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June 24, 2016

TIP OF THE WEEK: APPLICANTS: To enable USAC to send you direct BEAR reimbursements, you must have certified – and USAC must have successfully processed – an FCC Form 498 in EPC. Be sure to allow enough time before you submit an invoice for USAC to request and process any additional documentation needed for your FCC Form 498 to be approved.

Commitments for Funding Years 2016 and 2015

Funding Year 2016. USAC will not be releasing a Funding Year (FY) 2016 wave this week. This wave is delayed due to a technical challenge with Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) impacting a small number of applicants and service providers. We anticipate that we will run another wave next week.

If you are impacted by the FCDL challenge, we will be sending you information specific to your situation early next week with further instructions.

Please contact the Client Service Bureau at (888) 203-8100 if you have any questions.

Funding Year 2015. USAC will release FY2015 Wave 56 FCDLs on June 30. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of June 24, FY2015 commitments total over \$3.3 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.

Remember that FCDLs for FY2015 will continue to be printed and mailed to applicants and service providers. Service providers who have signed up to receive electronic notifications will continue to have electronic notification files emailed to them.

Reimbursement Process – How to Get a PIN after June 30

Starting July 1, 2016, USAC will be able to reimburse applicants directly for the discount portion of the costs for approved eligible products and services that they have paid for in full. (Before July 1, reimbursements were made by USAC to the service provider, who was then required to pass the reimbursement on to the applicant.)

In order for applicants to be reimbursed, the following must first occur:

- The applicant has certified – and USAC has successfully processed – an FCC Form 486.
- The service provider has certified an FCC Form 473 for the appropriate funding year.
- The applicant has certified – and USAC has successfully processed – an FCC Form 498.
- The applicant must have a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

- The applicant has paid for the services in full.

This week we will talk more about the PIN.

Applicants will use the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) for most of their program activities. However, invoices will still be completed and certified in the earlier (legacy) system. To file an invoice in the legacy system, applicants will need a PIN.

A PIN is a unique number assigned by USAC to the authorized person listed on an FCC Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form – to enables that person to certify BEAR Forms online. PINs are considered equivalent to a handwritten signature.

- Before July 1, PINs will be issued based on the filing of a BEAR Form on paper. The system looks at the last name of the authorized person and the Billed Entity Number (BEN), and issues a PIN to that person if it has not already issued a PIN to that specific surname/BEN combination.
- Starting July 1, applicants must request a PIN directly from USAC.

Please note the following:

- If you have a PIN now, you can use that PIN after June 30 to certify BEAR Forms.
- If you had a PIN but can't find it, you can request a new PIN ("regenerate" a PIN) by calling our Client Service Bureau (CSB) at (888) 203-8100.
- If you don't have a PIN as of July 1, follow the process below.

How to obtain a PIN after July 1

First, call CSB. The agent will ask you to provide certain information for each user that needs a PIN. Remember that the PIN user must be authorized to make all of the certifications on the BEAR Form. CSB has a template prepared to make it easier for you to provide the information. We will also put a copy of the template on the [Personal Identification Number \(PIN\)](#) page on the USAC website.

Here is the list of information we need to create a PIN:

- Billed Entity Number (BEN) - this must be an independent school, independent library, school district, library system, or consortium in EPC.
- Last Name - the last name of the authorized person requesting the PIN.
- Entity Name - the name of the billed entity.
- Certifier Full Name - the first and last name of the authorized person.
- Certifier Title - the job title of the authorized person.
- Certifier Employer Name - the name of the organization that employs the authorized person.
- Request Date - the date that the PIN request is submitted.
- Street Address - the street address where the PIN should be mailed.
- Street Address 2 (optional)
- City
- State
- Zip
- Zip plus 4 (optional)
- E-Mail - the email address of the authorized user.

The authorized person can then log in to EPC and open a customer service case to send the request to USAC.

To open a customer service case:

- Log in to EPC.
- From the **Actions** tab, choose "Contact Us."
- The fields "Nickname," "Description," and "Priority" are required. You should create a nickname that will be easy to remember.
- For "Topic," choose "FCC Form 472 - BEAR."
- For "Subtopic," choose "Other."
- You can leave all other fields blank.
- Below the "Documents" header, click the "Choose File" button. Locate the spreadsheet you have completed. You can upload it by double-clicking the file name, or by clicking the "Open" button.
- After the spreadsheet has been successfully uploaded, click "Submit" at the bottom of the page to submit your request.

USAC will then enter this information in its system, and the system will generate a PIN. Each PIN will be mailed in a separate, secure mailer to the address provided for the authorized person specific to that PIN.

Remember that you do not need to request a new PIN if you already have one.

Last Week in "File Along with Me":

- Troubleshooting - Is Your Discount Information Blank? [Read More](#)
- Troubleshooting - Other Reasons for a Missing Discount. [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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