terms and conditions for using EPC. For assistance with this step, you can watch a short video or refer to the June 26 Special Edition News Brief.

2. The account administrator can then set up additional users within the organization if desired and assign them rights. For assistance with this step, you can watch a short video. The rights that can be assigned to a user are:

- Full Rights: the user can create, sign, and submit forms.
- Partial Rights: the user can create but not sign or submit forms.
- View Only: the user can only view the forms, but cannot make any changes or start any new forms.

3. If you are using a consultant, the account administrator can add the consulting firm to the organization. For assistance with this step, you can watch a short video or refer to the July 6 Special Edition News Brief. You can also assign full, partial, or view only rights to your consultant.

4. Review your contact information for accuracy and update any incorrect information. Also, review the information for your individual schools if you are a school district and your individual libraries if you are a library system. The system will pull this information directly from your organization's profile in EPC when you start your FCC Form 470 online. Also, you can update much of this information in your certified form if necessary by simply updating it in EPC.

5. Read through the document Filing FCC Form 470 before you begin, and take note of the changes to the online FCC Form 470 for FY2016. While we will cover the information required on the FCC Form 470 in a future SL News Brief, you should make particular note of the following changes from previous years:

Request for Proposal (RFP)

- You can issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) in addition to your FCC Form 470. (Note that we use the term "RFP" to describe any document which further explains the services sought, such as a Request for Information, a Request for Quotation, or a Statement of Work.) An RFP is required, however, if you are requesting support for dark fiber or self-provisioned network facilities.
- If you are using an RFP, you must upload it to your online form. You can upload multiple RFP documents and/or remove any documents that you upload in error. However, once you certify the form, you cannot remove any documents.
- If you upload RFP documents, you can indicate which services are covered by a particular document or associate all your services with a single document.
- Service providers will be able to view your FCC Form 470 and your RFP documents in EPC, and your FCC Form 470 and any associated RFPs will also be publicly available. (See above for details.)

Service requests

In this section, you must provide certain details about your services, such as functions, units, and/or minimum and maximum capacities. Many of these fields are no longer free-form text fields; however, the form provides dropdowns and helptext to guide you through the process. Fields marked with a red asterisk (*) are required.

Unlike the FCC Form 471, you can include Category One and Category Two requests on the same form. However, as you complete your service requests, note that the dropdown choices and additional information fields required for each type of service are not generic, but specific to that type of service. Again, the form provides dropdowns and helptext to guide you.

Personal Identification Number (PIN)

A PIN is no longer necessary to certify an FCC Form 470. Any full-rights user can certify the form, because that user has logged in to EPC and accepted the terms and conditions for use of EPC. Partial-rights users can complete but not certify a form.

Additional assistance

If you have any questions or need more information, you can create a customer service case in EPC or call the Client Service Bureau at (888) 203-8100.

Back