

Acronym/Term	Program	Description
28-Day Posting Period	SL RHC	The amount of time an applicant is required to wait after posting the FCC Form 465 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL) before entering into any contract with a service provider. The purpose is to ensure a fair and open competitive bidding process for service providers.
Allowable Contract Date	RHC SL	The earliest date an applicant may choose a service provider and sign a contract. This date must be at least 28 days after the applicant has posted an FCC Form 465 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL).
Beneficiary and Contributor Audit Program (BCAP)	USAC	Run by USAC and carried out by auditors trained in USF and support mechanism audit requirements, these audits of beneficiaries and contributors serve to identify areas of noncompliance with program rules and amounts of recoverable funds.
common carrier	USAC	An organization recognized by a regulatory authority to provide telecommunications services to all requesting parties, or an organization that holds itself out to provide such services generally to the public for a fee.
competitive bidding process	RHC SL	A requirement of participating in the RHC or SL programs, this process must be a fair and open competitive procurement. The applicant conducts the process to select a service provider and order products and/or services.
contract award date	RHC SL	The date the contract is awarded to the service provider and signed by the applicant. Program rules state that this must be at least 28 days after an applicant posts an FCC Form 465 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL).
contract expiration date	RHC SL	The date a contract between the applicant and service provider ends.
Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA)	HC LI RHC SL	A law that requires federal agencies to transfer delinquent debts or claims to the Secretary of Treasury (Treasury) for further collection action. Unpaid obligations to the USF are subject to the DCIA. In the event that a balance becomes over 90 days past due, USAC will transfer the debt to the Treasury for further collection and enforcement actions.
E-File	USAC	USAC's online forms submission tool, available at https://forms.universalservice.org .
Eligible Services List (ESL)	RHC SL	An FCC-released annual list of products and services approved for funding under the Rural Health Care and Schools and Libraries programs. The FCC seeks public comment on these lists each year.
eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC)	HC LI	A designation given to telecommunications service providers by their state public utility commissions or the FCC, enabling them to participate in the High Cost and/or Lifeline programs.

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FCC Form 498	HC LI RHC SL	The Service Provider Identification Number and Contact Information Form is an FCC form that service providers must fill out in order to participate in any of the universal service programs. The form is used to collect contact, remittance and payment information for service providers that receive universal service support.
FCC Form 498 Company Officer	HC LI RHC SL	The officer of a service provider company who is authorized to certify that the data set forth in the FCC Form 498 is true, accurate, and complete. The latest Company Officer on file has access to certify forms through the E-File system.
FCC Form 498 delegated users	HC LI RHC SL	The employee(s) of a service provider company authorized to enter and modify company information on FCC Forms 498 through the E-File application. Also known as “authorized users,” these individuals are established by the Company Officer or General Contact.
FCC Form 498 General Contact	HC LI RHC SL	The employee of a service provider company who filled out the FCC Form 498. This individual is listed on Line 8. The latest general contact on file has access to submit and modify data in the E-File system, and to create delegated or authorized users.
FCC Registration Number (FCC RN)	RHC SL	A 10-digit number that the FCC assigns to a business or individual registering with the FCC, which is required for participants in the Rural Health Care and Schools and Libraries programs.
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)	USAC	The U.S. government agency that regulates interstate and international communications and oversees the universal service fund. In 1997, the FCC designated USAC to be the independent not-for-profit corporation to administer the universal service fund in accordance with its rules.
Funding Request Number (FRN)	SL RHC	A unique number that USAC assigns to each funding request in a completed FCC Form 466 (RHC) and FCC Form 471 (SL) application. This number can be found in an applicant’s FCDL or FCL.
Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA)	USAC	A law passed in 2010 to amend IPIA and enhance the federal government’s practices to measure and recover improper payments.
Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA)	USAC	A 2002 law that requires USAC to provide the FCC with accurate, timely information about improper payments to support mechanism beneficiaries. To comply, USAC created its Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program, which assesses specific payments made to beneficiaries in all four support mechanisms to determine if these payments were made in accordance with FCC rules. Using results of these assessments, USAC calculates estimates of improper payment rates and provides this information to the FCC.
Internet service provider (ISP)	RHC SL	A company that provides Internet access service (also referred to as a service provider).

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invoice	RHC SL	A statement or document that service providers submit to USAC after they have provided or completed service to the applicant. Invoices are submitted using FCC Form 474 (SL) or an invoice template (RHC).
Invoice Status Report	RHC SL	A USAC-generated report sent to service providers upon receipt of the service provider's invoices. The report breaks out which invoice line items were accepted and denied.
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	USAC	Part of the Executive Office of the President, OMB reviews and approves FCC forms that are used by USF contributors and universal service program participants, contributors, and service providers.
Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program	HC LI RHC SL	USAC's own program, created to comply with IPIA, which assesses specific payments made to beneficiaries in all four support mechanisms to determine if these payments were made in accordance with FCC rules. Using results of these assessments, USAC calculates estimates of improper payment rates and provides this information to the FCC.
Red Light Rule	HC LI RHC SL	A requirement that the FCC withholds action on an application, payment, and/or other requests for benefits when the universal service program participant is delinquent in non-tax debts owed to the FCC or other federal governmental agencies. This rule extends to applications for support and disbursements from the universal service fund, and requires that USAC suspend support to any company who shares a Tax Identification Number with a company that has a delinquent debt.
Red Light status	HC LI RHC SL	An entity is considered in Red Light status when the Red Light Rule goes into effect (the entity is delinquent). See "Red Light Rule." USAC will not make any disbursements until the delinquency has been satisfied or payment arrangements are made. USAC takes into consideration the Red Light status of each entity at the FCC and will hold disbursements until the Red Light status is resolved.
Request for Proposal (RFP)	SL RHC	A form of solicitation for products or services that provides detailed information regarding those products or services and any additional details necessary for potential bidders to respond. Program applicants may incorporate RFPs in addition to the FCC Form 465 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL).

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service provider	HC LI RHC SL	A company that participates in one of four universal service programs and provides telecommunications or Internet services, equipment, hardware, or software. Types of companies include but are not limited to: competitive access/competitive local exchange carriers (cellular, personal communications, or specialized mobile radio providers), incumbent local exchange carriers, interexchange carriers, Internet service providers, interconnected VoIP, local resellers (coaxial cable, non-traditional, operator, paging, messaging, payphone, prepaid card, private and satellite service providers), shared-tenant service providers or building local exchange carriers, SMR (dispatch), toll resellers, or wireless data providers.
Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)	HC LI RHC SL	A unique number that USAC assigns to a service provider once that service provider has submitted the FCC Form 498 to USAC. Every service provider is required to have a SPIN in order to participate in any universal service programs and to receive payments from USAC.
Study Area Code (SAC)	HC LI	A unique number that USAC assigns to ETCs that uniquely identifies that company based on its service area. Companies must have at least one SAC per state in which they operate, but can have more than one SAC within a state if they have more than one service area.
Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)	USAC	The independent not-for-profit corporation created by the FCC in 1997 to administer the four universal service support mechanisms (programs) which help provide communities across the country with access to affordable telecommunications services.
universal service fund (USF)	USAC	Money collected from telecommunications companies and dedicated to fulfilling the goals of universal service. Under the authority of the 1996 Telecom Act, the FCC created the USF as well as the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the organization charged with administering the USF. Companies make contributions to the USF based on revenues from providing international and interstate telecommunications services.