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Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

August 21, 2020

TIP OF THE WEEK: Review the information below if you certify or intend to certify **BEAR Forms**. Note that you do not need to certify an applicant FCC Form 498, request a PIN, or file a BEAR Form if you have asked your service provider to provide you with discounted bills and your service provider will invoice USAC for the discount amount.

Commitments for Funding Year (FY) 2020 and FY2019

FY2020. USAC released FY2020 Wave 16 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on August 20. As of August 21, FY2020 commitments total over \$1.39 billion.

FY2019. USAC released FY2019 Wave 71 on August 19. As of August 21, FY2019 commitments total over \$2.40 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.** For information on filing an FCC Form 498 and obtaining an applicant 498 ID, you can refer to the [August 7 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 BEAR Form.

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

Accessing the BEAR Form

To access the BEAR Form, you must first log in first to One Portal, our multifactor (MFA) authentication system, by clicking the blue **Sign In** button at the top of the main page of the USAC website. If you request a PIN and you do not already have access to the BEAR Form through One Portal, we will create a One Portal account for you using your BEAR Form email address as your username. After we have created your One Portal account, you can follow the instructions to log in to One Portal for the first time.

In One Portal, you will see a dashboard with two links if you also have access to EPC, or a popup to access the BEAR Form if you don't have access to EPC under your BEAR Form email address.

For the short term, BEAR Form filers will need to retain their BEAR login information – Billed Entity Number (BEN), PIN, email address, and last name – in order to log in to the BEAR Form after they log in to One Portal.

Requesting a new PIN

To request a PIN, follow the steps below. Please note that a PIN is specific to both a Billed Entity Number (BEN) and last name. 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 using your last name. In this case, we suggest that you 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 [Personal Identification Number](#) page on 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.
- Within two days after we issue your PIN, we will create an account for you in One Portal so that you can log in to One Portal to access the BEAR Form.

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

- Review each column header to verify the information that belongs in that column.
- Do not add or delete columns on the template. You can leave the **Street Address 2** and **Zip+4** fields blank.
- Eliminate any spaces before or after your entries, especially in the **Last Name** and **E-Mail** fields. Also, check your spelling. Twice.
- Use the format m/d/yyyy format for **Request Date**.
- Enter the two-digit postal code for your **State**, not the full state name.
- Review your work one final time before you submit it.

Regenerating a forgotten PIN

If you cannot locate or remember your PIN, you can call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at (888) 203-8100 and ask that your PIN be regenerated. Our legacy system will create a new (replacement) PIN for you, and we will email you the new PIN within two weeks of receiving your request.

Receiving your PIN

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

Remember that it takes up to two days for us to create a One Portal account for a new user.

New Features from EPC Upgrade

EPC users now have two new features available in EPC due to a recent upgrade.

Simplified error messages

When EPC encounters an error or problem, it will now generate an error message that will be short and provide a specific code at the end. Previously, the system merely provided a long string of text.

To report the problem, you can simply copy the code and include it in a customer service case, or attach a screen shot to the case that includes the code.

Option to set search filters

You can now set and save one or more filters on the search pages in EPC located under the **Records** tab.

If the option to set filters is available, you will see a small filter icon in the upper right-hand corner of the search screen.

To set a filter:

- Choose your search criteria first.
- Click the down arrow next to the filter icon and choose **Save filters as...**
- Enter a name for your filter in the text box. You will see the list of the search criteria you have chosen for this filter. You also have the option to set this filter as your default. (Uncheck the box if you do not want to set a default filter.)
- Click the **SAVE** button.
- The name you have given your filter will appear in the upper left-hand corner of the screen next to **MY FILTERS**.
- You can set more than one filter, each with its own assigned name. All of them will appear horizontally next to **MY FILTERS**. The next time you return to that search page, you will see the list of the filters you have set and, if you identified a default filter, only the results that meet your default filter's search criteria.

To remove a filter, click the down arrow next to the filter icon, locate your filter, and click the **REMOVE** button.

To remove all filters, click the down arrow next to the filter icon and choose **Clear filters**.

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