



E-Rate News Brief

January 20, 2022

Funding Year (FY) 2022 FCC Form 471 Filing Window Countdown

The Funding Year (FY) 2022 FCC Form 471 application filing window is now open. The application filing window will close on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

Days to window close	61
FY2022 FCC Forms 470 filed	11,227
FY2022 FCC Forms 471 filed	1,857

FCC Forms 470 and 471 counts as of yesterday, 9:00 p.m. EST

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 is the last date that you can submit and certify an FCC Form 470 and still wait the required 28 days before submitting and certifying your FCC Form 471 **by March 22, 2022**, the last date of the FY2022 application filing window.

E-RATE TIP: Fall 2021 Training - Recordings Available on Demand. USAC offered a series of online training sessions for E-Rate program participants, including Tribal applicants, in November to help prepare for the FY2022 FCC Form 471 application filing window. You can register to watch a recording using the links available under **Previous Trainings** on the E-Rate [Webinars](#) page.

Commitments for Funding Year (FY) 2021

FY2021. USAC released FY2021 Wave 40 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on January 13. As of January 19, FY2021 commitments total over \$2.56 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).

February Training Opportunities

E-Rate Tribal Training Webinar with Question and Answer Session February 3

4 p.m. ET

[Register Here](#)

In this session, we will present an overview of the E-Rate program and cover general topics such as the application process, the competitive bidding requirements, important program terms, eligibility, and program discounts. Additionally, we will focus on the recently proposed Federal Communications Commission (FCC) order to amend the definition of library in the FCC's rules to clarify that Tribal libraries are eligible for support through the E-Rate program.

Invoice Training February 10

2 p.m. ET

[Register Here](#)

This webinar is designed to help E-Rate program participants (applicants and service providers) understand the invoicing process. We will discuss how to submit the FCC Form 472 (BEAR Form) and the FCC Form 474 (SPI Form), invoice deadlines, invoicing reviews, and more. After the presentation, we will conduct a Q&A session.

January 2022 Training - Recordings Available on Demand

In January, USAC offered a series of online office hour training sessions for Schools and Libraries (E-Rate) program participants, including Tribal applicants. USAC conducted one-hour webinars for each day focused on E-Rate topics related to FCC Forms 470 and 471. All the sessions were recorded and are available to view. You can register to watch a recording using the links available under **Previous Trainings** on the E-Rate [Webinars](#) page.

- **E-Rate Eligible Services Office Hour** (Thursday, January 13) - E-Rate experts provide an overview of E-Rate eligible services for applicants and service providers of all experience levels.
- **Competitive Bidding (FCC Form 470) and Guiding Statements Overview and Office Hour** (Tuesday, January 18) - E-Rate experts walk you through competitive bidding and the FCC Form 470 with a focus on the new FY2022 Guiding Statements Document.
- **Service Provider Selection and the FCC Form 471 Office Hour** (Thursday, January 20) - E-Rate experts provide an overview of how to apply for program discounts on the FCC Form 471 for applicants of all experience levels.

Preparing for the FY2022 Application Filing Window

The FCC Form 471 application filing window opened last Wednesday, January 12 and will close Tuesday, March 22 at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

Tuesday, February 22 is the last date that you can submit and certify an FCC Form 470 for FY2022 and still have time to wait the required 28 days before submitting and certifying your FCC Form 471 before the window closes on March 22 at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

The FCC Forms 470 and 471 must be filed in EPC. The dates and times above apply to the time the form is certified in EPC. If you complete all of the required information on the form before the deadline but certify it after the deadline, the form will not be considered as timely filed.

Below are the next steps for applicants who have not accessed EPC in the last six months, applicants who are ready to start the competitive bidding process, and applicants who have completed their competitive bidding process and signed a contract.

Applicants who have not accessed EPC in the last six months

Last July, we added an additional step to the login process. To access EPC, you must first log in to One Portal, our multi-factor authentication (MFA) system. MFA is a method of authenticating a computer user during the login process by requiring the user to enter two or more separate pieces of information, such as a password known to the user and a code we generate and send to the user by email or text.

For existing users, we have created accounts for you in One Portal. To set up your credentials in One Portal, click the blue **Sign In** button at the top of any USAC page and follow the instructions. To see a demonstration of the login process, you can watch the [Forgot Password](#) video. The process of logging in for the first time and the process of resetting your existing password are essentially the same.

Newly created users in EPC will automatically be set up with a One Portal account using their email address as their username. As above, click the blue **Sign In** button to get started. If you need assistance, call our Customer Service Center (CSC) at (888) 203-8100.

Applicants who are just starting the application process for FY2022

Applicants begin the process of applying for discounts on eligible services by completing and certifying an [FCC Form 470](#) (Description of Services Requested and Certification Form) in EPC. This opens the [competitive bidding process](#), which is a formal process to identify and request the products and services needed so that potential service providers can review those requests and submit bids for them.

The entity that will run the competitive bidding process must be prepared to receive and evaluate bids and negotiate with service providers.

