

## RHC Connect User Guide – Letter of Agency (LOA) and Letter of Exemption (LOE)

**Updated as of September 2024**

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## General Information

### Letter of Agency

A [Letter of Agency \(LOA\)](#) is required for health care providers (HCP) that are not owned or controlled by the consortium leader. The LOA authorizes the consortium leader to file forms and act on behalf of the participating site(s) in matters related to the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program. The LOA is written by the participating HCP and is addressed to the consortium leader (also called “lead entity”).

#### Requirements

The LOA must include the following:

- Name of the entity filing the application (i.e., lead entity or consortium leader).
- Name of HCP/consortium member authorizing the lead entity to file the application on its behalf.
- Physical location or address of the HCP/consortium member site(s).
- Specific timeframe the LOA covers (i.e., the start date and end date).
- Signature, title, and contact information (including mailing address, phone number, and email address) of an official authorized to act on behalf of the HCP/consortium member.
  - **For HCPs on Tribal lands:** If the health care facility is a contract facility run solely by a Tribal nation, the appropriate Tribal leader, such as a Tribal chairperson, president, governor, or chief, must also sign the LOA, unless health care responsibilities have been delegated to another Tribal government representative.
- Date of signature.
- Type of services covered by the LOA; and
- Relationship of each HCP seeking support to the lead entity filing the application on their behalf.

#### Recommendations

USAC recommends that the LOA:

- Is submitted on the letterhead of the participating health system or consortium member.
- Include a statement authorizing the consortium leader to submit the FCC Form 460 (Eligibility and Registration Form), submit the FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form), prepare and post the request for proposal (RFP), submit the FCC Form 462

(Funding Request Form), and manage invoicing and payments on behalf of the consortium member.

- Include the HCP number(s) with the physical location or address of the HCP/consortium member site(s).

### **Tips for Including a Third-Party Authorization (TPA)**

An LOA can also serve as a [third-party authorization \(TPA\)](#) between consortium members and third parties by including the following language:

- “[HCP Name] hereby authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to act on its behalf...”
- “[HCP Name] authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to: [HCP Name] authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to submit the FCC Form 461...”
- “By this Letter of Agency, [HCP Name] authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to make the certifications included in the FCC Form 461...”

### **Letter of Exemption (LOE)**

For health care providers (HCP) that are owned or controlled by the consortium leader, a current (i.e., through the funding year for which funding is requested) [Letter of Exemption \(LOE\)](#) must be filed. The LOE authorizes the consortium leader to file forms and act on behalf of the participating site(s) in matters related to the HCF Program. The LOE is written by the participating HCP and should be addressed to “USAC review staff” or “to whom it may concern.”

### **Requirements**

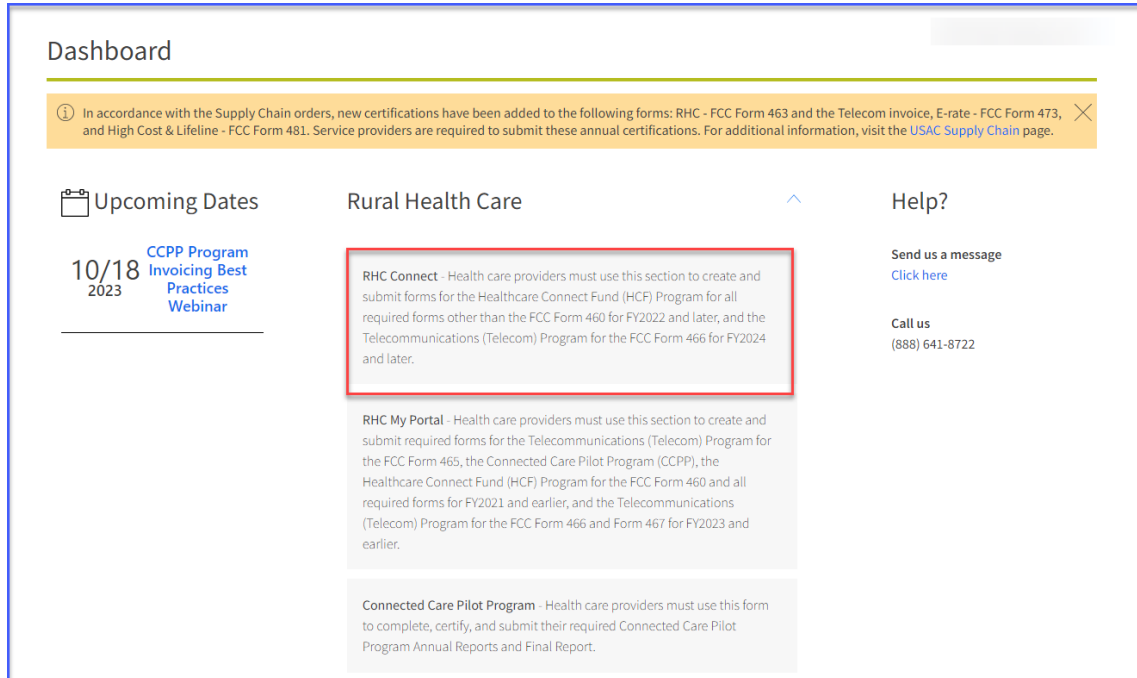
The LOE should include:

