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March 4, 2016

TIP OF THE WEEK: Public school districts – please help the libraries that have indicated your district as the one in which their main branch is located by updating the information in your profile. Your information will not be locked and can still be updated before you certify your FCC Form 471 (see below).

Commitments for Funding Years 2015 and 2014

Funding Year 2015. USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2015 Wave 40 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on March 11. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of March 4, FY2015 commitments total over \$3.06 billion.

Funding Year 2014. USAC will release FY2014 Wave 78 FCDLs on March 8. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 1 (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) requests at all discount levels. As of March 4, FY2014 commitments total just under \$2.28 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.

Additional Common Questions Received by CSB

We will continue to send out common questions received by our Client Service Bureau (CSB) along with their answers in SL News Briefs to help applicants trying to navigate and file program forms in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC).

Q. How do I get a user account in EPC?

A. Before a user account can be created, your organization (independent school, independent library, school district, library system, consortium, service provider, consulting firm) must have an account in EPC, and that account must have an account administrator.

- If your organization does not have an account, call the Client Service Bureau at (888) 203-8100 to create one.
- If your organization has an account but no account administrator, CSB can establish one. You can be the account administrator if you provide the appropriate authorization, which can be as simple as a letter on the organization's letterhead or an email from an email address that includes the organization's domain name.

Once you have an account administrator, he or she can create a user account for you.

Q. My account administrator created a user account for me, but my attempts to reset my password have been unsuccessful. What should I do?

A. First, check to make sure you are entering your email address (username) correctly.

- Do not use upper-case (capital) letters. If your email address includes upper-case letters, enter the upper-case letters as lower-case letters (e.g., enter **johnsmith@school02.org** instead of **JohnSmith@School02.org**).
- Check to make sure there are no spaces or other formatting before or after your email address. If you copy and paste your email address, you can inadvertently include spaces or other characters. To be sure, place your cursor immediately before the first letter in your email address and hit the Backspace key, then place your cursor immediately after the last letter in your email address and hit the Delete key.
- Do not copy your email address from the text of the reset password email message from USAC.
- Double-check your email address for accuracy.

Second, verify that you can receive the reset password email message from USAC.

- Add **admin@portal.usac.org** and/or **portal.usac.org** to your safe senders list.
- Look for USAC's email in your junk email or spam folder.
- Check with your IT administrator to see if USAC's email is being blocked.

If you still cannot reset your password, call CSB. They can ask USAC to create a temporary password – usually within 24 hours – and then contact you and provide the temporary password. When you enter the temporary password, the system will prompt you to create a new password. You don't have to wait for an email to arrive, and you don't have a 15-minute deadline for entering your temporary password.

Remember that you will not be able to take any actions within EPC until you have accepted your Terms and Conditions. To do this, go to the News tab and follow the link in the welcome message.

Q. I have my student counts but I am afraid to enter them in my profile because I won't be able to edit them after I have started my FCC Form 471. What should I do?

A. The entity information in your profile is not locked – you can edit it at any time. If you have already started an FCC Form 471, every time any information is updated in your profile, the updated information moves to your form automatically.

At the time you certify your form, the information from your profile that appears in your FCC Form 471 (such as student counts) is locked in that form. You can still update your profile information, but you will have to submit a Receipt Acknowledgment Letter (RAL) correction to update the information in your certified form. Any FCC Form 471 that you certify subsequently will have the profile information that was current at the time that you certified that FCC Form 471, which means that two different forms filed by the same billed entity could have different student counts.

Q. I am a library system. I get an error message in the discount calculation section of my FCC Form 471. What can I do?

A. In general, the system will prevent you from continuing past this section if data are missing from either (1) your profile or (2) the profile of one or more schools in the public school district in which the main branch of your library is located.

- First, check the profiles of your library branches. One and only one should be designated as the main branch, and that one should also have identified the public school district in

which it is located. Each branch must have an urban/rural status (you can enter it manually if it is missing) and its square footage.

- Second, you can contact the public school district and ask them to update their profile information. If necessary, remind them that their information is not locked and can still be updated. USAC is also working to identify entities that are missing information and researching mechanisms to encourage them to take this important step.

Q. I am a service provider. I printed a copy of the Service Provider Annual Certification (SPAC) Form 473 and submitted it for FY2016. Why isn't it showing up on the SPIN Search Tool?

A. In general, program forms for FY2016 will be filed in EPC. Although we have received some paper FCC Forms 473, we are as yet unable to enter them in our system.

NOTE TO APPLICANTS: Some applicants include the filing of the FCC Form 473 by the service provider as a disqualification factor in their bid evaluation. For this application cycle, service providers may not be able to comply with this requirement before you close your competitive bidding process. Please plan accordingly.

Q. I do not understand the concept of an annex. How and why should I set up annexes in my school or library profile?

A. If a school has more than one location separated by a public right-of-way, but all of those locations together are considered one school by the state, those additional locations are annexes of that school. They are associated only with that school, they do not have an entity number, and they share the Category Two budget of that single school. For the purpose of the Category Two budget calculation, that school uses the total student counts for the school and its annexes combined.

Similarly, if a library has more than one location separated by a public right-of-way, but all of these locations together are considered a single library by the state library administrative agency, those additional locations are annexes of that library. They are associated only with that library, they do not have an entity number, and they share the Category Two budget of that single library. For the purpose of the Category Two budget calculation, that library uses the total square footage for the library and its annexes combined.

In the past, we required each separate location to get its own entity number, especially for invoicing purposes because there would be different service delivery addresses. For FY2016, if these locations fit the definition of annexes above, proceed as follows:

- Your account administrator can go to the landing page, click the name of the school or library with annexes, choose "Related Actions" and then "Manage Annexes." Follow the prompts to create an annex.
- We strongly suggest that you do not close or inactivate the entity from the previous year. That way there will not be any issues with invoices that have not yet been submitted for those years.

You can also call the Client Service Bureau at (888) 203-8100 for assistance with any of these issues.

Last Week in "File Along with Me":

- Decide on services and post for bids. [Read More](#)
- Starting your FCC Form 470 (includes videos). [Read More](#)

- Finishing up your FCC Form 470 (includes videos. [Read More](#))

"File Along with Me" is a blog that covers the E-rate Program application process step-by-step, and serves as a schedule you can follow to manage your application. Ready to join us? [Read the Blog](#)

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