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Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

January 17, 2020

TIP OF THE WEEK: The Funding Year (FY) 2020 application filing window is open. The filing window will close on March 25 at 11:59:59 p.m. EDT. The window countdown clock will hide the Upcoming Dates section on the main page of the website until the filing window closes, but you can still access the complete list of upcoming dates by clicking the [See full calendar](#) link just below the clock.

Commitments for Funding Years 2019 and 2018

Funding Year 2019. USAC released FY2019 Wave 42 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on January 16. As of January 17, FY2019 commitments total over \$2.14 billion.

Funding Year 2018. USAC released FY2018 Wave 78 FCDLs on January 13. As of January 17, FY2018 commitments total over \$2.27 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).

Updating Entity Profiles in EPC

The administrative window – the period of time during which applicants can update their entity profile information in EPC – closed on Monday, January 13. For applicants that missed this deadline, we are providing the follow information.

There are some entity profile updates you can do yourself. Your account administrator can create new users, delete existing users, and update user permissions. You can also create contract records to cite on your FCC Form 471.

Entity profile changes that do not affect discount calculations can only be made by the Client Service Bureau (CSB). Examples of changes that CSB can help you with include changing entity names, adding annexes, updating mailing addresses, and adding or updating state codes, NCES codes, or FSCS codes. To request assistance, you can open a customer service case in EPC or call CSB at (888) 203-8100.

CSB cannot make entity profile changes that could result in changes to discount calculations – such as changes to student counts or changes to physical addresses, which in turn can affect an urban or rural status. Although you can provide this information in one or more narrative fields in the FCC Form 471, we suggest that you file a Receipt Acknowledgment Letter (RAL) modification, which is designed to collect all the information we will need. RAL modifications are included in the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review of your FCC Form 471.

To file a RAL modification:

- Certify your FCC Form 471.
- Access your certified form, either by using the search function in the **FCC Forms and Post-commitment Requests** section of your landing page or the search function in the **FCC Forms 471** record type under the **Records** tab.
- Under the **Related Actions** menu, choose **Submit Modification Request (RAL)**.
- Choose the **Application** option for application-level changes, and the **Entity** option to request entity changes.
- Follow the prompts to provide the necessary information, and submit your modification request when you have finished.

More FCC Form 470 Reminders

In the [January 3 SL News Brief](#), we provided some reminders on how to fill out and file the FCC Form 470 and how to conduct the competitive bidding process. Below are some additional reminders to help you through these processes.

How do I describe the services I need?

You can use the narrative field in each of your service requests to clearly describe the services you are requesting. This helps potential bidders understand the size and scope of the project and the services being requested so that they can submit responsive bids. If you need more space or your requests are large and/or complex, you should consider including a Request for Proposal (RFP) or RFP document so that you can describe your project in sufficient detail on the FCC Form 470. (See [Step 1: Competitive Bidding](#) for an explanation of "RFP or RFP document.")

In general, you cannot specify the make and model number of a specific piece of equipment from a specific manufacturer in an FCC Form 470 and/or an RFP without adding the words "or equivalent." The FCC Form 470 will add those words automatically, but make sure that any RFPs or RFP documents you issue include this language as well.

You can provide a specific manufacturer's name to indicate compatibility ("compatible with our existing Brand X equipment") or equivalency ("Brand X or equivalent"). Also, if you are requesting basic maintenance, you can specify makes and model numbers of the equipment you would like to be maintained if you already have the equipment. However, if you are also requesting funding for the equipment on your FCC Form 470, be sure to clarify that you are seeking basic maintenance of specific equipment or equivalent equipment on your form.

How general or specific should my descriptions be?

Phrases like "as needed" and "district-wide" in the narrative are examples of descriptions that are too broad for service providers to understand the scope of your project. Rather than "as needed," describe the circumstances where your needs might change during the course of a day or a year. Rather than "district-wide," provide a list of all the individual schools in your district and their needs based on the size of their student bodies, locations, and any other relevant factors.

On the other hand, a description such as "internet access not to exceed 100 Mbps" in the narrative will limit you to bids for internet access of no more than 100 Mbps. If you might want to purchase a faster service, you should specify a range that includes higher speeds.

What numbers should I provide in the "Quantity" fields if I am not sure what I will need?

First, describe your project or services in sufficient detail that potential bidders understand what you are trying to accomplish. Again, if the narrative field does not provide enough room, consider putting a high-level description in that field and uploading an RFP and/or RFP document(s) with your FCC Form 470 to provide the necessary details.

To indicate to potential bidders the size and scope of your project in the form itself, provide your best estimate of the number of items you are seeking in the "Quantity" field. Bidders are free to propose a higher or lower number in their bids based on their assessment of your needs, and you will not be held to the number you enter as an upper limit when you file your FCC Form 471 if the bids are clearly responding to your needs as you have described them in the narrative and your RFP document(s).

How do I respond to questions from potential bidders?

Applicants – and consultants that act on behalf of applicants – should respond to bidder inquiries in a timely manner so that competitive bidding deadlines can be met.

- One option is to post questions received from potential bidders along with their answers on a website or in an RFP document attached to the certified FCC Form 470.
- Note that service provider questions should be seeking specific information they need to prepare responsive bids. Generic emails that do not pose questions related to your FCC Form 470 and associated documents or emails that clearly appear to be "spam" do not require a response – especially if you have provided a specific procedure or mechanism for submitting questions.

Reminder: Upcoming Webinar on C2 Budgets

The Category Two (C2) budget webinar will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. EST. This webinar is designed for applicants and service providers of all E-rate experience levels and will cover:

- C2 budgets for the test period (FY2015 – FY2019)
- C2 budgets for the transition year (FY2020)
- C2 budgets for the first permanent C2 budget cycle (FY2021 – FY2025)

You can [use this link to register](#) for the event.

The [Webinars](#) page on the USAC website has more information on webinars and to view recordings of past webinars.

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