- Name of the entity authorized to submit forms on behalf of the HCP/consortium member.
- Physical location or address of the HCP/consortium member site(s).
- Signature, title, and contact information (including mailing address, phone number, and email address) of the officer, director, or other employee of the consortium member submitting the LOE.
- Date of signature.
- A statement from the consortium leader verifying that the consortium leader owns and operates the member HCPs listed on the LOE document and/or that the member HCPs listed on the LOE document are ineligible sites.

## RHC Connect Walkthrough

### Step 1:

Log into My Portal and click on **RHC Connect**.



The screenshot shows the RHC Connect Dashboard. At the top, there is a notification banner: "In accordance with the Supply Chain orders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 and the Telecom invoice, E-rate - FCC Form 473, and High Cost & Lifeline - FCC Form 481. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional information, visit the USAC Supply Chain page." Below the banner, the dashboard is divided into three main sections: "Upcoming Dates", "Rural Health Care", and "Help?".

**Upcoming Dates:** A calendar icon is next to the text "Upcoming Dates". Below it, a date "10/18 2023" is displayed next to the text "CCPP Program Invoicing Best Practices Webinar".

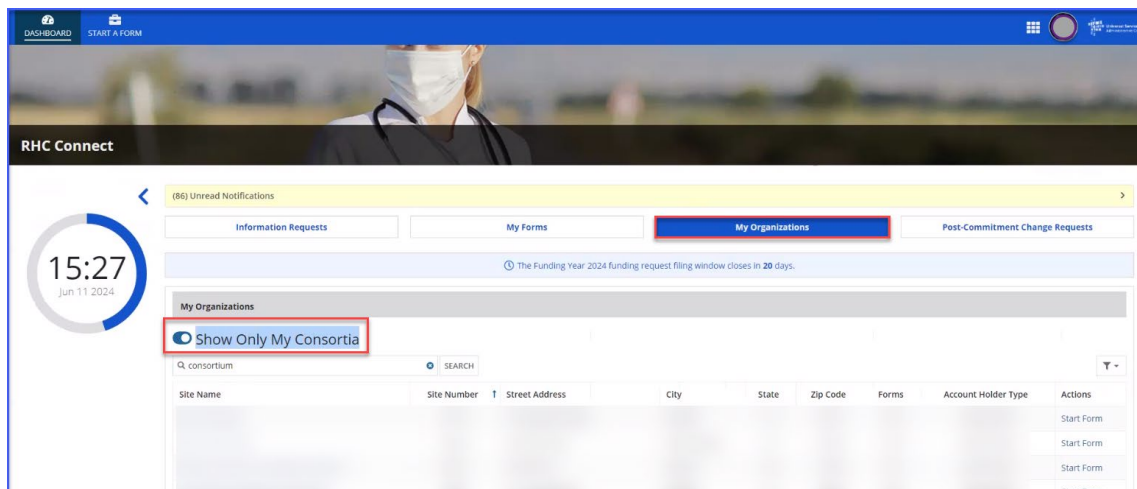
**Rural Health Care:** This section contains three informational cards:

- RHC Connect:** Health care providers must use this section to create and submit forms for the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program for all required forms other than the FCC Form 460 for FY2022 and later, and the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program for the FCC Form 466 for FY2024 and later.
- RHC My Portal:** Health care providers must use this section to create and submit required forms for the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program for the FCC Form 465, the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP), the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program for the FCC Form 460 and all required forms for FY2021 and earlier, and the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program for the FCC Form 466 and Form 467 for FY2023 and earlier.
- Connected Care Pilot Program:** Health care providers must use this form to complete, certify, and submit their required Connected Care Pilot Program Annual Reports and Final Report.

**Help?:** This section includes links for "Send us a message" (with a "Click here" link), "Call us" (with the phone number (888) 641-8722), and "Click here".

### Step 2:

Navigate to the **My Organizations** tab on the **RHC Connect Dashboard**. All active consortia will display if the toggle beside **Show Only My Consortia** is in the closed position. To view your consortia, click on the toggle to open it.

