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Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

April 28, 2017

TIP OF THE WEEK: You have less than two weeks to certify your FCC Form 471 in EPC for FY2017. May 11, 2017 is the last possible day to certify an FCC Form 471 within the filing window.

Commitments for Funding Year 2016

Funding Year 2016. USAC is scheduled to release Funding Year (FY) 2016 Wave 45 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on May 4. This wave includes commitments for approved applications for all service types and at all discount levels. As of April 28, FY2016 commitments total over \$2.49 billion.

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).

FY2017 Application Filing Window Reminders

The FY2017 FCC Form 471 application filing window closes at 11:59 PM EDT on Thursday, May 11, 2017. Below are reminders in a question-and-answer format for applicants who are still working on their FCC Forms 471.

FCC Form 470 and competitive bidding

What is the 28-day waiting period?

- You must wait at least 28 calendar days after you certify your FCC Form 470 before you choose a service provider, sign a contract (if applicable), and certify your FCC Form 471. You can wait longer than 28 days.

Is a Request for Proposal (RFP) required?

- E-rate program rules do not specifically require you to have an RFP or other formal bidding document. However, if applicable state or local competitive bidding or procurement rules or regulations require an RFP or other formal bidding document, you must comply with those rules. Note that "RFP documents" – which includes any bidding documents that describe your project and requested services in more detail than that provided on the FCC Form 470 – must be attached to the FCC Form 470, even if they are created after the form is certified.

What if I missed the April 13 deadline?

- April 13, 2017 is the last day that you could certify an FCC Form 470, wait 28 calendar days, and then complete all of the FCC Form 471-related activities on the last day of the application filing window. If your FCC Form 470 was certified after April 13, wait the required 28 calendar days, choose your service provider, sign a contract (if applicable) and, after you certify your FCC Form 471, file a request with the FCC to waive the window filing requirement. Refer to the [July 29, 2016 SL News Brief](#) for information on how to file a waiver request. Please note that your waiver request may or may not be granted.

I'm not getting any bids. Can I solicit bids?

- Yes, you can solicit bids. Note also that if you are currently receiving service (e.g., monthly telephone service or Internet access), you can ask your current service provider to send you an email or other document stating that they are willing to continue to provide service at your current rates and terms for FY2017. You can consider that document as a bid response.

I am a service provider. How do I respond to FCC Forms 470/RFPs that I'm interested in?

- You should contact the contact person identified on the FCC Form 470. The applicant may have also provided a specific method for submitting bids in the FCC Form 470 and/or an RFP document. Do not submit bid responses to USAC.

Contracts

Am I required to have a contract?

- In general, services such as monthly telephone service and Internet access can be provided under tariff or on a month-to-month basis without a contract. We would expect to see a contract or other legally binding agreement for other types of service.

How do I enter my contract details in my FCC Form 471?

- To enter information about a contract, the applicant creates a contract record in its profile. To do this, go to the organization's main page (not the landing page) in EPC, choose **Contracts** from the left-hand menu, and follow the prompts. You can also upload a copy of your contract. When you are entering the details of a funding request in your FCC Form 471, you can search for and cite the contract record that you created in your profile. Refer to the [Contracts video](#) on the USAC website for a demonstration of the process.

I exercised a voluntary extension to my existing contract for service through June 30, 2018. Do I have to create a new contract record?

- No. When you cite the contract on your funding request, you will have an option to enter the last date of service under that contract for the funding year. As long as the voluntary extension option is clearly included in the contract, we only need the date that the extension expires.

EPC access

I am a new user and I have not received my email to log in to EPC. What do I do?

- You do not need to wait for the first email to arrive. After your account administrator has created you as a user, go to **portal.usac.org**, enter your email address, and click "Reset Password." If you do not receive the second email inviting you to reset your password, contact your account administrator or the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 888-203-8100. You can also watch the [Logging In](#) video demonstration on the USAC website to see how the process works.

Can I update the answers to my connectivity questions even though EPC profiles are locked?

- Yes. The answers to the connectivity questions are not locked and can be updated. Go to your organization's main page (not the landing page), choose **Related Actions** from the left-hand menu, then **Manage Connectivity Questions**. You do not need to update your answers if they have not changed from last year. The FCC Form 471 will automatically pull your answers into the form right before you arrive at the Certifications section of the form.

