



Filing the FCC Form 470 and the Competitive Bidding Process

Applicant and Service Provider Training

August 1, 2024

DISCLAIMER

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

Housekeeping: General

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers.
- The audience will remain on mute.
- Use the **Questions** box to ask questions at any time.
- You can download the slide deck from the **Handouts** section of the webinar panel.



The screenshot displays the GoToWebinar interface. At the top, there is a menu bar with 'File View Help'. Below it, the 'Audio' section is expanded, showing 'Sound Check' with a green signal indicator and a question mark. Underneath, there are two radio buttons: 'Computer audio' (selected) and 'Phone call'. A red 'MUTED' indicator is visible. Below the microphone selection, there is a dropdown menu for 'Microphone (HD Webcam C510)'. A volume slider is present, and another dropdown menu for 'Speakers (High Definition Aud...' is visible. The 'Handouts: 2' section is expanded, showing two files: '2017-05-05_11-59-21.png' and 'GTM IOS.jpeg'. The 'Questions' section is expanded, showing a text input field with the placeholder '[Enter a question for staff]'. Below the input field, there is a red button that says 'Ask questions here!' and a 'Send' button. At the bottom, there is a footer with the text 'Multi sessions different registrants', 'Webinar ID: 980-960-603', and the GoToWebinar logo.

Download PDF of Slides here!

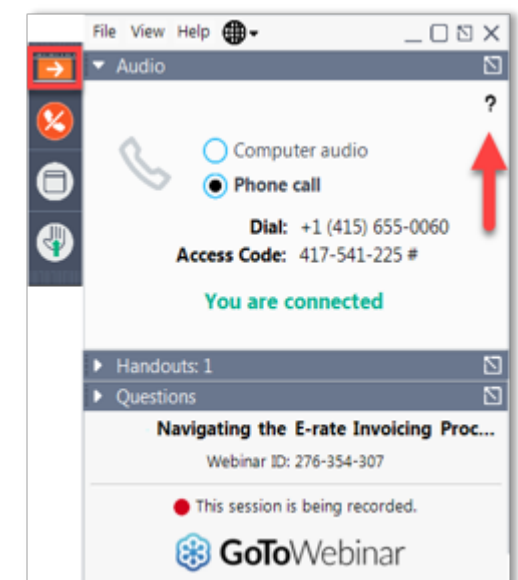
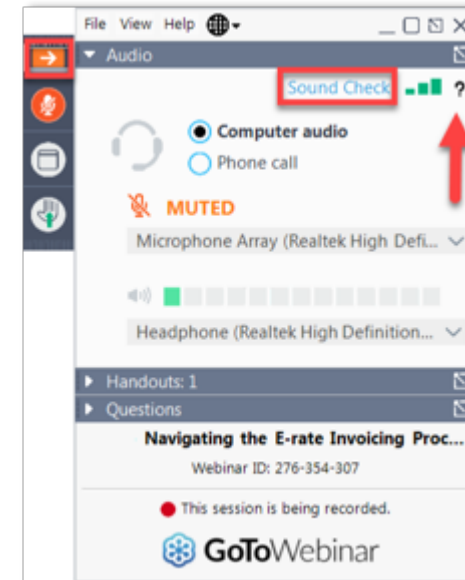
Ask questions here!

Multi sessions different registrants
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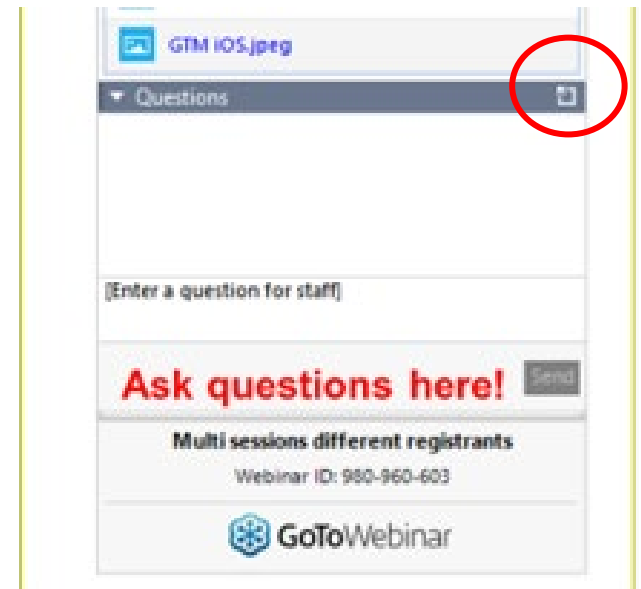
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- Click the **Sound Check** link, then the question mark icon to test your audio.
- If you lose audio or the slides freeze, restart the webinar.
- Check that your computer meets GoToWebinar's system requirements by exiting the webinar and clicking the **Check System Requirements** link in your event confirmation email.
- If issues persist, call (833) 851-8340 to troubleshoot with GoToWebinar.



Housekeeping: Q&A

- There will be a live Q&A session focused on today's topics.
- Tips for submitting questions:
 - Use the **Questions** box in your webinar control panel anytime during the presentation.
 - Write in full sentences.
 - Ask one question at a time.
 - Ask questions related to today's webinar content.
- To view answers:
 - Click the box with the arrow icon in the top right corner of the **Questions** box to expand it and reveal all written answers.



E-Rate Customer Service Center (CSC)



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Create a customer service case

1. Log in to the [E-Rate Productivity Center \(EPC\)](#)
2. Select the **Contact Us** link from the upper right menu on the landing page.

Meet Our Team



Latoya Anderson

Senior Program Manager | E-Rate



Shawn Jensen

Associate Program Manager | E-Rate

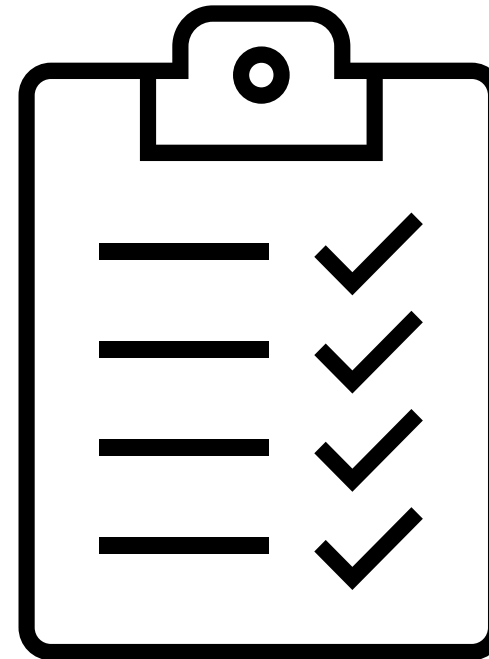


Jessie Stern

Communications Specialist | E-Rate

Agenda

- Competitive Bidding Overview
- Get Ready to Request Bids
- File and Certify an FCC Form 470
- What's New in E-Rate
- Ensure an Open and Fair Process
- Wait at Least 28 Days
- Select a Service Provider
- Additional Information
- The Service Provider's Role
- Resources
- Questions and Answers