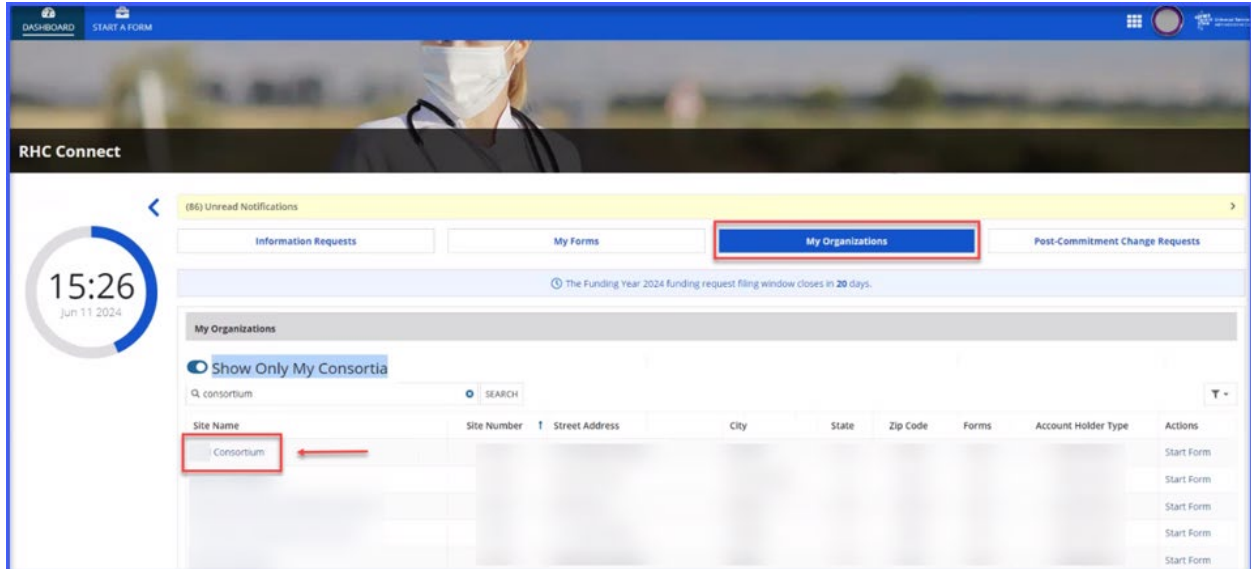


The screenshot shows the "My Organizations" page within the RHC Connect dashboard. At the top, there is a navigation bar with "DASHBOARD" and "START A FORM" buttons. Below the navigation bar, there is a header for "RHC Connect" and a notification for "(86) Unread Notifications".

The main content area has four tabs: "Information Requests", "My Forms", "My Organizations" (which is highlighted with a red box), and "Post-Commitment Change Requests". Below the tabs, there is a message: "The Funding Year 2024 funding request filing window closes in 20 days." Below this message, there is a section titled "My Organizations" with a toggle switch labeled "Show Only My Consortia" (highlighted with a red box). Below the toggle, there is a search bar and a table with columns: "Site Name", "Site Number", "Street Address", "City", "State", "Zip Code", "Forms", "Account Holder Type", and "Actions". The "Actions" column contains "Start Form" links for each row.

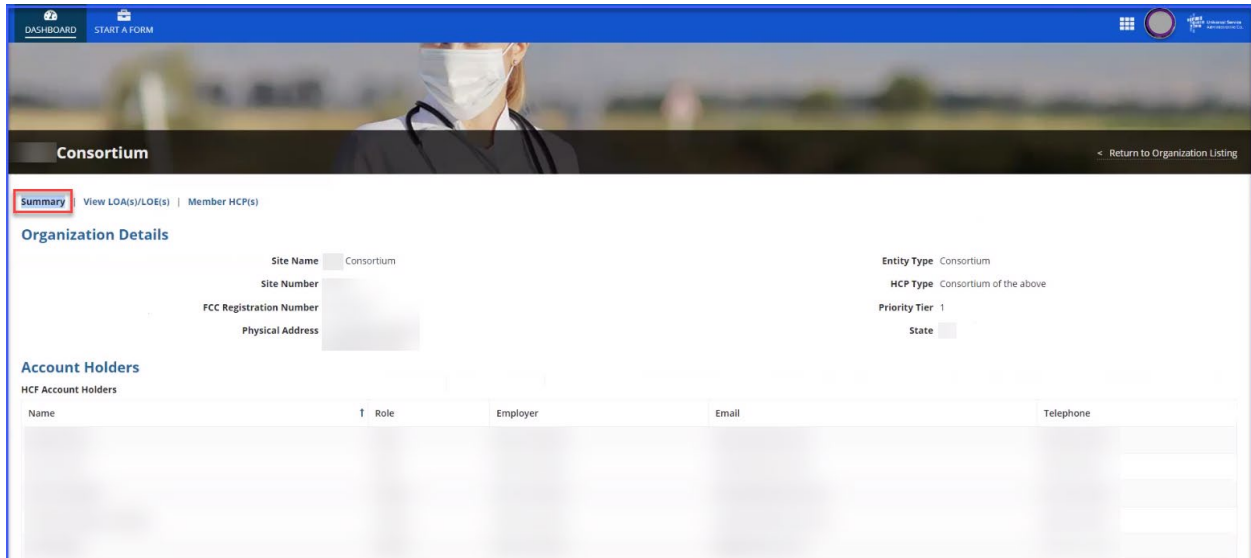
**Step 3:**

Select the consortium you're submitting the LOA for by clicking the hyperlink on the **Site Name**.



