

[Back](#)

August 12, 2016

**TIP OF THE WEEK: APPLICANTS: When you are completing your FCC Form 498, remember to enter your bank account number first and your bank's routing number second.** Transposing these two numbers is the most common mistake applicants make, and therefore the most common reason for delays in processing this form.

## Commitments for Funding Years 2016 and 2015

**Funding Year 2016.** USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2016 Wave 8 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on August 12. This wave includes commitments for approved applications for all service types and at all discount levels. As of August 12, FY2016 commitments total over \$297.0 million.

On the date the FCDLs are issued, you can access your FCDL notification from the **Notifications** section of your landing page in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC).

**Funding Year 2015.** USAC will release FY2015 Wave 61 FCDLs on August 16. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of August 12, FY2015 commitments total over \$3.31 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. FCDLs for FY2015 will continue to be printed and mailed to applicants and service providers, and emailed to service providers who have signed up to receive electronic notifications.

## USAC's FCC Form 498 Review Process

Applicants who want to request reimbursements directly from USAC by submitting an FCC Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form, must first certify an FCC Form 498, Service Provider and Billed Entity Identification Number and General Contact Information Form. USAC must review and approve each FCC Form 498 before the applicant can receive a 498 ID. The 498 ID will then be featured on each BEAR Form submitted by the applicant.

In the [December 4, 2015 SL News Brief](#) we described the filing process for the FCC Form 498, and in the [May 20, 2016 SL News Brief](#) we provided a summary of the information you need to have on hand in order to complete your form. This week we will cover USAC's FCC Form 498 review process.

USAC's review process includes verification of the following information:

- Banking account number
- Routing number
- FCC Registration Number (FCC RN)
- D-U-N-S Number

- Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or Tax Identification Number (Tax ID)

When we are ready to start our review, we will send an email asking you for specific documentation. Follow the submission instructions in the email to submit your documentation. We suggest that you [upload your documentation](#), but you can also fax it to us at (888) 637-6226.

We then compare the information we receive with the entries on your FCC Form 498 and our other sources of information.

- If the information matches, we can approve your form.
- If the information does not match or is not consistent, this can delay our processing of your form or cause your form to be rejected.

### **Bank account number and routing number**

To verify the bank account number and bank routing number, USAC requests a copy of a voided check or a statement from your financial institution that includes the bank name and bank account number. The name on the account must match the name on the FCC Form 498, and the bank account information must match the information on the voided check or bank statement.

If you do not have a voided check or bank statement that meets these requirements – for example, if reimbursements must be deposited with another entity, such as a town or county government – call USAC at (888) 641-8722 and choose Option 5 (FCC Form 498) and then Option 1 or 2 (questions about the form) for assistance. We can help you identify acceptable documentation that will meet our requirements or provide you other assistance.

### **FCC RN and FEIN or Tax ID**

Our system will also verify that the FEIN or Tax ID number you report on the FCC Form 498 matches the number you reported on your FCC RN on file with the Federal Communications Commission. We will notify you if there is a mismatch. The mismatch must be corrected before we can process your form.

If we notify you that your FCC RN does not appear to match the entity filing the FCC Form 498, you need to verify that you have entered the correct FCC RN. You can search the [Search Public Information](#) section of the CORES website and search for the correct FCC RN using your FEIN (or Tax ID number), business name, or last name.

To modify your FCC RN, you may need to modify both your organization's profile and your FCC Form 498.

To modify your organization's profile:

- Log in to your EPC account.
- From your landing page, click the organization main page.
- Click "Manage Organization."
- You can now edit the FCC RN in your organization's profile.
- Click "Submit" to save your information.

From this point, you can modify your FCC Form 498.

- Click the **Records** tab at the top of the page.

- Choose "FCC Form 498" from the list of entries. Note: You must have School or Library Official or a General Financial Contact rights assigned to you by your account administrator to be able to modify your form.
- Click the nickname of the form you want to modify.
- Click the "Modify FCC Form 498" button at the top of the form.
- Navigate to the third page of the form using the "Save and Continue" button.
- Under the "Organization Number," update the FCC RN.
- Continue to click "Save and Continue" until you have submitted your form.
- Re-certify your form.

### **How to ensure that entities who have changed status can still submit BEAR Forms**

In the transition from our legacy system to EPC, the status of some entities changed. For example, a school district that used the entity number of its administration building to file program forms in the legacy system may have created a new entity number for the school district in EPC. In this and other similar cases, the entity number of the previous year applicant (in our example, the administration building entity number) cannot file BEAR Forms for FY2015 and previous funding years.

To remedy this, a billed entity (independent school, independent library, school district, library system, or consortium) filing an FCC Form 498 should proceed as follows:

- Go to the section of the form marked "Block 14: Billed Entity Number/FCC Form 498 Association."
- Add the entity numbers – one at a time – of any entities that will be filing BEAR Forms for your entity for FY2015 and previous funding years.
- After you enter each entity number, check to make sure that the entity name that appears in the "Billed Entity Name" field is the correct entity.

NOTE: This system enhancement was added recently. If you have been unable to enter these entity numbers in your FCC Form 498, please try again. Remember that you must re-certify your FCC Form 498 after you make any modification or change.

### **Notification of successful review**

When we have completed our review of your documentation, we will approve your FCC Form 498 and send an email to the General Financial Contact. These email notifications are sent in batches once or twice a week.

Because the notifications are not sent every day, the applicant may be unable to start a BEAR Form until the day following the email, or the applicant may be able to complete a BEAR Form before the email arrives. In either case, if the 498 ID appears on the BEAR Form, the FCC Form 498 has been approved and the applicant can complete and certify the BEAR Form.

### **Common problems**

Here are the most common reasons for processing delays:

- **The bank routing number and the bank account number are transposed.** While the bank routing number appears first on a check, the applicant enters the bank account number first on the FCC Form 498.
- **The applicant modifies the FCC Form 498 and does not re-certify it.** Every time an applicant updates an entry or makes any other change on a certified FCC Form 498, the form

must be re-certified, or its status will show as "In Progress" and the applicant cannot file BEAR Forms with the updated information. If you make changes and re-certify the form, be sure to email USAC or call us at (888) 641-8722 and let us know that the form is ready for our review. We will then send you an email after we have re-approved your form.

- **USAC has not received the requested supporting documentation.** If you have submitted your documentation and do not receive a response from USAC after three days, you can [email USAC](#) to check on the status.
- **The information you have provided is not consistent with the information on your FCC RN.** We will provide you with an explanation if we reject your form. If you need help, call us at (888) 641-8722 and choose Option 5 (FCC Form 498) and then Option 1 or 2 (questions about the form).

If you have any questions, you can [email Customer Support](#) or call us between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm ET Monday through Friday at (888) 641-8722.

### Last Week in "File Along with Me":

- What happens after your funding commitment is issued. [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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[Back](#)