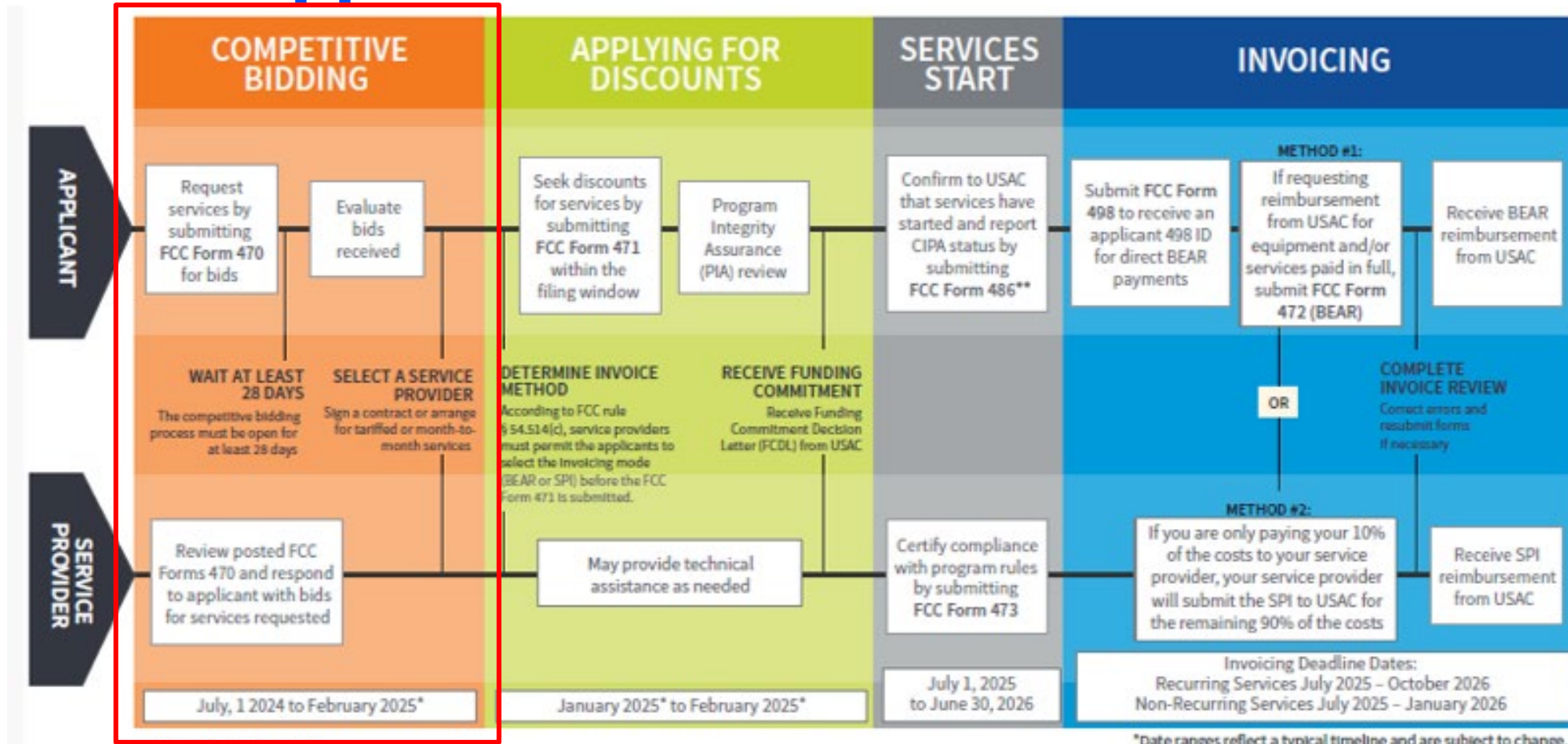
Competitive Bidding Overview

What Is Competitive Bidding?

- Competitive bidding is the formal process for applicants to choose the service providers who will provide the requested equipment and services.
- Service providers review the applicant's FCC Form 470 for requested equipment and services, any procurement requirements, and then submit bids.