**Step 4:**

Once the hyperlink for the consortium is clicked, the **Summary** screen is displayed with all of the information about the selected consortium.



**Step 5:**

On the **View LOAs/LOEs** section, click on the existing LOA to view information about the LOA in the **Details** section.

**View Letter(s) of Agency/ Exemption** SUBMIT NEW LOA/LOE

ID#	Submission Type	Nickname	Effective Date	Expiration Date	Submitted By	Status	Submitted On
700034	Letter of Agency (LOA)		5/30/2024	7/6/2024		Submitted	6/10/2024 8:49 PM EDT
700033	Letter of Exemption (LOE)					Submitted	6/10/2024 8:39 PM EDT
700032	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	6/10/2024 8:13 PM EDT
700031	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	6/6/2024 3:05 PM EDT
700024	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/11/2024 1:49 PM EDT
700017	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/9/2024 12:06 PM EDT
700004	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/8/2024 5:03 PM EDT
700002	Letter of Exemption (LOE)					Submitted	5/2/2024 4:55 PM EDT
700001	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/2/2024 4:50 PM EDT

9 items

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**Details**

LOA/ LOE ID: 700034

LOA/LOE Uploaded Document: Individual ID PCL

Nickname: [Redacted]

Effective Date: 5/30/2024

Expiration Date: 7/6/2024

Attached HCP(s)

HCP Number	HCP Name	State	Attached On	Status
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	6/10/2024 8:49 PM EDT	Submitted
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	6/10/2024 8:49 PM EDT	Submitted

**Step 6:**

To submit a new LOA or LOE, click the **Submit New LOA/LOE** button.

DASHBOARD START A FORM UNIVERSAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATIVE CO.

**Consortium** Return to Organization Listing

Summary **View LOA(s)/LOE(s)** Member HCP(s)

SUBMIT NEW LOA/LOE

**View Letter(s) of Agency/ Exemption**

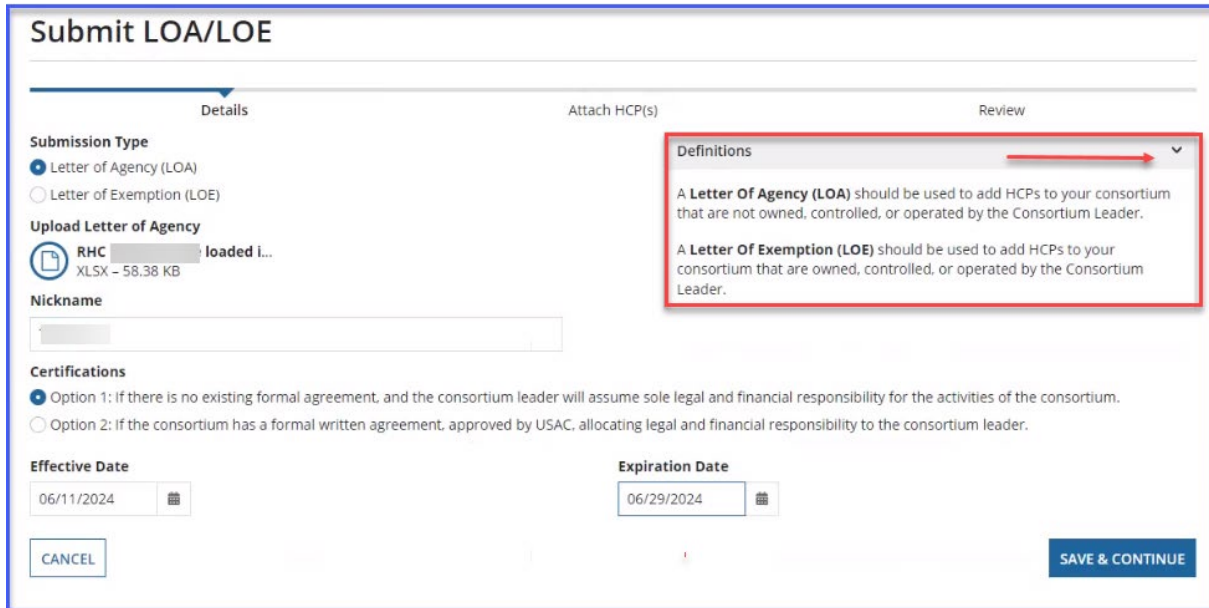
ID#	Submission Type	Nickname	Effective Date	Expiration Date	Submitted By	Status	Submitted On
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700024	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/11/2024 1:49 PM EDT
700017	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/9/2024 12:06 PM EDT
700004	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/8/2024 5:03 PM EDT
700002	Letter of Exemption (LOE)					Submitted	5/2/2024 4:55 PM EDT
700001	Letter of Agency (LOA)					Submitted	5/2/2024 4:50 PM EDT

9 items

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**Step 7:**

When the **Submit New LOA/LOE** button is clicked, this pop-up screen will appear. Read the definitions of the LOA and LOE by clicking the dropdown arrow beside **Definitions** on the **Details** screen.



