

# Healthcare Connect Fund Program

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# Quarterly Webinar for Individual HCPs

August 11, 2015

## Housekeeping

- Use the “Audio” section of your control panel to select an audio source and connect to sound
  - Turn on your computer’s speakers, or
  - Use the call-in instructions in your confirmation email
- All participants are on mute
- Submit questions at any time using the “Questions” box
- Slides will be posted to the training archive web page

## Important Caveat

This is just a general overview and starting point for applicants.

- Every applicant's situation is different
- The presentation does not cover every program requirement
- The presentation does not cover requirements for service providers and consultants

It is essential to read the following documents carefully as you proceed through the planning and application process:

- Healthcare Connect Fund Order (FCC 12-150), located at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care>,
- The Rural Health Care Program rules, 47 C.F.R. Section 54.600-680, located at <http://www.ecfr.gov>, and
- The Healthcare Connect Fund Program forms and instructions (FCC Forms 460-463), located at <http://www.usac.org/rhc/healthcare-connect/tools/forms/default.aspx>.

Consult the FCC and USAC websites for additional resources.

## Presenters

- Maura Duffy - Outreach and Customer Service
- Lisa Pilgrim - Eligibility
- Tatiana Malebranche - Individual HCPs Processing Team
- Phil Vestergaard - Invoicing

## Agenda

- Funding Update: Progress Toward the \$400M Cap
- Eligibility Best Practices
- Competitive Bidding and Funding Commitments
- Invoicing Best Practices
- My Portal Improvements and New Features
- Program Update

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# Funding Update

## Progress Toward Annual Cap

<b>\$400 Million Cap for Total RHC Program Funding</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>FY2015</b>
<b>Total Commitment Requests Received (Telecom and HCF Programs)</b>	\$190,003,211	\$269,180,656	\$60,953,482
<b>Total Commitments Made (Telecom and HCF Programs)</b>	\$179,210,915	\$201,026,390	\$42,551,778
<b>Commitment Requests Received (HCF Program – Consortia)</b>	\$33,163,978	\$67,120,929	\$12,267,741
<b>Commitments Made (HCF Program – Consortia)</b>	\$33,163,977	\$43,890,392	\$10,544,197
<b>Commitment Requests Received (HCF Program – Individual HCPs)</b>	\$16,002,730	\$48,495,696	\$3,486,171
<b>Commitments Made (HCF Program – Individual HCPs)</b>	\$16,002,730	\$25,410,640	\$211,958

## Progress Toward Annual Cap

HCF Program Disbursements	FY2013	FY2014
Total Disbursements Made	\$24,202,134	\$7,286,790
Total Disbursements Made (Individual HCPs)	\$9,404,027	\$3,154,533

HCF Program Funding Requests	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015
Total Funding Requests	2,840	6,406	221
Total Funding Requests (Individual HCPs)	2,784	6,165	171



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# Eligibility Best Practices

## Informing USAC of Changes

- Applicants are required to notify USAC if any information on the FCC Form 460 changes.
  - A revised FCC Form 460 must be filed to change information such as the site address, legal entity, or eligible entity type.
  - Please email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) if either the non-profit or eligibility status changes.

## Duplicate HCP Numbers

- When filing a new FCC Form 460 for an HCP, please be sure that no existing HCP number exists for that location.
  - Applicants can access HCPs that are listed as “Available.”
  - HCPs that are listed as “Active” currently have account holders assigned to them.
  - The same HCP number should be used for all RHC programs.
  - Please email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) if you have questions regarding availability of an HCP.

## Third Party Authorization Guidance & Requirements

- Many TPAs have already expired or will expire within the coming months. These authorizations must be current in order for the authorized party to continue to file on behalf of an HCP.
- Updated TPAs should be emailed to [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org). The new TPA should be re-executed and updated with a new authorization end date.

## Primary Account Holder How-To

- The primary account holder has the ability to manage secondary and tertiary account holders for an HCP in My Portal.
- A revised FCC Form 460 must be filed to change the primary account holder for an HCP.

## Primary Account Holder How-To

- If the primary account holder is no longer employed at the HCP and no other account holders are assigned to the HCP, please email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) with the following information.
  - The new primary account's holder full name, HCP number, employer, address, employer FCC RN, phone number, and email address.

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## **Competitive Bidding/Funding Commitments Best Practices**

## Form Processing Statistics

- More than 6,000 FCC Forms 462 were submitted in FY2014, more than twice the forms submitted in FY2013.

FY2013	Forms	%
Completed	1497	53.8%
In Review	1287	46.2%
Total	2784	

  

FY2014	Forms	%
Completed	3765	61.1%
In Review	2401	38.9%
Total	6166	



## Service Providers and Competitive Bidding

- Vendors or service providers participating in the competitive bidding process are prohibited from assisting with or filling out a service request.
- Potential bidders must have access to the same information, and must be treated in the same manner.
- All bidders must be evaluated based on the bid evaluation criteria listed on the FCC Form 461.

## FCC Forms 462 Submitted Without a Contract

- Forms submitted without a contract as month-to-month forms are only eligible for one funding year.
- When completing a form submitted as month-to-month please check the “month-to-month” box.

RHC Note: If you wish to request support on a month-to-month basis, select the 'Please process my form as month-to-month. I do not wish to submit a contract for review' box below. If the box is selected, only enter the service start date, contract information (Eg. Contract friendly name, term, extension, signed date, etc...) is not required.

