



November 17, 2022

## E-RATE TIPS:

- **Applicants: Update your Account Administrator and User Permissions.** USAC recommends reviewing and making changes to your E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) account administrator, if needed, and reviewing all permissions associated with your account. If your AA is not available (e.g., has left your organization), the Customer Service Center (CSC) at 888-203-8100 can help you transfer account administrator rights.
- Each year, USAC updates applicant profiles in EPC using the reviewed and approved profile information from their current year FCC Form 471 application(s). The **EPC administrative window**, which is currently open, allows applicants to make updates to their profile information to prepare for the upcoming FY2023 application filing window. Visit the [EPC Administrative Window](#) page to learn more about updating your EPC profile information.
- **Update your Student Count and NSLP Data for FY2023.** As a reminder, applicants should provide updated student enrollment and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) numbers for their FY2023 applications during the EPC Administrative Window as they are no longer permitted to rely on prior years' numbers due to COVID-19.
- **USAC updated the [FCC Form 498](#) for all service providers on November 16, 2022** to require service providers to have an active unique entity identifier (UEI) through SAM.gov in order to submit an FCC Form 498. This only applies to service providers that submit a new FCC Form 498 or revise their current FCC Form 498 at this time. To learn more, read our [latest bulletin](#) and watch the new [Register for a New 498 ID](#) and [Update SAM.gov Unique Entity ID on the FCC Form 498](#) videos.
- **Visit our recently updated web content** on the following pages: [E-Rate System Consolidation](#), the Service Provider page [Step 1: Obtain a SPIN](#), and [Competitive Bidding & FCC Form 470 FAQ](#).

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**Commitments for Funding Year (FY) 2022 and FY2021**

**FY2022.** USAC released FY2022 Wave 26 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on November 10. As of November 16, FY2022 commitments total over \$2.68 billion.

**FY2021.** USAC released FY2021 Wave 67 FCDLs on November 11. As of November 16, FY2021 commitments total over \$2.67 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).

## What to Do if You Missed Your October Invoice or FCC Form 486 Filing Deadline

October 28, 2022 was the deadline for most program participants to:

1. [Submit an invoice](#) for FY2021 recurring services.
2. [Request an invoice deadline extension](#) for FY2021 recurring services.

### Missed Invoice Deadlines for FY2021

If you missed your invoice filing deadline and your deadline to request an invoice deadline extension for FY2021 recurring services, you must file a waiver request with the FCC before submitting your invoice to USAC to be processed. The USAC [Appeals](#) page provides information on how to submit appeals and waiver requests to the FCC. The FCC must grant your waiver request before USAC can extend the invoice filing deadline.

If your invoice was submitted by the deadline but USAC reduced or denied the amount invoiced, you must [submit an appeal to USAC](#) if you disagree with USAC's decision.

You can verify whether your invoice filing deadline was extended by searching for your Funding Request Number(s) (FRNs) in EPC and clicking the **SDD/IDD History** tab. You can also use USAC's [Open Data](#) platform to confirm these deadlines. This data is located in the [FRN Status Tool FY2016+](#). Please reference [the video](#) on how to use the tool to determine your deadlines.

### Missed FCC Form 486 Deadline for FY2022

October 31, 2022 was also the deadline for most program participants to [certify an FCC Form 486](#), Receipt of Service Confirmation and Children's Internet Protection Act Certification Form, for FY2022.

If you missed your deadline to file an FCC Form 486 for FY2022 services, certify your form as soon as possible to avoid a penalty (see below).

## FY2022 FCC Form 486 Urgent Reminder Letters

USAC started sending FCC Form 486 Urgent Reminder Letters for FY2022 last week. USAC will send an email to the contact person on the FCC Form 471 informing them that the letter is available in the organization's **News** tab in EPC.

As a reminder, if you have received a positive funding commitment from USAC, the next step is to file an FCC Form 486, Receipt of Service Confirmation and Children's Internet Protection Act Certification Form, no later than 120 days after services have started. **If this date is missed, USAC will adjust the service start date** reported on the FCC Form 486 to the date 120 days before the certification date of the FCC Form 486 and will not pay invoices for services delivered before the adjusted date.

To avoid missing your 120-day deadline, look for the FCC Form 486 Urgent Reminder Letter. The letter is sent based on the service start date applicants reported on their FCC Form 471. Applicants then have 15 days from the date of this letter to certify an FCC Form 486.

The letter will appear in the organization's **News** tab in EPC. You can also find it in the **Notifications** section of the organization's landing page.

To view the letter, follow these steps:

- Log in to [EPC](#).
- From the **Notifications** section of your organization's landing page, choose **Notification Type** "FCC Form 486 120 Day Notification" and **Funding Year** "2022".
- In the right-hand column of each notification, choose **Generate Notification**. The status will then change to View Notification.
- Click **View Notification** to view your letter.

Applicants who receive this letter should certify their FCC Form 486 online **no later than 15 days after the date of the notification** so that USAC is not required to adjust their service start date.

You can check if you have an approved or partially approved FCC Form 486 for your FCC Form 471 applications or funding requests in the [E-Rate FRN Status Tool FY2016+](#) (in the "FCC Form 486 Status" column).