**Submit LOA/LOE**

Details Attach HCP(s) Review

**Submission Type**

Letter of Agency (LOA)  
 Letter of Exemption (LOE)

**Upload Letter of Agency**

RHC [redacted] loaded i...  
XLSX - 58.38 KB

**Nickname**

[redacted]

**Certifications**

Option 1: If there is no existing formal agreement, and the consortium leader will assume sole legal and financial responsibility for the activities of the consortium.  
 Option 2: If the consortium has a formal written agreement, approved by USAC, allocating legal and financial responsibility to the consortium leader.

**Effective Date**

**Expiration Date**

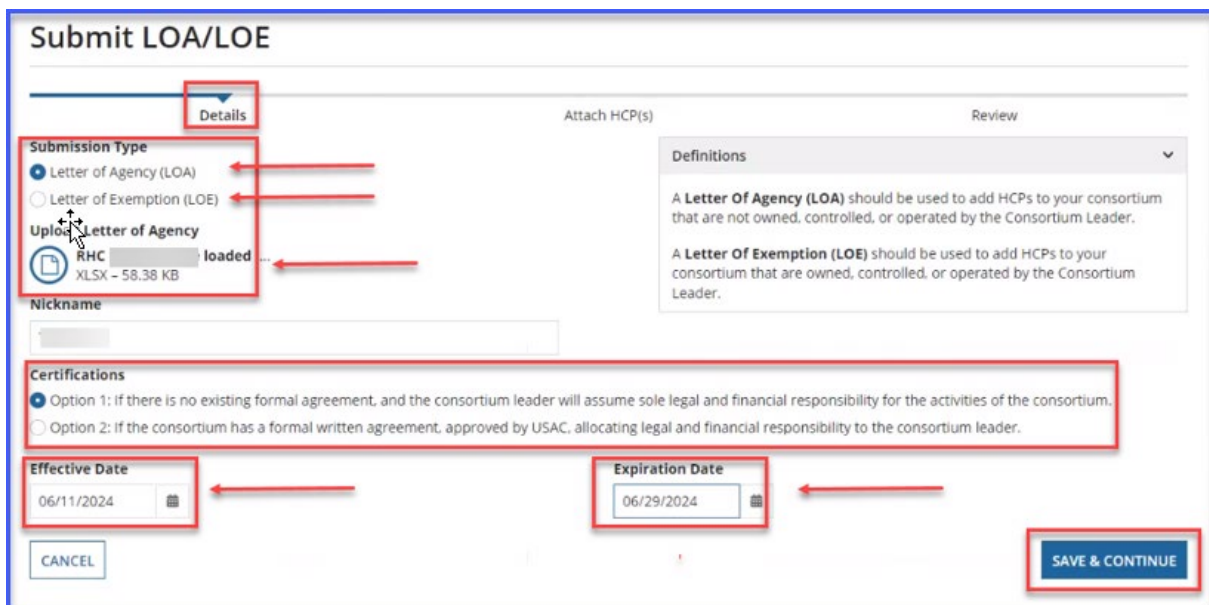
**Definitions**

A **Letter Of Agency (LOA)** should be used to add HCPs to your consortium that are not owned, controlled, or operated by the Consortium Leader.

A **Letter Of Exemption (LOE)** should be used to add HCPs to your consortium that are owned, controlled, or operated by the Consortium Leader.

**Step 8:**

On the **Details** screen, click the correct radio button under **Submission Type** and upload the document. Enter a nickname and select **Option 1** or **Option 2** under **Certifications**. Select the **Effective Date** and the **Expiration Date** from the dropdown calendar, then click **Save & Continue**.



**Submit LOA/LOE**

Details Attach HCP(s) Review

**Submission Type**

Letter of Agency (LOA)  
 Letter of Exemption (LOE)

**Upload Letter of Agency**

RHC [redacted] loaded i...  
XLSX - 58.38 KB

**Nickname**

[redacted]

**Certifications**

Option 1: If there is no existing formal agreement, and the consortium leader will assume sole legal and financial responsibility for the activities of the consortium.  
 Option 2: If the consortium has a formal written agreement, approved by USAC, allocating legal and financial responsibility to the consortium leader.

