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May 23, 2016

Tips for Last-minute Filers – Schools and School Districts

The FY2016 FCC Form 471 filing window closes at 11:59:59 pm EDT this Thursday, May 26, for **schools and school districts only**.

The filing window closes for consortia and libraries on July 21, 2016.

Applicants must certify their forms before the window closes to be considered in-window. In some cases, applicants may have to certify with some information missing in order to file in window and then include the information in a Receipt Acknowledgment Letter (RAL) modification afterwards (see below). Remember, if your application is not filed before the filing window closes, you run the risk of not receiving funding.

Here are some tips for last-minute filers:

1. DO NOT wait until the last day of the window to file your application or request help, as you may not have time to complete and certify your application before the window closes.

If you start now, you will have more time to think through any issues that arise, and contact us for help if you need it.

2. If you need help from the Client Service Bureau (CSB), call us at (888) 203-8100. The best times to call are during the extended hours and at non-peak times.

CSB hours through the close of the school/school district window:

Monday, May 23: 8:00 am – 10:00 pm EDT

Tuesday, May 24: 8:00 am – 10:00 pm EDT

Wednesday, May 25: 8:00 am – 10:00 pm EDT

Thursday, May 26 at 8:00 am – Friday, May 27 at 12:30 am EDT

Remember that the following times are our busiest:

- Weekdays from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm EDT
- Weekdays from 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm EDT

3. If the information in the PDF form view of your application (either draft or final) does not appear to be correct or complete, proceed by reviewing the information in the detailed form view.

The detail in the screens you complete as you fill out the form is the information contained in our database. Occasionally the draft PDF form view is incorrectly formatted or appears to be missing information. We will base our review on the information in the database.

You can always print each page of the form view if you need a record of your submission and the PDF does not contain everything you need.

4. If your entity should be an independent school but was moved into the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) as a school district, ask CSB to create a single school under the school district with a new entity number to represent your school.

A school district billed entity has no fields for student counts, and therefore has no discount calculation. Creating the school underneath the existing school district (even though technically the school is not part of a district) will allow you to enter student counts and other discount-related information in order for the system to calculate your Category One (C1) and Category Two (C2) discounts and your C2 budget.

5. If your entity should be a school district but was moved into EPC as a school, ask CSB to create a school district with a new entity number and associate your school with that school district.

Other schools that are also part of your school district can then be associated with your school district as well, and the appropriate C1 and C2 discounts can be calculated for the school district and the C2 budgets for each school.

6. If your service provider does not have a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) or the SPIN was not moved into EPC, use interim SPIN 143666666 to complete your FRN.

You can update the SPIN later by submitting a RAL modification or during Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review.

7. There are three updates you must make in your profile before you can complete the information required on your FCC Form 471. Do those first before you start to file or, if you are blocked, exit the form, enter the information in your profile, and then return to your form.

- **Discount information.** For your independent school or each school in your school district, you must enter the student counts and other discount-related information directly in each school's profile. All of these fields must be completed. If you don't see an urban/rural status for a school, you can provide that status yourself. (**PATH:** From your landing page, click on the name of a school in your school district, then the "Manage Organization" button.)
- **Contract record.** Each contract you intend to cite on an FRN must have a record in your profile containing the information for that contract. You can also upload a copy of the contract in the contract record. Note that you cannot edit a contract record after you submit it; instead, create a new contract record. (**PATH:** From your landing page, click your organization name, then click "Related Actions," then "Contracts," then the "Manage Contracts" button, then the green "Add a New Contract" button.)
- **Connectivity questions.** For your independent school or each school in your school district, you must answer some questions about the state of Internet connectivity. You will be blocked from certifying your form if these questions are not answered. (**PATH:** From your landing page, click your organization name, then click "Related Actions," then "Manage Connectivity Questions.")

8. If you started your form before the ability to indicate fractional line allocations was added to EPC, choose one entity, allocate the line to that entity, and then describe the correct allocation in the FRN-level narrative.

You can also provide this information in a RAL modification (see below).

9. If you can complete your form but some of the information is incomplete or incorrect, complete the form, certify it before the window closes, and then submit a RAL modification.

In general, RAL modifications are meant to correct information that was entered incorrectly on a form. However, to make sure that applicants can submit their FCC Forms 471 before the window closes, we will also accept information through a RAL modification that the applicant was blocked or otherwise unable to enter.

Here are just a few examples of issues you can address through a RAL modification:

- An entity that is part of your school district but for some reason cannot be added to your profile.
- A product or service that you believe to be eligible but you are not sure which dropdowns to choose to accurately characterize the product or service. (Make the choice that comes closest to the description of the product or service so that you can complete the form.)
- A line or cost allocation that you believe should be made but that you cannot figure out how to enter it. (Again, make the choice that comes closest to your understanding of the situation.)

After you have certified your form, prepare a document that describes the situation that you were not able to completely address in the form. Submit a RAL modification and attach the document to your form at the application level. PIA can then review this information as part of the review of your application. (**PATH:** From your landing page, located your certified form in the **FCC Forms** section and click on its nickname or application number. Click "Related Actions" and then "Submit Modification Request (RAL)." To attach your document at the application level, click the "Application" button, choose "Application Details" from the sub-category dropdown, click "Continue," click the "Edit Application" button, and upload your document from the **Supporting Documentation** section.)

Note, however, that you must still comply with program rules. For example, you cannot choose a service provider, sign a contract, or file and certify an FCC Form 471 if the 28-day waiting period required for your competitive bidding process has not yet elapsed.

10. If you are a consortium of independent schools and/or school districts, your filing window deadline is July 21, 2016.

You can certainly encourage your member schools and school districts to complete their profile information so that they can certify their FCC Forms 471. However, if your applicant type is "consortium," you are not subject to the school/school district filing window deadline.

Note that the filing window deadline for libraries is also July 21, 2016.

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