## Fall 2022 Training-Recordings Available on Demand

Below are on demand recordings and accompanying slides from our Fall webinars.

**E-Rate Program Overview (October 18)**: E-Rate experts provide a high-level overview of the application process from beginning to end and explain basic program concepts for applicants and service providers, followed by a Q&A session.

- Watch a Recording (on the [Webinars](#) page, click **Watch**)
- [Slide Deck](#)

**E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process (October 20)**: Presenters discuss the E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process (getting started, competitive bidding, applying for support, and Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review), followed by a Q&A session.

- Watch a Recording (on the [Webinars](#) page, click **Watch**)
- [Slide Deck](#)

**Category Two Budgets (October 25)**: Presenters discuss Category Two (C2) budgets. We provide an overview of C2 budgets and C2 budget guidance for Funding Year (FY) 2023, followed by a Q&A session.

- Watch a Recording (on the [Webinars](#) page, click **Watch**)
- [Slide Deck](#)

**EPC Administrative Window (October 27):** Presenters discuss the administrative window – the period during which applicants can make updates to their entity profile information in EPC to prepare for the upcoming FCC Form 471 application filing window for FY2023, followed by a Q&A session.

- Watch a Recording (on the [Webinars](#) page, click **Watch**)
- [Slide Deck](#)

**E-Rate Post-Commitment Process (November 3):** Presenters discuss the E-Rate Post-Commitment Process (starting services and invoicing) and other post-commitment activities (service substitutions, appeals, and more), followed by a Q&A session.

- Watch a Recording (on the [Webinars](#) page, click **Watch**)
- [Slide Deck](#)

### **PQA Information Requests Going Out Soon**

The 2023 Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) assessment program is underway. PQA is a program that assesses E-Rate payments made on invoices submitted during the past 12 months to verify that the payments were properly made – in other words, that all program rules were followed correctly when the payment was authorized and disbursed.

For disbursements made each month, a certain number of payments will be chosen, and applicants will be asked to provide specific documentation (e.g., customer bills that support invoices submitted to USAC) to verify that those payments were made correctly. It is important that you maintain proper documentation in order to be able to respond correctly and completely to PQA requests.

The email request that notifies applicants whose payments have been selected for PQA review are being sent starting in mid-November from the domain name [PQA@USACcms.i-sight.com](mailto:PQA@USACcms.i-sight.com). Please check your email and respond promptly if you receive an email from USAC's PQA program. Also, check your spam folder or junk email folder to see if it contains an email from this domain. This will help expedite your review.

- Do not hesitate to contact your reviewer, if you have questions. Contact information is provided in the email sent announcing the review of your FRN for this year's PQA assessment.
- In order to avoid future recovery actions or appeal filings, please ensure you respond to your PQA reviewer by the deadline. Contact your PQA reviewer if you are unable to respond by the deadline.

### **Update to Supply Chain Covered Companies List**

On September 20, 2022, the FCC added equipment and services from two new entities as Covered Companies (Pacific Network Corp. and its wholly-owned subsidiary ComNet (USA) LLC and China Unicom (Americas) Operations Limited) to its list of communications equipment and services that have been deemed a threat to national security. Recipients of Universal Service Fund (USF) support may not use USF money to buy new equipment or to support or maintain equipment already in inventory from companies, their parents, affiliates, and subsidiaries included on the Covered List.

The FCC released the Supply Chain First Report and Order ([FCC 19-121](#)) in 2019 that prohibits the use of USF funds to purchase or obtain any equipment or services produced or provided by a covered company posing a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. Go to the FCC [Covered List](#) to learn more.

## **FCC Launches E-Rate Tribal Libraries Pilot Program (Interested Libraries' Responses due Tomorrow, November 18)**

In January, the FCC adopted a Report and Order ([Tribal Library Order](#)) that amended the FCC's rules by updating the definition of a library, and clarifying that Tribal libraries are eligible for support through the E-Rate program. This change and clarification meant that many more Tribal libraries could participate in the E-Rate program.

To further encourage Tribal library participation, on October 20, 2022, USAC and the FCC announced an E-Rate Tribal Libraries Pilot Program that will provide one-on-one assistance to participating Tribal libraries in all aspects of preparing, applying, and receiving E-Rate support during the upcoming funding year (FY2023). This includes sharing information about program rules and requirements, providing training on how to use the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC), and walking through the competitive bidding and application processes. The pilot will also support participants during the invoicing and other post-commitment processes including the service confirmation, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) certification, and service substitution requests. Visit the [Tribal Libraries Pilot Program](#) page to learn more about the pilot.

USAC and the FCC hosted an information session to share more details about the Tribal Libraries Pilot Program on Monday, November 7. Interested participants can view the [information session slides](#) on USAC's website.

To apply for the Tribal Libraries Pilot Program, please complete a [brief survey](#) to tell us more about your library. **Pilot Program responses are due by Friday, November 18, 2022.** The size of the pilot program will be capped so that we can ensure adequate resources to assist pilot program participants throughout all phases of the E-Rate program, so apply now to secure your spot!

If you have questions about the Tribal Libraries Pilot Program or the E-Rate program, please contact USAC at [TribalTraining@usac.org](mailto:TribalTraining@usac.org).

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