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## Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

May 12, 2017

**TIP OF THE WEEK:** Read the guidance below about activities you should be undertaking now that the FY2017 application filing window has closed. These suggestions will allow you to request any necessary changes to your application up front and to prepare for the review of your application.

### Commitments for Funding Years 2016 and 2015

**Funding Year 2016.** USAC is scheduled to release Funding Year (FY) 2016 Wave 47 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on May 18. This wave includes commitments for approved applications for all service types and at all discount levels. As of May 12, FY2016 commitments total over \$2.62 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).

**Funding Year 2015.** USAC will release FY2015 Wave 77 FCDLs on May 16. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of May 12, FY2015 commitments total over \$3.31 billion.

The day after the wave runs, 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.

### Next Steps Related to the FY2017 Application Filing Window

The application filing window for FY2017 has closed. We are providing a few reminders below for actions you should take while the application process is still fresh in your mind.

#### **Review your FCC Form 471 and submit a RAL modification to correct or update information.**

We want to call your attention to a few areas and fields that you should double-check for accuracy. If you find any information that should be corrected or updated, you can [submit a Receipt Acknowledgment Letter \(RAL\) modification](#). For specific guidance on submitting a RAL modification, refer to the [March 31 SL News Brief](#).

**Entity information.** If your entity profile was locked before you could provide updates to your organization and/or your member entities, you can file a RAL modification. Specifically, you should pay attention to the following:

- **School districts:** Review the contact information for your school district and each of your individual schools. For each school in your district, review the actual or estimated student counts and – if you have one – your approved Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) percentage, the urban/rural status, and the attributes (such as public, private, or tribal).
- **Library systems:** Review the contact information for your library system and each of your individual library branches, bookmobiles, and kiosks. For each library in your library system, review the square footage, the urban/rural status, and the attributes (such as public, private, or tribal). You must have identified one library as the main branch and identify the school district in which it is located.
- **Independent schools and libraries:** You will have both contact information for yourself and also your entity information necessary for the discount and Category Two budget calculations that are required for an individual school or library as noted above.
- **Consortia:** Although consortia cannot change profile information for their members, they should review their own contact information and the list of consortium members they reported as receiving or sharing services on each FCC Form 471 they filed. They can also provide any other information that may be necessary for USAC to correctly process their application.

**FCC Form(s) 470 you cited on a funding request.** Applicants citing an FY2016 or FY2017 FCC Form 470 filed and certified their form in EPC. However, applicants with multi-year contracts or who started their competitive bidding process before the FY2016 FCC Form 470 was available in EPC may be citing a form from a previous funding year. For these earlier forms, check to be sure that each 15-digit application number you provided was for the correct FCC Form 470 that was posted for the correct service type and for which you waited at least 28 days before you chose your service provider.

Also, for FCC Forms 470 not filed in EPC, make sure they are certified. You can check the status of an FCC Form 470 filed for a funding year before FY2016 with the [Search FCC Form 470](#) tool, and you can certify an uncertified form with the [Certify FCC Form 470](#) tool.

**FCC Registration Number.** Check this 10-digit number to make sure it is correct, especially if this is the first year you have filed E-rate program forms.

**Costs and cost allocations.** Check your math. The pre-discount costs of your funding requests should match the information in your contract(s) or other documentation you used to prepare your form.

If you notice any incorrect information in the above or any other fields, we suggest that you [submit a RAL modification](#).

**Review and archive the documentation that you prepared for your competitive bidding process and that you relied on to complete your FCC Form 471.**

As part of your application filing process, you may have produced, accessed, or received a number of documents. You may need to refer to one or more of these documents at various times during the application process, for example, to prepare for a review or an audit or to file an FCC Form 486, an invoice, or an appeal. If you collect and store this documentation in a manner that allows you – or your successor – to easily access and produce these documents, you can respond much more quickly to an USAC requests.

You have already provided some of this information to USAC – your RFP document(s) in your FCC Form 470, your contract information in your profile – but you should keep your own copies as well.

Some documents that might be easier to find and store now but that might be more difficult to locate later include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Competitive bidding

- Request for Proposal (RFP) and RFP documents
- Public notice of RFP issued (if a public notice is required by your state or local procurement laws)
- Winning and losing bids
- Questions and answers provided to potential bidders – emails, supporting documents, or other correspondence produced as part of the competitive bidding process
- Completed bid evaluation matrices or other documents that show how the bids received were evaluated and the winning bid chosen
- Contracts and/or legally binding agreements, with evidence of board approvals (if board approvals are required by your state or local procurement laws)
- If there is a restriction that prevents services and costs from being made public, a copy of the precise cite to the law, statute, local rule, or court order identifying the restriction.

- Discount calculations

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) data sources
- Income surveys or other surveys
- Direct certification documentation and other documents related to participation in CEP or other provision(s) of NLSP
- Other documentation used to compute student counts.

- Supplemental documentation

- Consulting agreements or letters of agency
- Draft and/or final budgets
- Receipt Notification Letter (RNL) modifications submitted
- RAL modifications submitted
- Any questions received from PIA and your responses.

We suggest you take the time now to organize and file all documents related to your application in a manner that will allow you to easily locate and retrieve them for any future needs. For guidance on how to organize your documentation, review the [E-rate Binder Table of Contents](#) and the [Samples and Examples](#) on the USAC website.

**Prepare for PIA review.**

Now that you have all of your documentation in order, you should be in good shape for Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review. During PIA review, we verify certain information on your form, and we may have additional questions to help us in our review. We will notify you by email and in your EPC **News** feed that there are PIA questions waiting for you to answer.

This would be a good time to alert your service provider that you may need help with network diagrams, product descriptions, and other data that they will be able to supply.

Please respond promptly to any PIA requests for information or documentation. In general, you have 15 days to respond.

- PIA will send you a reminder if we haven't heard from you in seven days after our initial request. We will also alert your state E-rate coordinator that we are waiting for a response.
- We do want to get decisions out as quickly as possible. If after 15 days we have not heard from you, we may act on the information we already have to make a funding decision. Providing us with the information we request allows us to make a more informed decision.
- You can request an extension if you need more time. Your first request for additional time to respond is automatically granted for an additional seven days. Subsequent requests must be reviewed by PIA before they can be approved.

**Monitor your contact email address and your EPC account.**

Because we use your email address and your EPC account to ask questions and to receive your answers during the PIA review process, the contact person you identified on your form should regularly monitor their email address and EPC account. You can also use a RAL modification to update your holiday/vacation contact information in case we should use a different email address or telephone number during a specific period of time, or if you have empowered someone else to answer questions on your behalf.

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