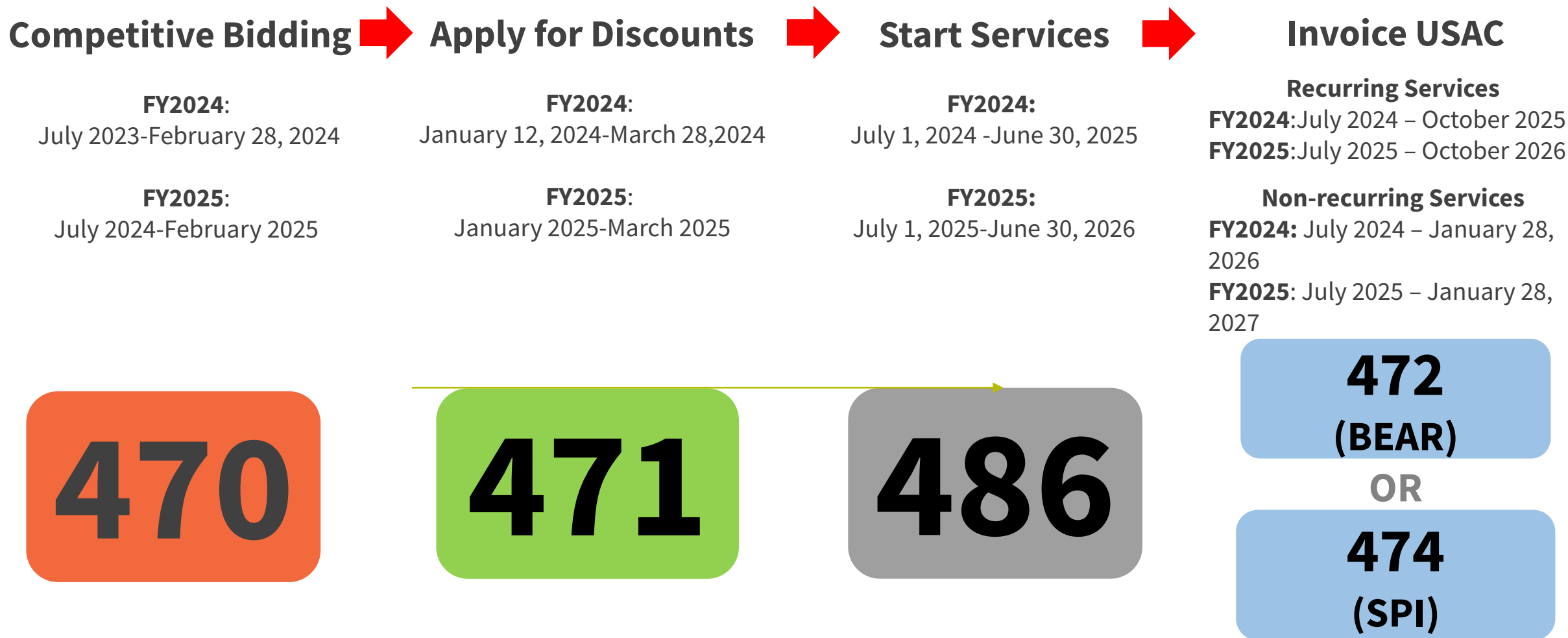
The E-Rate Application Process



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

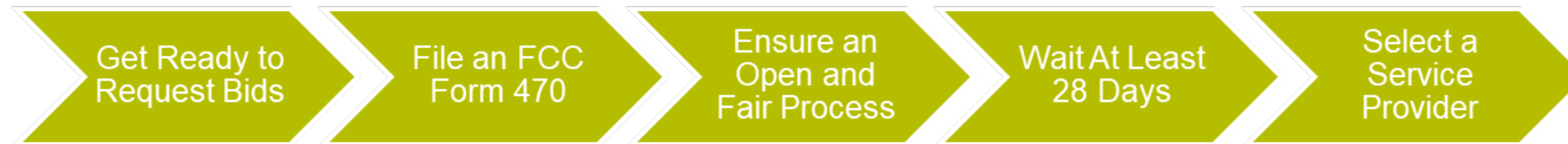
- Website: The application process is broken down in detail for both applicants and service providers on the Schools and Libraries Program website (www.usac.org/sl).
- Glossary of Terms: Definitions for program terms and acronyms.
- **Consortium members report their CIPA status by submitting the FCC Form 479 to their consortium leader. The consortium leader then files the FCC Form 486.
- To adjust funding commitments and/or modify the dates for receipt of services after the FCDL is issued, file the FCC Form 500.

Applicant Forms and Important Dates Reminder



* Date ranges shown reflect a typical timeline but are subject to change.*

Competitive Bidding Steps



Get Ready to Request Bids

Plan Your Project

Plan the scope of your project and the equipment and services needed.

- Review any state or local competitive bidding and procurement (purchasing) requirements that apply to you.
- Review the [FCC Form 470 Guiding Statements Table](#) to assist with determining the services needed and being requested.
- Understand concepts of [Entity Eligibility](#) and [Service Eligibility](#)
 - Review the [Eligible Services List \(ESL\)](#) for the current funding year to see what equipment and services are eligible for E-Rate program funding.

Be Aware Of “Mixed Eligibility” Products/Services

- **Mixed eligibility** refers to equipment and services for which only a portion is eligible for discounts under the E-Rate program.
- In general, a [cost allocation](#), separating the eligible and ineligible costs, is required if an equipment or service:
 - Contains both eligible and ineligible components — for example, a data T1 circuit (eligible) that also has channels on the circuit dedicated to voice services (ineligible);
 - Is utilized for eligible and ineligible uses — for example, a server that is used for both caching (eligible) and video distribution (ineligible); or
 - Is delivered to both [eligible and ineligible locations](#) — for example, broadband service delivered to a school run by a church (eligible) and to the church office (ineligible).
- There is no single approved method to allocate eligible and ineligible costs. Your method must use tangible criteria that result in a reasonable allocation.

File and Certify an FCC Form 470

File an FCC Form 470

- The applicant must file and certify an [FCC Form 470](#) to initiate the competitive bidding process.
 - Describe your desired services and requirements with sufficient specificity for service providers to be able to submit responsive bids.
 - No generic descriptions (e.g., all Digital Transmission Services).
 - You may also include additional bidding documentation such as a [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) with your FCC Form 470.
 - RFP generically refers to any bidding document that describes the applicant's project and requested equipment and services in more detail.
 - Services requested on the FCC Form 470 and RFP MUST match.

When to File the FCC Form 470

- The FCC Form 470 must be filed every year for services provided under tariff, on a month-to-month basis, or for those seeking new services under contract.
- It must be filed **at least** 28 days before filing FCC Form 471.
 - **Multi-year contracts:** You **do not** need to file a new FCC Form 470 if the contract is still in effect and the costs/services are still within the terms of the establishing FCC Form 470 (but you do still need to file a new FCC Form 471 requesting E-Rate support each funding year).
 - After the contract's initial term is over, you will need to recompetete the contract.
- Competitive Bidding Exemptions:
 - Category One: [Low-Cost High-Speed Internet Access](#)
 - Category Two: [Low Cost Internal Connections \(Libraries only\)](#)

Receipt Notification Letter (RNL)

- After posting FCC Form 470, USAC issues a Receipt Notification Letter (RNL) in your EPC News feed.
- **Review your submitted FCC Form 470 carefully.** If you need to make corrections, do the following:
 - For minor changes (see the [Ministerial and Clerical Errors](#) page on the E-Rate website), locate the form in EPC and choose “Related Actions” to submit [allowable corrections](#).
 - For **significant changes** to your form, you must **file a new FCC Form 470 or restart your 28-day waiting period.**
- The Receipt Notification Letter contains your Allowable Contract Date, which is 28 days after the certification date of your FCC Form 470.

Keep Equipment and Service Requests General

- Do not list the specific make and model of equipment and services sought without also considering equivalent alternatives.
 - Example: “XYZ manufacturer's router model 345J **or equivalent**”
 - EPC will automatically add the “**or equivalent**” language in the FCC Form 470 unless the applicant selects "Other" for the Manufacturer Description. In this case, the applicant will manually write in "or equivalent" when entering their description.
 - Remember to double check your RFP if using one.