**Effective Date**

**Expiration Date**

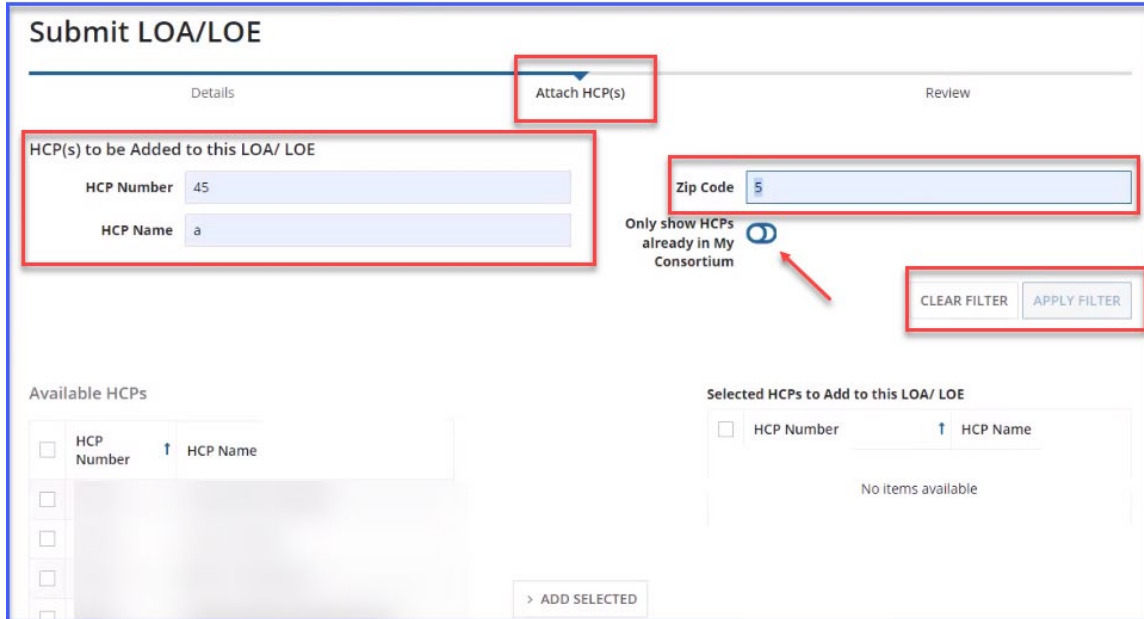
**Definitions**

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A **Letter Of Exemption (LOE)** should be used to add HCPs to your consortium that are owned, controlled, or operated by the Consortium Leader.

**Step 9:**

On the **Attach HCP(s)** screen, search for the HCPs to be added to the LOA/LOE by using the HCP number, the HCP name, or the zip code of the HCP site. Then click **Apply Filter**. A partial search may be entered. To view HCPs that are already members of the consortium, open the toggle button shown below.



**Submit LOA/LOE**

Details **Attach HCP(s)** Review

HCP(s) to be Added to this LOA/ LOE

HCP Number

HCP Name

Zip Code

Only show HCPs already in My Consortium

Available HCPs

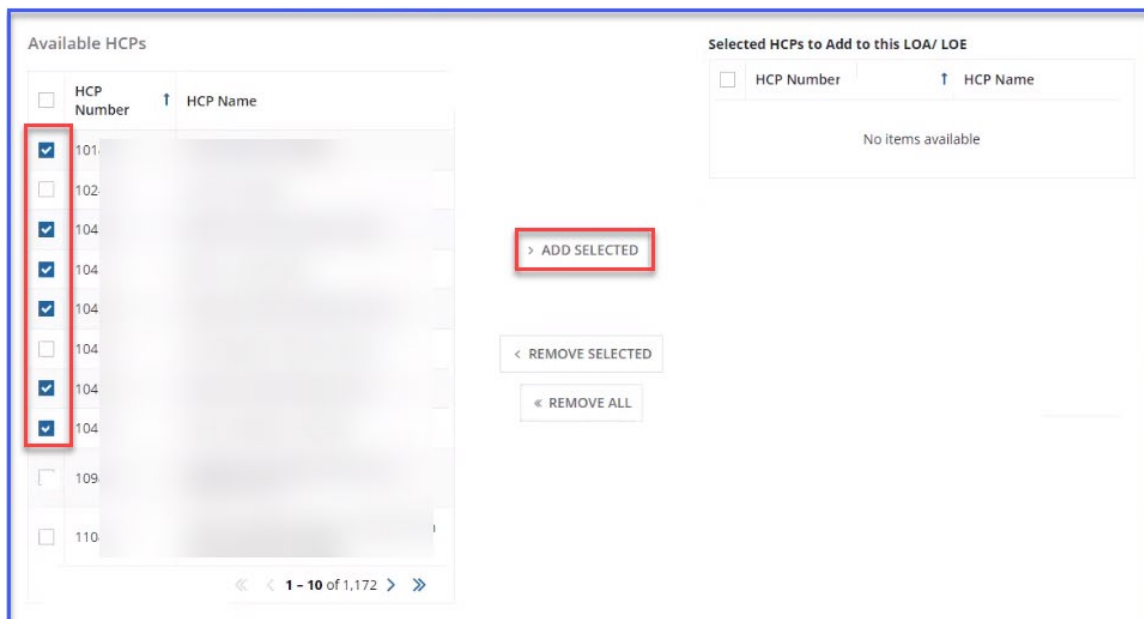
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCP Number	HCP Name
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		

