Universal Service Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program
News Brief

July 9, 2021

> **TIP OF THE WEEK:** **The FY2022 FCC Form 470 is available in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC).** Applicants with long procurement cycles or others who need to open their competitive bidding process now can certify this form for the upcoming funding year.

Commitments for Funding Year (FY) 2021 and FY2020

FY2021. USAC released FY2021 Wave 13 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on July 8. As of July 9, FY2021 commitments total just under $1.56 billion.

FY2020. USAC released FY2020 Wave 62 FCDLs on July 7. As of July 9, FY2020 commitments total over $2.42 billion.

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

Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Application Filing Window is Open

The application filing window for the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program opened at 9:00 a.m. EDT on Tuesday, June 29, and will close at 11:59 p.m. EDT on Friday, August 13.

During the application filing window, schools and libraries can apply for funding for purchases made between July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022 of eligible equipment, including Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers, and laptop and tablet computers, as well as commercially available broadband internet access services to meet the remote learning needs of students, school staff, and library patrons who would otherwise lack access to connected devices and broadband connections sufficient to engage in remote learning.

For more information or to start an application, visit the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) website. You can also sign up for the ECF newsletter or call the ECF Customer Support Center at (800) 234-9781, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. EDT.

BEAR PIN Removal Update

We have deployed the new BEAR Access Tool and the new BEAR Form login screen. We are also moving the BEAR Form credentials for current BEAR Form filers into this new tool and testing the results for completeness and accuracy.

Starting July 12, this will be the process for logging into the BEAR Form:

- Log in to One Portal.
- Choose the BEAR Form option from your One Portal dashboard.
- On the new BEAR Form login screen, enter your Billed Entity Number (BEN). We suggest that you click the **BEN Name** button to display the name of the billed entity to verify that you have entered the correct BEN.
- Click the **Login** button. You should see the main page of the BEAR Form, where you can start a new form, continue a saved form, or get historical information on BEAR Forms filed for your BEN.

If you have trouble accessing the BEAR Form:

Make sure you are using the correct email address. The new tool will populate your One Portal username (email address) as your BEAR Form login email address. If you have used more than one email address to file BEAR Forms in the past, you must log in to One Portal with the email address associated with the BEN for which you intend to file a BEAR Form. You will see an error message if our records show that your email address is not associated with the BEN you entered.

For users with multiple email addresses, you can consolidate your access to all of your BENs under the same email address by completing and submitting a BEAR access template (see below) for the BEN(s) that currently are associated with other email addresses.

Use the new BEAR access template to request BEAR Form access. You may be filing BEAR Forms for the first time, or you may have access to file BEAR Forms for some BENs but need access for other BENs. You can make either type of request by completing and submitting a BEAR access template.

We will post the BEAR access template early next week. The request process will be very similar to the process for submitting the old PIN access template, with the following differences:

- You must have a user account in EPC to request access to the BEAR Form. Another user cannot request access on your behalf.
- All fields on the template must be completed. However, we can enter the customer service case number in the first field if you forget.
- We have provided some formatting improvements. For example, some five-digit zip codes have one or two leading zeros, and you will now be able to enter those successfully.

To start, complete a BEAR access template and attach it to a customer service case in EPC. We will process BEAR access requests twice a week, and send you an email when your access has been granted. However, you do not have to wait for the email before you can file, because the email is informational only and does not include a PIN or other login credentials.

Check your work. The most common reason applicants did not receive PINs in the past is that they entered a misspelled or incomplete email address. If there are blank fields on your BEAR access template or your email address is not in a valid format, we will describe the problem in your original customer service case and ask you to submit a corrected template.

For help, please open a customer service case in EPC or call our Client Service Bureau (CSB) at (888) 203-8100.

USAC Seeks Feedback on User Experience-Related IT Enhancements

The Share Your E-Rate User-Experience System Ideas form is available for program participants to submit their ideas and feedback for improving and/or enhancing the user experience of E-Rate information systems. Please share your feedback to help us continue to improve the program.

We may ask you for additional information about any suggestions you submit to us. However, if you do not want USAC to contact you, simply notify us by email.

We have also posted a list of the User Experience-Related System Enhancements that contains the user-submitted suggestions we have implemented, organized by the date USAC deployed the enhancement. We will continue to update the list as we deploy new system enhancements.

Occasionally, we may offer external users the opportunity to test changes to forms or tools and provide feedback before the final version is completed. If you are willing to volunteer to be part of a demonstration and feedback session for our User Acceptance Testing (UAT), please check the box at the bottom of the form. We will contact you at the email address you provided if a UAT opportunity arises.

If you have specific inquiries or requests for assistance related to the information systems, please create a customer service case in EPC or call CSB at (888) 203-8100.

Notice for FCC Form 500 Filers Reporting Equipment Transfers

In the June 25 SL News Brief, we summarized the conditions under which an applicant is required to notify USAC of a transfer of equipment. Specifically, the requirement to report transfers of equipment to USAC no longer applies to transfers that occur on or after July 1, 2021.

Due to this change, applicants who start an FCC Form 500 to report a transfer of equipment that occurred on or after July 1, 2021 will now receive a message that this notification to USAC is no longer required.

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