Disqualification Factors

- You can disqualify bids if they don't meet the requirements. Bidder disqualification criteria must:
 - Be spelled out in FCC Form 470 and/or RFP, and
 - Be available to **all** potential bidders.
- The following items are examples of bid disqualification reasons:
 - Service provider not registered with the state procurement office.
 - Service provider does not have a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN), also known as the [service provider's 498 ID](#).
 - Service provider must have an FCC RN.
 - Service provider is not bonded.
 - Service provider's bid must directly address requested equipment and services.

Competitive Bidding Tip

When unsure whether a service falls under one of two service types, you are allowed to request bids for **both** service types.

For example, if you are unsure whether a piece of equipment or a service falls under Internal Connections or BMIC, you have the option to seek bids for both.



What's New in E-Rate

School Buses: Now E-Rate Eligible

- Equipment and services necessary to provide mobile broadband **connectivity on school buses are E-Rate eligible** when used for **educational purposes**.
 - Installation fees and equipment needed to make the wireless service for school buses functional **are also eligible** under Category One.
- School bus Wi-Fi services are eligible for school-owned, leased or contracted school buses, **if used primarily to transport students to and from school and school-related activities** for educational purposes. Charter, municipal, city buses and other school-owned vehicles (i.e., cars and vans) are not eligible.
- Separate maintenance and operations services related to mobile broadband connectivity for school buses are also **not eligible**.
- Visit [this link](#) to view FAQs about Wi-Fi on school buses.

School Buses: Competitive Bidding

- School bus Wi-Fi is subject to all existing E-Rate rules and requirements, including competitive bidding, cost allocation, and discounting rules.
 - Applicants are not required to compare costs between a given service plan for providing school bus Wi-Fi and other technological approaches to deliver connectivity to end user devices.
- Applicants who entered into multi-year agreements for Bus Wi-Fi in the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) program are not exempt from competitive bidding requirements.
- The competitive bidding exemption for Commercially Available Business Class Internet Option (CABIO) services does not apply to bus services. It only applies to services delivered to a school or library building.
- Service provider selection must be consistent with E-Rate program rules including selecting the most cost-effective service offering(s), using price of the eligible equipment and services as the primary factor in the evaluation matrix.

Wi-Fi Hotspots: Now E-Rate Eligible

- Eligible schools and libraries can receive E-Rate support for Wi-Fi hotspots and wireless Internet services that can be used off-premises by students, school staff, and library patrons.
- Eligibility is limited to commercially available mobile wireless Internet services delivered through Wi-Fi hotspots.
- Wi-Fi hotspots and Internet services are subject to all existing E-Rate rules and requirements, including competitive bidding, cost allocation, and discounting rules.
- Applicants who entered into multi-year agreements for Wi-Fi hotspots services in the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) program are not exempt from competitive bidding requirements.
- Service provider selection must be consistent with E-Rate program rules including selecting the most cost-effective service offering(s) and using price of the eligible equipment and services as the primary factor in the evaluation matrix.

FCC Form 470 Updates (Coming Soon)

- Adding "Mobile Service for Use on Buses"
 - Can be found under: "I seek bids for internet access and/or data transmission service."
- Adding "School Bus Wi-Fi Network Equipment"
 - Can be found under: "I seek bid for Category One network equipment or maintenance operations."
- Adding "I seek bids for wireless Internet services that can be delivered with a Wi-Fi hotspot for off-premises use."
 - Can be found under: "I seek bids for internet access and/or data transmission service."
- Adding "I seek bids for Wi-Fi hotspots for off-premises use."
 - Can be found under: "I seek bids for Category One network equipment or maintenance and operations."
- To learn how to file the FCC Form 470 to request Wi-Fi on school buses, visit our [webpage](#).

FCC Form 470 Updates: Allowable Contract Date Changes

- RFP Upload
 - Allow users to upload an RFP document to any non-cancelled Form 470, even if that Form 470 did not originally have an RFP.
- Substantial Change Question/New Layout to RFP Upload Screen
 - New Yes/No question: Does this new RFP constitute a substantial change to your FCC Form 470?

The screenshot shows the 'Add an RFP to FCC Form 470' interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'News', 'Tasks (70)', 'Records', 'Reports', and 'Actions'. The 'Records' tab is active. The main content area is titled 'Add an RFP to FCC Form 470' and includes the following text:

QC Smile School District - Used for Dashboard testing - Test ACD reset - Form #250000201 - Funding Year 2025

Upload RFP

Changes to the FCC Form 470, including uploading a new RFP document, may require applicants to restart the 28-day waiting period before selecting a service provider, signing a contract, or submitting and certifying an FCC Form 471. Ministerial or clerical errors, such as updating contact information, do not require a reset of the 28-day waiting period. However, changes that materially affect the competitive bidding process, such as changing the services or equipment being requested, do require restarting the 28-day waiting period.

If you are requesting bids for additional equipment, services, or recipients of service not included on the original FCC Form 470, you may need to file a new FCC Form 470.

Please review the [USAC.org](https://www.usac.org) for additional guidance.


Does this new RFP constitute a substantial change to your FCC Form 470? *

Yes

No

If you select yes, the 28-day waiting period will reset, and the Allowable Contract Date on your FCC Form 470 will be updated accordingly. If the new Allowable Contract Date prevents you from certifying the FCC Form 471 before the application window closes, you must request a waiver from the Commission after certifying the FCC Form 471.

Uploading a new RFP document with substantial changes and not waiting the minimum 28 days may result in denial of funding.

Please add an RFP here  *

Associate RFP to Service Request(s)

Category 1: Data Transmission and/or Internet Access

Please select the service request(s) that apply to the RFP uploaded above.

Allowable Contract Date (ACD) Changes (cont.)

- ACD Automatic Reset
 - When “Yes” is selected for substantial change question, the allowable contract date will automatically update to extend by 28 days.
 - Day of modification/new RFP is day 0, the following day is day 1. ACD on Summary screen will change to reflect new date.
- ACD Automatic Reset Validations
 - ACD cannot be reset if the FCC Form 470 is referenced on an FRN which is not cancelled. Error message will appear.
 - Form 471 cannot be certified if an FRN is citing an FCC Form 470 whose ACD is in the future. Error message will appear.
 - If the offending FCC Form 470 is removed from the application, the app can be certified.

Ensure an Open and Fair Process

Open and Fair

- **Open** = there are no secrets in the process; information shared with one bidder must be shared with all.
- **Fair** = all bidders are treated the same, fairly, and equally.