Selected HCPs to Add to this LOA/ LOE

<input type="checkbox"/>	HCP Number	HCP Name
No items available		

**Step 10:**

Select the HCPs to attach, then click **Add Selected**.



Available HCPs

<input type="checkbox"/>	HCP Number	HCP Name
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	101	
<input type="checkbox"/>	102	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	104	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	104	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	104	
<input type="checkbox"/>	104	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	104	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	104	
<input type="checkbox"/>	109	
<input type="checkbox"/>	110	

Selected HCPs to Add to this LOA/ LOE

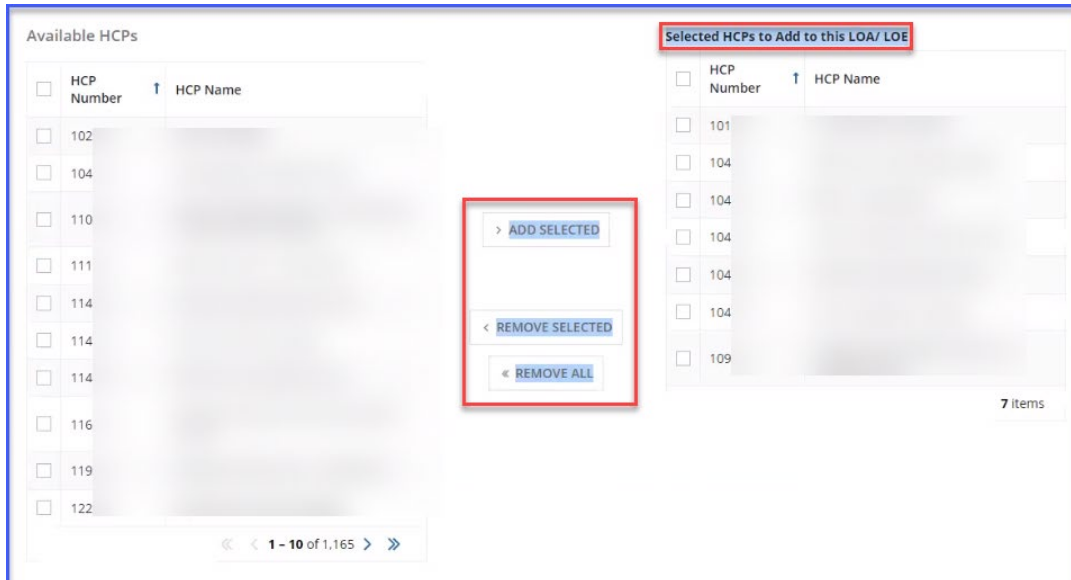
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCP Number	HCP Name
No items available		

« 1 - 10 of 1,172 »



