

[Back](#)



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

December 22, 2017

TIP OF THE WEEK: Make a note of the window open and close dates and window-related tasks and put it somewhere prominent before you leave for the holidays. This will help you get started on your application process (or help you pick up where you left off) when you return to the office. Remember the FY2018 FCC Form 471 application filing window opens Thursday, January 11, 2018, at noon EST and closes on Thursday, March 22, 2018, at 11:59 PM EDT.

No SL News Brief next Friday, December 29, 2017. Also, the Client Service Bureau (CSB) is closed today, December 22 and Friday, December 25.

Commitments for Funding Year 2017

Funding Year 2017. USAC is scheduled to release Funding Year (FY) 2017 Wave 31 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on December 29. As of December 22, FY2017 commitments total over \$2.01 billion. (Please note that last week's total should have read "over \$1.99 billion" – Wave 29 was accidentally counted twice.)

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

Updates to the FY2018 FCC Form 471

There are a few updates to note on the FCC Form 471 for FY2018. We are providing the information now so that you know what to expect.

In general, the changes are minor.

Continuing the voice phase-down

In FY2018, the highest discount for voice services is 10 percent. An applicant would have to be eligible for a 90 percent discount for other Category One services to receive a 10 percent discount on voice services.

Applicants will receive a warning message if they try to create a Funding Request Number (FRN) for voice services (or any other services, for that matter) that features a zero-dollar (\$0.00) funding

commitment request. If they continue, they will be unable to submit their form until they remove all zero-dollar FRNs.

Remember that discounts on voice services go away entirely in FY2019.

Preparing for inflation rate changes

When USAC receives the inflation factor some time in first quarter 2018, we will be able to quickly update the information in EPC and calculate Category Two budgets for FY2018. Please be aware, however, that we do not have this information yet, and we do not expect to have it early in the filing window.

Entering service start dates

The service start date for an FRN cannot be earlier than the first day of the funding year, which for FY2018 is July 1, 2018.

USAC has added a detailed hover-text window where the service start date field appears on the FCC Form 471. The hover text explains in detail when installations can start earlier than July 1, but cautions the applicant that the service start date cannot be before July 1.

If the applicant tries to enter a service start date earlier than July 1, the system will not allow it.

Updates to COPY FRN function

Last year, the COPY FRN feature copied everything from the FRN identified by the applicant. This led to problems with service start dates and service end dates showing up for FY2016 if the applicant copied an FY2016 FRN.

Applicants must now review each screen in the copied FRN. The system will not automatically copy the service start and service end dates, so these must be entered by the applicant. Remember that you cannot enter a service start date before July 1, 2018.

Citing FCC Forms 470

When an applicant tries to cite an FCC Form 470, the system will check for the information about that form in EPC.

- If the FCC Form 470 has not been posted for at least 28 days, you will not be able to cite the form. If it is the form you wish to cite, you must wait until 28 days have passed after the form was certified before you can cite it. Remember that you cannot select your service provider or sign a contract before you have waited the full 28 days.
- Also, if the FCC Form 470 posts for a service type (Voice, Internet Access and/or Telecommunications, Internal Connections, Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections, or Managed Internal Broadband Services) that is different from the service type you are requesting on an FRN, you will not be able to cite to that FCC Form 470. If you are filing your FCC Form 470 now and you are not sure which of two service types is the correct one to use to list your services, list your services under both service types and put a note in the narrative that you are not looking for duplicative services, but that you have included your information in both service types.

Note also that if you are creating a contract record in your profile, you cannot cite an FCC Form 470 that has not been posted for at least 28 days.

Additional helper and hover text

Where appropriate, we have added additional helper text and hover text to assist applicants in filing their forms. We have included this additional text everywhere that applicants seem to have trouble or have told us they had trouble. We hope that you find this additional text useful.

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[Back](#)