See the [Open & Fair Process](#) page on our website for more information.



Open and Fair Guidelines

- All applicants must comply with all E-Rate, state, and local procurement requirements.
- Applicants cannot have a relationship with service providers that would unfairly influence the outcome of the competitive bidding process.
- Applicants cannot give anyone inside competitive information.
- Applicants cannot have ownership interest in the company of a service provider that is competing for services.
- Applicants **must** describe the desired equipment and services with sufficient specificity to enable interested parties to bid.
- Applicants cannot receive gifts or donations from service providers that violate or seek to circumvent FCC rules.
- Applicants **are not** required to show “proof” of E-Rate participation or share their bid evaluation information with any service provider.

Create A Bid Evaluation Matrix

- To evaluate incoming bids, create a [bid evaluation matrix](#) or similar document.
- Develop evaluation criteria or factors to assess the bids.
 - You can have one or multiple factors.
 - You may also have disqualifying factors.
- Assign each evaluation factor a point value or percentage.
 - The price of the **eligible equipment and services** must be the most heavily weighted factor.
 - Other factors can be considered, but they must be weighted less than the price of eligible equipment and services.

Sample Bid Evaluation Matrix

FACTOR	POINTS AVAILABLE	VENDOR 1	VENDOR 2	VENDOR 3
Price of the eligible products and services	50*	20	50	40
Prior experience with the vendor	25	25	0	25
Prices for ineligible services, products, and fees	15	10	5	15
Local or in-state vendor	10	10	0	0
TOTAL	100	65	55	80

*This number must be higher than all other numbers in the same column.

Abide by the Gift Rules

- [Receipt or solicitation of gifts](#) by applicants from service providers (and vice versa) is a competitive bidding violation.
- Service providers may not offer or provide any gifts or thing of value to applicant personnel involved in E-Rate.
- Gift prohibitions are always applicable – not just during the competitive bidding process.
- Exceptions for gifts – limited to items worth \$20 or less, including meals or prizes, and cannot exceed \$50 from one service provider to each individual per funding year.
- Watch our [Gift Rules video](#) for more details on the gift rules.

Wait at Least 28 Days

28-Day Waiting Period Review and Reminders

Applicants must wait at least 28 days after certifying their [FCC Form 470](#) before selecting a service provider, executing any contracts for contracted services, or signing and submitting an [FCC Form 471](#). The allowable contract date is the earliest date on which an applicant can select a service provider. See your Receipt Notification Letter.

Your state or local procurement regulations may require a longer waiting period or impose additional requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the 28-day waiting period:

- **When does the waiting period start?** *The calendar day **after** you certify your FCC Form 470, the day you certify, is day zero. For example, if you certify on 1/1/2024, the waiting period starts on 1/2/2024, and your Allowable Contract Date is 1/29/2024 (see slide 39 for a visual aid). If you add a Request for Proposals after certifying the FCC Form 470, you may be required to restart the 28-day waiting period.*
- **Do weekends count as a part of the 28 days?** *Yes, the 28-day period is based on calendar days.*
- **When can you select a vendor?** *After the 28-day waiting period (unless your FCC Form 470 lists a later bid deadline.)*
- **When's the last day you can select a vendor?** *You must select the most cost-effective service offering before you submit the FCC Form 471.*
- **When can you stop receiving bids?** *You may set a bid deadline and include it to your narrative or RFP. This deadline must be at least 28 days after verifying your FCC Form 470 or longer depending on state rules. If you **do not add a deadline to your narrative or RFP**, you must accept bids up until you evaluate bids and make a vendor selection. These deadlines should be memorialized in your records.*

Allowable Contract Date Infographic

CALENDAR						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	Certified FCC Form 470 1 Day 0	2 Day 1	3 Day 2	4 Day 3
5 Day 4	6 Day 5	7 Day 6	8 Day 7	9 Day 8	10 Day 9	11 Day 10
12 Day 11	13 Day 12	14 Day 13	15 Day 14	16 Day 15	17 Day 16	18 Day 17
19 Day 18	20 Day 19	21 Day 20	22 Day 21	23 Day 22	24 Day 23	25 Day 24
26 Day 25	27 Day 26	28 Day 27	Allowable Contract Date 29 Day 28	30	1	2

Remember

If the 470 narrative or RFP does not include a bid submission deadline



then applicants are **required** to accept all bids up until they conduct their evaluation.

- This is the earliest you can select a vendor.¹
- You can wait up until you certify FCC Form 471 to select a vendor.²

¹ This may vary based on state and local procurement rules.
² You must select a vendor before the filing window closes.

While You Wait

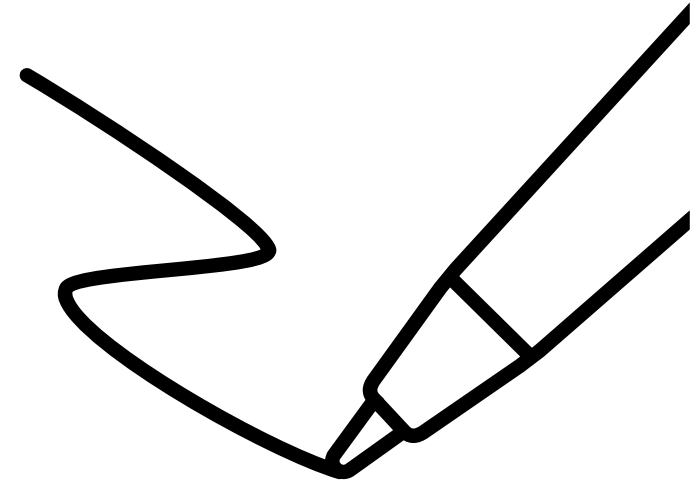
- After applicants file and certify their FCC Form 470, they must wait a minimum of 28 days before selecting a service provider.
- Use the 28-day waiting period to:
 - Receive bids.
 - Respond to service provider inquiries regarding your project.
 - Be sure that any information provided to one service provider is provided to all bidders.
 - [Evaluate the bids](#) using your factors and bid evaluation matrix.

Next Steps After the 28-Day Waiting Period



What If You Receive No Bids?

- If applicants receive no bids or only one bid, they can:
 - Proactively solicit bids after waiting 28 days.
 - Ask their current provider to submit a bid.
 - Accept the one bid, if it is cost effective.
- Be sure to create a memo for your E-Rate files to document the situation.