You do not have to file an FCC Form 470 for FY2022 if:

- you will be purchasing services from a state master contract where your state filed an FCC Form 470 and conducted a competitive bidding process and that resulting state master contract covers those services for all of FY2022; or
- you posted an FCC Form 470 for a previous funding year and conducted a competitive bidding process which resulted in a multi-year contract that covers your services for all of FY2022; or
- you are purchasing a commercially available, high-speed business-class Internet service that meets ALL of the requirements listed in the **Exemption from Filing an FCC Form 470** section of the [Applicant Step 1: Competitive Bidding](#) guidance document on the USAC website.

Remember that you must wait at least 28 days after you submit and certify your FCC Form 470 before you can select a service provider, sign a contract, and complete and certify your FCC Form 471.

Applicants who have completed their competitive bidding process and signed a contract

If you are using a new or existing contract on your FCC Form 471, you must have a contract record for that contract in your EPC profile. A contract record provides specific details about a contract – e.g., the establishing FCC Form 470, the number of bids received, the service provider, the contract term and associated dates – so that this information can be auto-populated from your profile to the appropriate funding request on your FCC Form 471.

You can create contract records in your EPC profile even though the EPC administrative window is closed. To create a contract record, go to the organization page for the parent organization (independent school, school district, independent library, library system, or consortium), click **Contracts** from the

menu choices at the top of the page, then choose **Manage Contracts**, then choose **Add a New Contract**.

- You do not need to create a new contract record for a multi-year contract or a contract with voluntary extensions if you previously created the contract record in EPC.
 - For a contract that has been voluntarily extended through FY2022, you can cite the existing contract record on the appropriate funding request on your FCC Form 471 and then enter the extended date in the field labeled "What is the date your contract expires for the current term of the contract?"
- If you have a new contract or need to make changes to an existing contract record, you must create a new contract record. EPC does not allow edits to a contract record after it has been submitted. You are encouraged – but not required – to upload a copy of your contract into your contract record. If you do not upload your contract, be sure to keep a copy handy in case USAC requests it during the review of your application.

Deadline Relief for E-Rate Participants in Mississippi and Louisiana

On September 3, 2021, the FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) released an Order ([DA 21-1107](#)) that waived certain E-Rate program rules and deadlines and extended some deadlines to assist participants and providers located in the areas affected by Hurricane Ida (see [10/22/2021 SL News Brief](#) for specific details). Below we list the upcoming deadlines for applicants in the affected areas of Mississippi and Louisiana.

Based on the order, **January 31, 2022**, is the last day of the extension period for applicants and service providers affected by Hurricane Ida to file the following:

- Requests for review or waiver of decisions by USAC, directed to USAC or the FCC.
- FCC Form 486 (Receipt of Service Confirmation and Children's Internet Protection Act Certification (CIPA) Form).
- FCC Form 472 (Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form) and FCC Form 474 (Service Provider Invoice Form).

New E-Rate FCC Form 471 Download Tool Now Available

Today, USAC will launch a new [E-Rate Form 471 Download Tool](#). The tool is a part of USAC's [Open Data](#) initiative, which strives to make Universal Service Fund data open and available to the general public.

With this tool, users can filter, view, and download data from all FCC Form 471 datasets for FY2016 and forward from a single screen, including:

- A PDF copy of the original FCC Form 471 application in the **471 Basic Information** dataset.
- Current program deadlines (e.g., Service Start Date, Invoicing Deadline Date) for all Funding Request Numbers (FRNs) in the **FRN Status** dataset.
- All FCC Form 471 data for the original FRN and any subsequent changes made post-commitment (e.g., FCC Forms 500, Service Substitutions, SPIN Changes, or Appeals).

USAC updates the data in each FCC Form 471 Open Data dataset nightly. To access FCC Form 471 data for FY2015 or prior, please use the [Data Retrieval Tool \(DRT\)](#). If you cannot find the needed data using the DRT, you can also [contact us](#) directly.

Where can I find the new tool?

Users can access the tool on USAC's [E-Rate Open Data](#) website directly or through the [E-Rate Tools](#) page.

Will USAC offer training for the new tool?

To learn how to use the tool in some common use-cases, watch our [tool walkthrough video](#). In addition, if you are new to USAC's Open Data platform, USAC has [beginner-level videos](#) that introduce and explain how to get started using the Open Data platform.

Will the Download FCC Form 471 Tool still be available?

With the new E-Rate FCC Form 471 Download Tool launch, USAC will retire the following legacy data tool: [Download FCC Form 471](#). USAC plans to take this legacy platform tool permanently offline on January 27.

USAC Seeks Feedback on User Experience-Related IT Enhancements

The [Share Your E-Rate User-Experience System Ideas](#) form is available for E-Rate program participants to submit their ideas and feedback for improving and/or enhancing the user experience of USAC 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 wish to be contacted by USAC, simply notify us by [email](#).

The [User Experience-Related System Enhancements](#) page contains the user-submitted suggestions we have implemented, organized by the date the enhancement was deployed. We will continue to update the list as we deploy new system enhancements.

If you have specific inquiries or requests for assistance related to the information systems, please create a customer service case in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) or call CSC.

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