

[Back](#)



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

September 18, 2020

TIP OF THE WEEK: For applicants who have received an extension of the September 30, 2020 deadline for delivery and installation of nonrecurring services, you should work with your service providers to extend your contracts to cover the additional time if necessary. You can then report the new contract expiration date to USAC by filing an FCC Form 500.

Commitments for Funding Year (FY) 2020 and FY2019

FY2020. USAC released FY2020 Wave 21 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on September 17. As of September 18, FY2020 commitments total over \$1.64 billion.

FY2019. USAC released FY2019 Wave 73 FCDLs on September 16. As of September 18, FY2019 commitments total over \$2.41 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).

Second FCC Form 471 Application Filing Window to Open Soon

On September 16, 2020, the FCC released an Order ([DA 20-1091](#)) directing USAC to open a second FCC Form 471 application filing window for FY2020. This window will open when the Order is published in the Federal Register and will close on October 16, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

This window will enable schools to request additional bandwidth needed to meet the unanticipated and increased demand for on-campus connectivity resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic without having to undergo a new competitive bidding process. While the order is limited to schools, consortia with schools and/or school districts as members can also apply for services for those members as long as those funding requests meet all the criteria described below.

Eligible services

Services requested for this second FY2020 application filing window are limited to additional on-campus Category One internet access and/or data transmission services needed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As long as these service requests meet the competitive bidding exemption outlined below, applicants may request discounts on services provided as early as July 1, 2020.

Competitive bidding

Applicants do not need to post an FCC Form 470 to request this additional bandwidth on their FY2020 FCC Form 471 if they meet the following conditions:

- they already sought bids for the services by posting an FCC Form 470;
- they received an FCDL from USAC approving a funding request for Category One internet access and/or data transmission services that relied on that FCC Form 470 or they have such a request pending with USAC; and
- they are requesting additional E-rate discounts on an FCC Form 471 during this second window to purchase additional bandwidth through their existing service provider or a new service provider.

To the extent that the applicant's state or locality has not waived their local competitive bidding rules, applicants may post an FCC Form 470 to comply with local laws. In this situation, the applicant is exempt from the E-rate Program requirement to wait 28 days before selecting a service provider.

Service providers, contracts, and pricing

Applicants may file funding requests featuring new service providers in the event that their existing service providers are unable to provide sufficient bandwidth to meet the demand.

USAC can fund requests where the price per megabit is the same or less than that in the original contract. However, if the price per megabit is higher than that in the original contract, USAC will limit the funding commitment to the price per megabit in the original contract.

The temporary exemption in this order does not relieve service providers from the E-rate Program requirement for them to offer the [lowest corresponding price](#) for the services.

Filing the FCC Form 471

Applicants that wish to apply for this funding opportunity must include the following information in the narrative section of their new FCC Form 471 funding request(s):

1. the original FY2020 FCC Form 471 application number(s) and the original Funding Request Numbers (FRNs) that relied on the original FCC Form 470;
2. a statement confirming that the requested E-rate discounts are for additional bandwidth needed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
3. additional information in the narrative section of the new FRN(s) about the price per megabit in the original and new funding requests that highlights any difference in pricing.

The information requested in item 3 above can also be provided in other per-unit terms, for example, an applicant seeking discounts for an additional 1 Gbps circuit could provide the per-circuit prices in the narrative.

Maintaining appropriate documentation

Applicants are required to retain records documenting the services that they receive pursuant to the temporary rules described above and consistent with the E-rate Program's document retention rules. Applicants and service providers requesting E-rate support during the second FY2020 application window are responsible for maintaining records that demonstrate their compliance with the temporary rules.

Program participants and service providers remain otherwise subject to audits and investigations to determine compliance with universal service fund (USF) program rules and requirements.

Opening of the FY2021 administrative window

Each year, USAC opens an administrative window in advance of the upcoming application filing window for applicants to update the information in their EPC profiles.

USAC will open the EPC administrative window for FY2021 as soon as possible after the second FY2020 application filing window closes.

Note for FY2021 applications

Applicants that seek additional funding in FY2020 without conducting competitive bidding must seek bids for any additional bandwidth requested for FY2021 if their needs in FY2021 are beyond the scope of their original FCC Form 470.

To subscribe, click here: [Subscribe](#).

©1997-2020, Universal Service Administrative Company, All Rights Reserved.
USAC | 700 12th Street NW | Suite 900 | Washington, DC 20005

[Back](#)