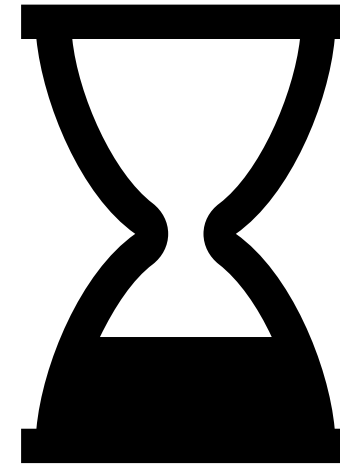


Select A Service Provider

Allowable Contract Date

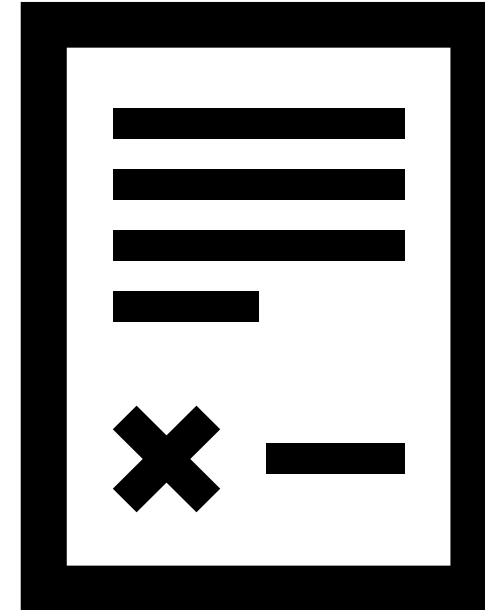
- Wait 28 days
- Evaluate all bids
- Select the service provider(s)

Reminder: Your Allowable Contract Date is printed on your Receipt Notification Letter.



Enter Into a Legally Binding Agreement

- After selecting a service provider, legally enter into a [binding agreement](#) with them.
- Sign something (a contract, purchase order, etc.) requesting the services from the provider(s).
- Upload the evidence to your Contract Profile in EPC.



Document Retention

- Applicants and service providers are required to [retain documentation](#) that demonstrates compliance with the statutory or regulatory requirements for all E-Rate program purchases of equipment and services **for a period of 10 years** after the latter of the last day of the applicable funding year or the service delivery deadline for the funding request.
- Keep all records such as:
 - RFP documents
 - Winning and losing bids
 - Vendor correspondence
 - Evaluation matrices
 - Documentation and memos of zero or one bid received (if applicable)
 - Other competitive bidding documentation
- The [Document Retention List](#) is available in the Resources section of the USAC website.

Additional Information

USAC Does Not Pay for Duplicative Services

- **Duplicative services** are services that provide the same functionality for the same population in the same location during the same period of time. USAC cannot fund duplicative services.
- **Backup services** are services sought to reduce reliance on any single service provider's network during an outage and **are considered duplicative**.
- Services that provide necessary bandwidth requirements, such as multiple T-1 lines when appropriate for the population served and the services to be received, may not be considered duplicative. However, the applicant must still evaluate and choose the most cost-effective option from the bids received.

State Master Contracts

- A [state master contract](#) (SMC) is competitively bid and put in place by a state government for use by entities in that state.
- If the state files an FCC Form 470:
 - The applicant cites the state's FCC Form 470 on its FCC Form 471.
 - The applicant is required to follow the applicable provisions of the state master contract and state and local procurement laws. No separate bidding documents or contracts are required by the applicant citing the state's FCC Form 470, other than what is required by the state master contract and state and local procurement laws. The signed state master contract between the state and the service provider must meet the FCC signed contract requirement.

Bid Awards

- **Single winner:** Single vendor wins the bid
- **Multiple Award Schedule:** State awards contract for same equipment and services to multiple vendors that can serve the same population.
 - If the state awards contracts to multiple service providers, the applicant must conduct a bid evaluation for all service providers able to provide services to the applicant under these contracts (a mini-bid process).
 - Justify vendor selection.
 - Remember to include in your mini-bid all contracts on the multiple award schedule that provide the services sought.

Common Missteps and Bidding Errors

- Failure to provide **complete and accurate** information on the FCC Form 470 and RFP, such as:
 - Correct category and service type.
 - Appropriate details on the project, deadlines, and other necessary requirements.



Common Missteps and Bidding Errors - Continued

- Failure to retain all competitive bidding documents.
 - Retain the Bidding Matrix showing that:
 - Price was the most highly-weighted factor.
 - You carefully considered **all bids received**.
 - Retain winning and losing bids.
 - If you only received one bid, create a memo to document that fact for your files.



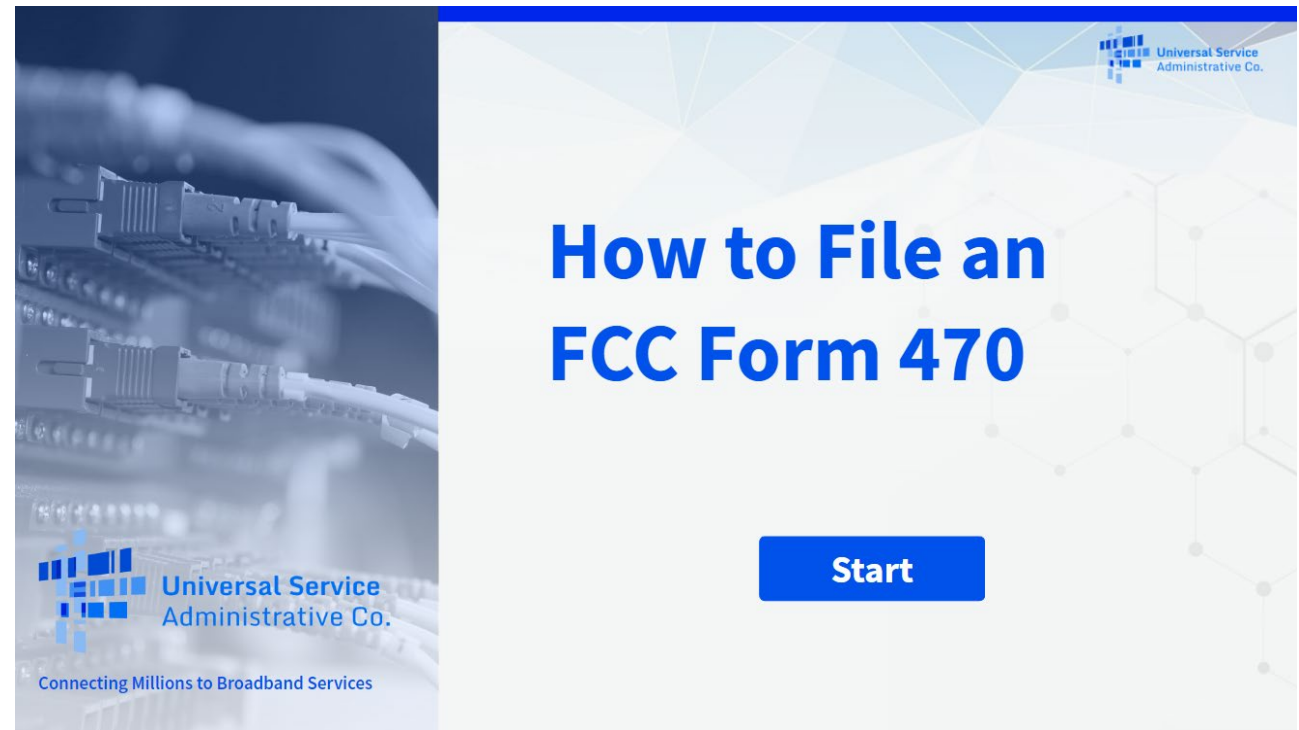
Common Missteps and Bidding Errors - Continued