**Step 11:**

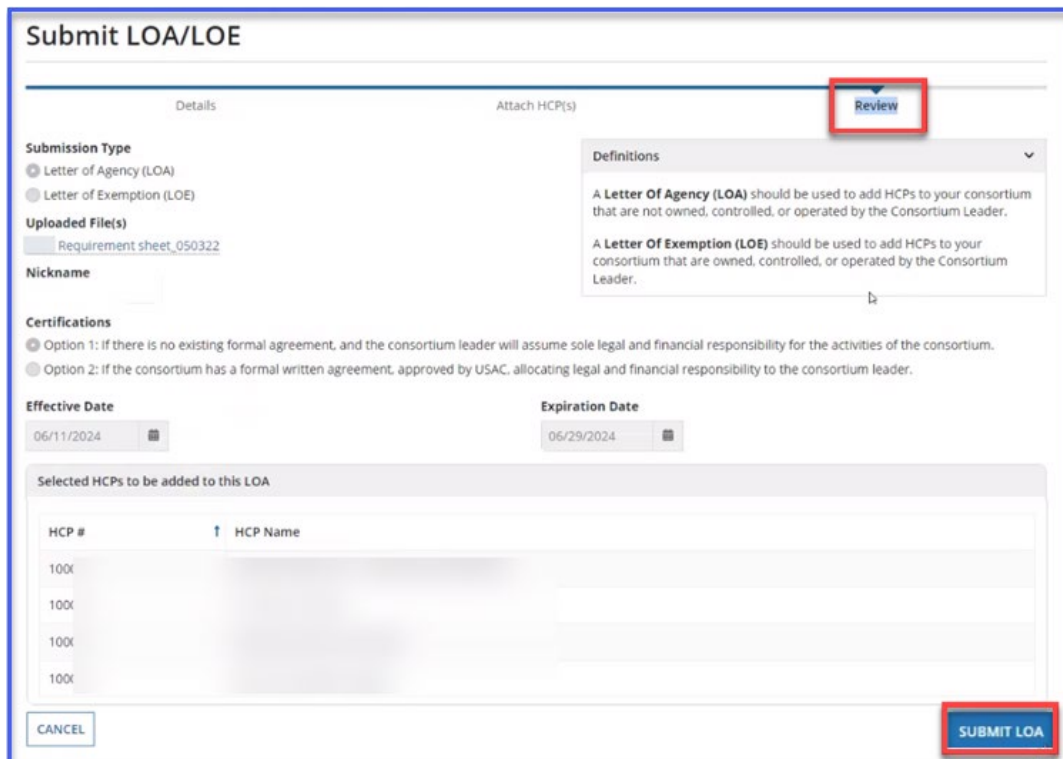
Selected HCPs will move to the column on the right. Click **Remove Selected** or **Remove All** if the HCP(s) was selected incorrectly. Once all HCPs are added, click **Save & Continue**.



The screenshot shows a user interface for selecting HCPs. On the left is a table titled "Available HCPs" with columns for "HCP Number" and "HCP Name". On the right is a table titled "Selected HCPs to Add to this LOA/ LOE" with the same columns, containing 7 items. Between the tables are three buttons: "> ADD SELECTED", "< REMOVE SELECTED", and "◀ REMOVE ALL". A red box highlights these three buttons.

**Step 12:**

On the **Review** screen, review all of the information entered, then click **Submit LOA**.



The screenshot shows the "Submit LOA/LOE" review screen. At the top, there are tabs for "Details", "Attach HCP(s)", and "Review", with the "Review" tab highlighted by a red box. Below the tabs, there are sections for "Submission Type" (radio buttons for Letter of Agency (LOA) and Letter of Exemption (LOE)), "Uploaded File(s)" (a file named Requirement sheet\_050322), "Nickname", "Certifications" (two radio button options), "Effective Date" (06/11/2024), and "Expiration Date" (06/29/2024). At the bottom, there is a table titled "Selected HCPs to be added to this LOA" with columns for "HCP #" and "HCP Name". At the bottom right, there is a "SUBMIT LOA" button highlighted with a red box, and a "CANCEL" button at the bottom left.

**Step 13:**

After submitting, you will be directed to the confirmation page. The message in the green banner confirms that the LOA/LOE was successfully submitted.

### Submit LOA/LOE | ID: 700035

You have successfully attached a Letter of Agency to the following Health Care Providers.

**LOA/LOE ID**  
700035

**Submission Type**

Letter of Agency (LOA)  
 Letter of Exemption (LOE)

**Uploaded File(s)**

**Nickname**

**Certifications**

Option 1: If there is no existing formal agreement, and the consortium leader will assume sole legal and financial responsibility for the activities of the consortium.  
 Option 2: If the consortium has a formal written agreement, approved by USAC, allocating legal and financial responsibility to the consortium leader.

**Effective Date**

**Expiration Date**

**Attached HCP(s)**

**Definitions**

A **Letter Of Agency (LOA)** should be used to add HCPs to your consortium that are not owned, controlled, or operated by the Consortium Leader.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What changes were made from My Portal to the RHC Connect?**

RHC Connect has a new look and feel that is more intuitive and user-friendly. It is easier to navigate the form for submission, and it is easier for RHC program reviewers to approve funding requests.

### **Did the requirements for Letters of Agency (LOA) or Letters of Exemption (LOE) change?**

No, the requirements for Letters of Agency (LOA) or Letters of Exemption (LOE) did not change – only the platform changed.

### **Who is impacted by this change?**

RHC Connect is used for FY2022 and future funding years for the HCF Program and FY2024 and forward for the Telecom Program. Connected Care Pilot Project (CCPP) projects are not impacted unless they also participate in the HCF or Telecom Program.

## Resources

For more information, visit the following webpages on the USAC website:

- [Letter of Agency](#)
- [Letter of Exemption](#)
- [What is a Consortium?](#)

For questions about the Rural Health Care program, contact [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) or the RHC Customer Service Center at (800) 453-1546 from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET Monday through Friday for assistance. Use the [RHC Customer Service Center Tip Sheet](#) to learn about what the RHC Customer Service Center can and cannot help you with.