Universal Service Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

August 23, 2019

> **TIP OF THE WEEK:** Applicants who receive a Revised Funding Commitment Decision Letter (RFCDL) should wait at least 48 hours before submitting an invoice related to changes approved in the letter. This will give our systems sufficient time to synchronize the updated RFCDL information so that your invoice can be processed successfully.

Commitments for Funding Year 2019

Funding Year 2019. USAC released Funding Year (FY) 2019 Wave 18 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on August 22. As of August 23, FY2019 commitments total over $1.50 billion.

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).

Obtaining a Personal Identification Number (PIN)

Applicants who want to request reimbursements directly from USAC by submitting an FCC Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form, must have two identifying numbers that are issued by USAC:

- **An applicant 498 ID.** An applicant 498 ID is a nine-digit number starting with 443- that appears at the top of the online BEAR Form after you log in. Applicants obtain this number by certifying an FCC Form 498, Service Provider and Billed Entity Identification Number and General Contact Information Form, and submitting proof of their banking information to USAC. For more information on filing the FCC Form 498, you can refer to the August 2 SL News Brief.
- **A Personal Identification Number (PIN).** A PIN is a six- to eight-digit identifier – a combination of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters – that applicants use to log in to the online BEAR Form. Applicants can request this number by downloading and completing a PIN Request Template and attaching it to a customer service case in EPC.

In this this issue we will discuss PINs in more detail.

Using an existing PIN

Applicants who already have a PIN that they can use to log in to the online BEAR Form can continue to use that PIN. You do not need to request a new PIN.

If you know that USAC issued you a PIN in the past but you cannot locate it, you can call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 888-203-8100 and ask that your PIN be regenerated. The system will create a new (replacement) PIN for you, and we will email you the new PIN within two weeks of receiving your request.

Requesting a new PIN

Applicants who have never received a PIN can request one by following the steps below.

Please note that a PIN is specific to both a Billed Entity Number (BEN) and last name. This means that:

- If you are filing BEAR Forms for more than one billed entity, you will need a separate PIN for each billed entity.
- If someone else with the same last name as yours already has a PIN for a specific BEN, we cannot issue you a PIN under your last name. Generally, in this case, we ask if we can use your first initial and last name as your last name. For example, John Smith could use JSmith for his last name if we have already issued a PIN to Mary Smith for the same BEN.

To request a PIN:

- Download the PIN Request Template from the USAC website.
- Complete one line for each PIN you are requesting.
- Create a customer service case in EPC, with the words "PIN Request" in the title. Choose the topic "FCC Form 472 - BEAR."
- Upload your completed template to the customer service case and click the **Submit** button.
- We will process your request and issue you a PIN within two weeks of receiving your request.

Here are some general tips to avoid common mistakes on the PIN Request Template:

- Read each column header before entering your data so that your entries are appropriate for that column.
- Do not add or delete columns on the template. If you do not have an entry for a field, leave the field blank.
- Eliminate any spaces before or after your entries, especially in the **Last Name** and **E-Mail** fields.
- Review your work a final time before you submit it.

And here are some specific tips for correctly entering data in certain fields:

- **BEN**: Make sure the entry in this field is the BEN for the entity you enter in the **Entity Name** field.
- **Last Name**: Delete any spaces before or after your entry. If you copy and paste your last name instead of typing it in, you risk including a space unintentionally. If you include a space and we do not catch and correct the error, you will not be able to use the PIN we create to log in to the BEAR Form.
- **Request Date**: Provide your entry in m/d/yyyy format.
- **State**: Enter the two-letter state or territory abbreviation, not the full name.
- **E-Mail**: Verify that your entry is in correct email format. Delete any spaces before or after your entry. If you copy and paste your email address instead of typing it in, you risk including a space unintentionally. If you include a space and we do not catch and correct the error, you will not be able to use the PIN we create to log in to the online BEAR Form.

Receiving your PIN

In general, we send PINs out on Wednesdays for requests that came in the previous week. We suggest that you add the domain **usac.org** to your safe senders list, and also check your spam or junk mail folder for your PIN email.

If it has been two weeks and you still have not received your PIN, please call CSB with your case number so we can research the problem and resend your PIN. If instead you submit a new PIN request or ask that your PIN be regenerated, that will start the request process all over again and delay your receipt of a PIN.

When we are approaching an invoicing deadline, we do try to create and send PINs out more often than once a week. However, if you know you will need a PIN to file a BEAR Form before the October 28, 2019 invoicing deadline for FY2018 recurring services, we suggest that you request a PIN as soon as possible.

Notice for Applicants Updating the FCC Form 498

When applicants start or open an existing FCC Form 498 to make updates, EPC is currently replacing the information in the Remittance Contact section with the General Financial Contact information when the applicant moves to the Remittance Contact screen.

Because EPC is copying this information, applicants should pay particular attention to the information in the Remittance Contact fields (name, title, physical address, phone number, and email address) to see if unwanted changes were made. If your Remittance Contact is different from your General Financial Contact, please review the information in the Remittance Contact fields and make any necessary corrections before you certify the form.

We expect to fix this issue in the next few weeks, and we apologize for any inconvenience.

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