- Failure to wait the **full 28-day waiting period**.
 - Count from the date of certification on the FCC Form 470.
 - Be sure to select a service provider **on or after** the Allowable Contract Date.



How to File an FCC Form 470 eLearning Module

- Form Assistance
- Begin the form: Basics
- Categories of Services
- Certifications
- [Link to eLearning Module](#)



FCC Form 470 Search User Guide

- How to search for certified FCC Form 470s in EPC
- Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470
- Exporting Search Results
- [Link to guide](#)


SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES (E-RATE) PROGRAM

Last Modified: April 2018

How to Search for FCC Forms 470 in EPC

Any user with an E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) account can search for and view certified FCC Forms 470 using a number of different criteria. Criteria include, for example, funding year, service type(s), state, or zip code.

Service Providers
Log in to EPC. Service provider users will see **Search FCC Forms 470** in the top right-hand menu of their landing page and can click this link to access the search function.



The screenshot shows a user interface for Universal Service Administrative Co. with a navigation bar (News, Tasks (0), Records, Reports, Actions) and a user profile icon. Below the navigation bar is the 'My Landing Page' section, which includes the company logo and a menu with the following items: Search FCC Forms 470, Manage Subscriptions, Contact Us, Appeal, Service, SUBSCRIPTION TYPE Change, and Help. The 'Search FCC Forms 470' link is highlighted with a red box.

All Other Users
Log in to EPC, click the **Actions** tab, and select **Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470**.

Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470

1. Enter the search criteria:
 - Funding Year
 - Date Posted Online*
 - Service Type(s)
 - Applicant Type*
 - Zip Code
 - State*


*mandatory field

2. Click **Continue**.

3 Universal Service Administrative Company | FCC Form 470 Search User Guide

FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table

- Category One vs Category Two
- Leased Dark and Lit Fiber
- Internet Access
- Data Transmission
- [Link to guide](#)


Available for Public Use

FY22 FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table

Starting with Funding Year 2022, the FCC Form 470 includes guiding statements to help applicants request E-Rate eligible services and/or equipment for the upcoming funding year. The following tables provide a quick way to reference the options provided in the form along with guiding messages.

Please see footnotes for additional information where provided.

Category One

If you intend to request bids for:	You should first select "I seek bids for internet access and/or data transmission service." Next, choose the following FCC Form 470 statement:	Then, choose the following FCC Form 470 statement:
Internet Access and Data Transmission Service	I seek bids for internet access and data transmission service (provided over any combination of transmission medium, e.g., fiber-only networks, fiber/non-fiber hybrid networks, or non-fiber networks such as cable, DSL, copper, satellite, or microwave).	I seek bids for internet access and data transmission services, whether offered by one service provider(s) as a bundled package or offered by one or more service providers as independent services. ¹
Cellular Data Plan/Air Card Service	I seek bids for internet access and data transmission service (provided over any combination of transmission medium, e.g., fiber-only networks, fiber/non-fiber hybrid networks, or non-fiber networks such as cable, DSL, copper, satellite, or microwave).	I seek bids for data plans or wireless adapters (Air Cards) for mobile devices for commercial wireless service for a school or library that does not have existing broadband internal connections. ²

¹ Applicants can use the narrative field on the FCC Form 470 and/or their RFP, if applicable, to provide additional details regarding their service need requirements.

² Cellular data plans and air cards for mobile devices are eligible only when the applicant seeking support demonstrates that the individual data plans are the most cost-effective option for providing internal broadband access for mobile devices at schools and/or libraries.

usac.org/e-rate
Updated December 2021

The Service Provider's Role

Know Your Role in the E-Rate Process

Applicants

- Determine services needed, file FCC Form 470.
- Conduct the competitive bidding process.
- Select winning bidder with price of eligible equipment and services as primary factor.
- Respond to Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) questions.
- File other applicant forms (FCC Forms 471, 486, 472, 500, etc.).
- Document compliance with FCC rules (ongoing).
- Retain documentation for at least 10 years from last date of service delivery.

Service Providers

- Respond to FCC Form 470 and any RFP.
- May assist with responding to PIA questions on technical services questions (but **not competitive bidding**).
- File service provider forms (FCC Forms 473, 474, etc.).
- Document your compliance with FCC rules (ongoing).
- Retain documentation for at least 10 years from last date of service delivery.

Service Providers – Bid on Services

- The **applicant** starts the [competitive bidding process](#) by posting one or more FCC Forms 470 and Request(s) for Proposals (RFP) documents, if applicable, to the USAC website.
 - These documents may include specific requirements for service providers to follow during the competitive bidding process.
- **Service providers** [review the information and bid on the requested services](#).
 - Use [FCC Form 470 tools](#) to search and view FCC Form 470 service requests and RFPs.
 - The bid should include information on E-Rate eligibility percentage and category of service.
 - The bid should be responsive to the equipment and services being requested.



Open and Fair – Service Providers

To help ensure an open and fair process, service providers should:

- **Review all the requirements**, including the FCC Form 470 and any RFP(s).
- Provide a responsive bid to what was requested by the applicant.
- Ask questions if the information provided by the applicant is unclear.
- Separate the eligible, mixed bucket, and **ineligible services** in your bid response.
- **Do not offer gifts, free services, devices, or non-E-Rate discounts** to make your response more attractive.
- **Do not offer to help** an applicant if you are also planning to respond to their bid request.

