

Is the 28-day posting period 28 calendar days, or 28 business days?

The 28 day posting period is calendar days. On the website under "Search Posted Services," the ACSD date is shown for each HCP.

I have a contract with my Internet provider that auto-renews every year unless we cancel the contract. USAC says this is not a valid evergreen contract?

Contracts may only be given evergreen status for the initial term of the contract. Options to renew or automatic renewals must be considered as a new bid for service. If a contract does contain an Option to renew, the HCP must post a Form 465 and go through the competitive bidding process. If the Option to renew is the most cost-effective decision, the HCP may select this bid at that time.

My 2010 Form 466s were returned with an evergreen status, but USAC has not completed my funding process for 2010 for those services. We have not yet received our funding commitment letter for any of the 2010 services. Is there any reason to submit my FY2011 evergreen renewals now, or should I wait until we complete our current 2010 funding process?

If you have not yet received Fund Commitment Letters and believe that you should, contact the Customer Support Center at (800) 229-5476 to check on the status. Regarding FY2011, there is no need to wait to submit documentation. If you have received confirmation from USAC that you have a valid evergreen contract, Form 466 and/or 466-A may be submitted at any time. If not, a Form 465 should be posted as soon as possible to allow for the 28-day competitive bidding period.

Has USAC recognized the Federal contract Networx as a possible evergreen contract?

USAC is actively working on resolving whether a Networx contract can be given evergreen status. Networx contracts do not typically identify a contract term. However, as part of a customary evergreen contract review, the contract term is one of the required items. Without this information, it is difficult for USAC to precisely identify the specific details of the contract, as is normally done during an evergreen contract review. USAC will provide further details on this matter as they become available.

With an evergreen contract, you are not able to file your Form 466 online in subsequent years without first filing a form 465. Is this correct?

Correct. USAC's current IT systems are not designed to allow for this. Applicants may either post a Form 465 electronically to allow e-certification of the Form 466, or send in paper copies of all Form 466/466-As. If applicants have a valid evergreen contract and post a Form 465 solely to allow e-certification of the Form 466s, they are not required to accept and review bids. We recommend, however, that applicants state that they have an evergreen contract and include the contract end date on Line 29 of the Form 465.

If you have an evergreen contract, can you submit a Form 466/466-A and e-sign without completing a Form 465?

See response to Question 5 above. Applicants with a valid evergreen contract cannot e-certify their Form 466/466-As without first electronically posting a Form 465.

What is the best way to edit a submitted Form 465?

Revisions to the Form 465 must be done by USAC. All requests should be directed to rhc-admin@usac.org.

If you post generic information on Line 29 of Form 465, how do you compare bids for different services? Bids for same services are very easy to document, but when they are different it becomes more difficult. What do you recommend?

In order to clearly document how the selection of a service provider was made, HCPs are encouraged to develop a scoring matrix to be used during the review process. Criteria should be developed that are important and specific to the HCPs needs and ability to provide healthcare.

We are on a month to month contract for our circuits with our local Service Provider. Do we still do the bidding process?

Yes. Contracts that are on a month-to-month basis must go through the competitive bidding process every year.

Is there a way or place where Service Providers can check to see if an HCP's requested service has been officially reviewed and deemed evergreen?

There is not a place online for service providers to check the evergreen status of HCP's contracts. However, service providers should ask HCPs whether the contract has been deemed evergreen. HCPs should be transparent about the status of their contracts. Any applications not directly related to an evergreen contract, must comply with the competitive bidding requirements.

If we have received e-mails from other vendors and responded, but only received bids from one vendor, how do we prove competitive bidding?

Copies of all email correspondence and bids should be maintained. If HCPs have provided all necessary information for service providers (in order to provide a bid) and service providers do not submit a bid, the HCP should maintain copies of all email correspondence to document this. As long as all reasonable efforts have been made by the HCP to answer questions from the service provider, this is considered compliant with the competitive bidding requirements. (Note: Written correspondence is highly preferable to phone correspondence as a means of demonstrating competitive bidding compliance.)

Can an HCP get a number without posting a 465?

No. A Form 465 must be submitted in order to receive an HCP number.

For more information, contact:

USAC Rural Health Care Program
E-mail: rhc-admin@usac.org
Toll-Free: 1 (888) 229-5476