FCC Form 471

My urban/rural status is incorrect. How do I fix it?

- You can provide this information through a Receipt Acknowledgment Letter (RAL) modification after your FCC Form 471 has been certified. Go to your form in EPC, choose **Related Actions** from the left-hand menu, and then choose **Submit Modification Request (RAL)**. You can then access the entity or entities you need to update. Remember that modifications that you submit will not change the form, and must be reviewed and approved during the application review process.

I can't change my student counts in my profile. What should I do?

- Submit a RAL modification as described above. Remember that modifications that you submit will not change the form, and must be reviewed and approved during the application review process.

I exited my FCC Form 471 without completing it. How do I get back to my form?

- If you have not yet provided all of the required information on the form, EPC will create a task for you in the **My Tasks** list on your landing page to return to the form and complete your data entry. If you have provided all of the required information and then clicked **Send for Certification**, EPC will create a task in the **My Tasks** list on your organization's landing page to certify the form.

Why can't I certify my FCC Form 471?

- You are probably not a full-rights user for your organization. Check with your account administrator.

How do I correct information on my FCC Form 471 after it is certified?

- Submit a RAL modification. For more specific guidance on the path to follow for a specific modification, refer to the RAL Modification section of the [March 31 SL News Brief](#).

What if I miss the May 11 deadline?

- Be sure to wait at least 28 days after you certified your FCC Form 470 before you choose a service provider and sign a contract (if applicable). Then complete and certify your FCC Form 471. After your form has been certified, you will receive an out-of-window message. You can then choose to request a waiver from the FCC of the window filing requirement. Refer to the [July 29, 2016 SL News Brief](#) for information on how to file a waiver request. Please note that your waiver request may or may not be granted.

Document retention

What competitive bidding documents do I need to keep?

- Keep all documents used during the competitive bidding process such as: RFPs and RFP documents, all winning and losing bids, bid evaluation worksheets, and any other documentation related to service provider selection. Note that service providers who submitted losing bids are not required to retain any documents.

What documents related to my FCC Form 471 do I need to keep?

- Keep all documents you relied upon to complete and certify the FCC Form 471 such as: contracts and legally binding agreements including any amendments and addendums, documentation of National School Lunch Program (NSLP) eligibility or alternative discount mechanism(s) used to support the discount calculation, documents that support the necessary resources certification, budgets, and documentation used to enter the descriptions of eligible products and services on funding requests.

How long do I need to keep documents?

- Keep all documentation for at least 10 years after the last date of service delivered. We suggest that you keep a paper or electronic file of documents as you produce them so that you can locate them easily if needed for application review or other purposes.

For more information:

Yesterday we conducted a webinar that covered the basics of the application filing process. You can view a recording of the webinar by clicking the registration link below and providing your basic contact information.

Navigating the Application Filing Process
[Register Now!](#)

This webinar is also available in the [Online Learning Library](#).

CSB is available to answer your questions. You can open a customer service case in EPC or call them at 888-203-8100 from 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM EDT weekdays.

Update on Search Tools

Yesterday we deployed updates to the [FRN Status Tool](#), the [FCC Form 471 Download Tool for FY2016](#), and the [Search Commitments Tool](#). These tools now feature current data that takes into account appeals, service substitutions, and Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes that have gone through a post-commitment wave and been issued a Revised FCDL (RFCDL). Tools that feature

data only from FY2015 and previous funding years, such as the [Data Retrieval Tool](#), will continue to function as they have previously, as will updates to data from funding years before FY2016 in the Search Commitments Tool.

- The committed amount for each Funding Request Number (FRN) will be updated to reflect the current amount after any changes due to the post-commitment wave.
- FRN-level data, such as the updated SPIN, service type, costs, and discount level will reflect the approved post-commitment changes.
- The FRN Status Tool will list the post-commitment wave number and RFCDL date. NOTE: The RFCDL comments and rationale will be added in a subsequent release.
- If a new FRN is created (for example, due to a mid-year change of service providers), the new FRN will be associated with the original FCC Form 471 and will appear in all three tools.

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