Lowest Corresponding Price (LCP)

- Service providers are required to offer applicants their services at the [lowest corresponding price](#) charged to other similarly situated customers throughout their geographic service area.
- This rule ensures that applicants are not charged more than similarly situated non-residential customers for the same services because of E-Rate participation.
- Exceptions can be made if the provider can show that they face significantly higher costs to serve this customer due to volume, mileage from facility, or length of contract.
- Applies to all service providers and for all service arrangements (tariff, month-to-month, and contracted services).

Resources

Resources

- [Competitive Bidding Page](#)
- [Competitive Bidding Infographic](#)
- [Competitive Bidding FAQs](#)
- [28-Day Waiting Period Page](#)
- [How to File an FCC Form 470 eLM](#)
- [Guiding Statements Video](#)
- [Guiding Statements Reference Table](#)
- [Applicant Process Page](#)
- [Service Provider Process Page](#)
- [Document Retention](#)

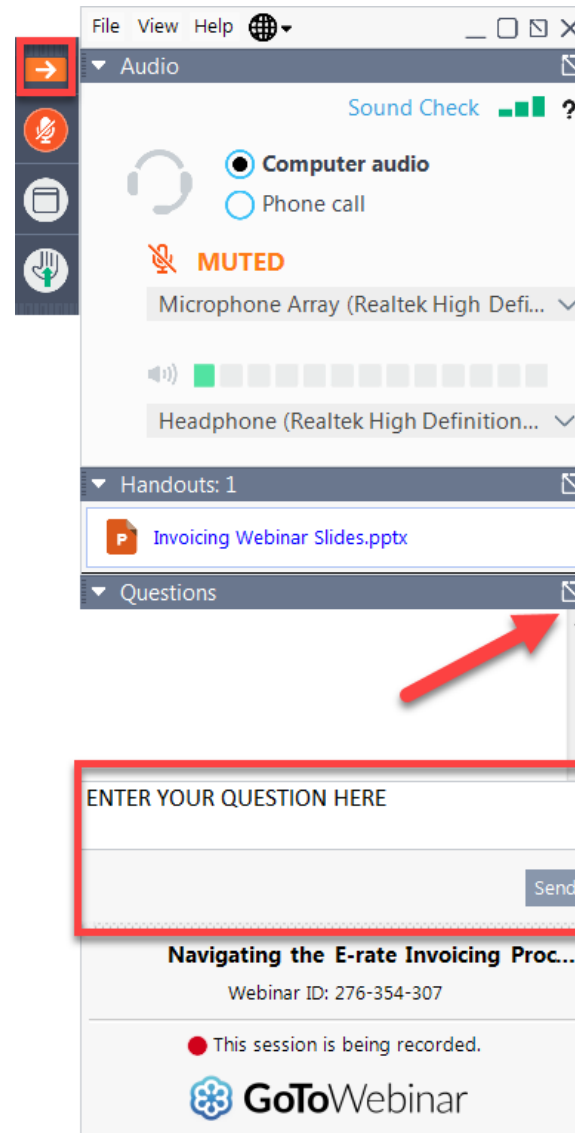


Additional Resources

- [Subscribe](#) to the E-Rate News Brief
 - Upcoming Date reminders
 - Program announcements
- [Webinars](#)
 - Watch past webinars and register for upcoming trainings.
- Customer Service Center (CSC)
 - Call us at (888) 203-8100
 - Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET

Live Q&A

- Submit your questions about today's topics:
 - Competitive Bidding
 - Requesting Bids
 - File and Certify an FCC Form 470
 - Open and Fair Process
 - 28-Day Waiting Period
 - Select a Service Provider
 - The Service Provider's Role



Q&A Tips

- ✓ Type your queries into the “Questions” box in your webinar control panel.
- ✓ Write in full sentences.
- ✓ Ask one question at a time.
- ✓ Click the box with the arrow above the questions box to expand it and see all the written answers.

Questions?

E-Rate Customer Service Center (CSC)



Call us at (888) 203-8100

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET



Create a customer service case in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC):

1. Log in to EPC.
2. Select the **Contact Us** link from the upper right menu on the landing page.

Upcoming Webinars

**Our next webinar is on:
August 15 at 2 p.m. ET**

Newly Eligible E-Rate Equipment & Services: Wi-Fi Hotspot Order (FCC 24-76)

Recommended for: Applicants and service providers

E-Rate Experience Level: All

For additional information, subscribe to the

The screenshot shows a webpage with a left-hand navigation menu and a main content area. The navigation menu includes: Learn, E-Learning Modules (with a dropdown arrow), Videos, Webinars (highlighted with a yellow bar), Regional Trainings, Tribal Training (with a dropdown arrow), EPC/BEAR Training Sites (with a dropdown arrow), and FAQs (with a dropdown arrow). The main content area is titled "Webinars" and contains the following text:

Join USAC for our live training webinars provided throughout the year for Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program participants. We will share program updates and essential guidance to help participants learn about and successfully navigate the program.

During each webinar, the audience will have the opportunity to take part in a live question and answer session with members of the E-rate Program team when we will answer questions on the webinar topic.

Equipment and Set-Up

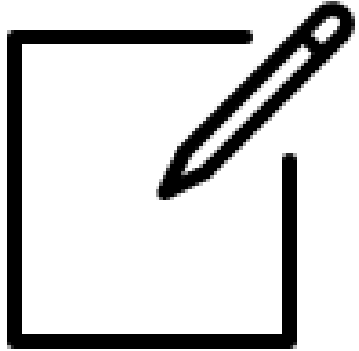
To participate, you'll need:

- To meet the [system requirements for attendees](#)
 - Click the "[check system requirements](#)" link to determine whether your computer meets the requirements to see and hear the webinar.
- A computer or mobile device with an internet connection.
- You can listen the webinar audio using your computer speakers or headset, or by calling in using the number provided in your confirmation email.

Select a webinar below to register. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about the event. You can add a calendar reminder from the registration confirmation page or event confirmation email by clicking "Add to Calendar."

Go to the E-Rate page for additional information.

Take Our Survey



- We want to hear about your webinar experience.
- A survey will appear on your screen at the end of the webinar.
- If you are not able to complete the survey today, one will be emailed to you within one to two business days.
- We appreciate your feedback!

Thank You!





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