- If you are requesting an Evergreen, MSA, E-rate contract competitive bidding exemption or have undergone a competitive bidding process without intention of receiving support on a month-to-month basis, a contract is required with this FCC Form 462 submission.
- Applicants must submit a contract or other documentation that clearly identifies (1) the vendor(s)/service provider(s) selected and the HCP(s) who will receive the services; (2) the service, bandwidth and costs for which support is being requested; (3) the term of the service agreement(s) if applicable.
- A contract is not required for applicants claiming a competitive bidding exemption for Annual Costs of \$10,000 or less.

Please process my form as month-to-month. I do not wish to submit a contract for review.

Other Documentation

## FCC Forms 462 Submitted With a Contract

- If an applicant submits a contract as a result of competitive bidding with the FCC Form 462, USAC staff will review this contract for evergreen status.

## FCC Forms 462 Submitted With a Contract

- When completing a form with a contract please utilize the “Select a Contract” button.
- Contracts uploaded using the “other documentation” button will be considered as supporting documentation but will not be reviewed for evergreen consideration.
- Notification of your evergreen status is reflected in the Funding Commitment Letter (FCL).

RHC Note: If you wish to request support on a month-to-month basis, select the 'Please process my form as month-to-month. I do not wish to submit a contract for review' box below. If the box is selected, only enter the service start date, contract information (Eg. Contract friendly name, term, extension, signed date, etc...) is not required.

- If you are requesting an Evergreen, MSA, E-rate contract competitive bidding exemption or have undergone a competitive bidding process without intention of receiving support on a month-to-month basis, a contract is required with this FCC Form 462 submission.
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- A contract is not required for applicants claiming a competitive bidding exemption for Annual Costs of \$10,000 or less.

Please process my form as month-to-month. I do not wish to submit a contract for review.

Select a Contract

19 Contract ID

Other Documentation

## Evergreen Contracts

- The FCC clarifies that if a contract is deemed evergreen by USAC under the Telecommunications Program **even after January 1, 2014**, that designation also applies under the Healthcare Connect Fund Program, and vice versa.
- To read the complete public notice, see Public Notice [DA 15-809](#).

## Block 5: Eligible Expense Request

- The items below should be verified using supporting documentation provided from the service provider:
  - Expense Type (Line 13)
  - Bandwidth (Line 14)
  - HCP Location (Lines 20 and 21)
  - Undiscounted Cost (Line 25)

## Information Request Deadline

- Applicants have 14 days from receipt of an information request to respond to the request.
  - Please respond to the information request as soon as possible. No reminders will be sent.
  - If no response is received by USAC for the information request, the FRN funding may be subject to denial

## Funding Commitment Letters

- Applicants should review all information on the FCL to ensure it is correct including service start/end dates, service type, SPIN, and endorsement (if applicable).
- If the applicant would like to request to make adjustments or changes to commitment they should contact USAC prior to initiating the submission of the FCC Form 463.



## Commitment Adjustments

- To request a change, email [RHC-HCP@usac.org](mailto:RHC-HCP@usac.org) including:
  - HCP and FRN numbers
  - Reason for commitment adjustment
  - Date of the commitment adjustment

The screenshot shows an email client interface with the following fields:

- From:** RHC-HCP@usac.org
- To:** RHC-HCP; |
- Cc:** (empty)
- Subject:** Commitment Adjustment

The email body contains the following text:

Hello Form 462 Team,

I would like to update the End Date for HCP 11111 FRN 14111111 to 5/31/2015 due to the circuit being discounted.

Thanks,

Abby Gedonn  
ABC Hospital

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# Invoicing Best Practices

## When to Invoice

- Please remember invoices must be submitted within six months of the funding end date of your specific FRN.

## Draft and Submitted Invoices

- When an invoice is submitted or created as a draft:
  - Line item becomes N/A
  - Reduces the line item remaining commitment
- Applicants should:
  - Manage and track drafts carefully
  - Monitor the status of submitted invoices

## Invoice As Much As You Can

- Our recommendation is to invoice for the full commitment, year, or month with all line-items on the same invoice (no future)
- Using this method will result in:
  - Simpler calculations of invoice amounts
  - Easier reviews for services providers and USAC
  - Reduced changes for potential mistakes
  - Reduced effort for everyone involved

## Service Provider Crediting

- Service providers must certify the following:
  - I understand that the vendor must apply the amount submitted, approved, and paid by USAC (Column P - USF support amount to be Paid) to the billing account of the health care provider(s) and FRN/FRN IDs listed on this invoice.
- Neither the FCC nor USAC tracks or monitors the funds that are credited back to sites.
- Please make sure to communicate with service providers to establish a credit schedule after invoicing and ensure timely crediting by the service provider.

## Invoice Denials

- Common errors leading to denials include:
  - Over-invoicing billing periods
  - Invoicing for billing periods before or beyond the funding commitment period
  - Not meeting the invoice deadline
- The RHC Program team will always send an email explaining the denial reason and how to correct

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## **My Portal Update**



## Details Added to Form Denial Notifications

- The FCC Form 460 and FCC Form 462 denial email notifications now list "Denial Reasons" with specific information about the denial.

## HCPs Able to Edit Billing Account Number on FCC Form 463

- Applicants are now able to edit the Billing Account Number (BAN) in Column B on the "Invoice Line Items" tab on the FCC Form 463. After the FCC Form 463 has been approved, Column B will pre-populate with the updated BAN on future invoices for the same expense item.

## Full De-Commitment Function

- Applicants can now request that USAC fully de-commit an un-invoiced portion of a funding request (i.e. in the case where a service was disconnected).
- In order to request a de-commitment, applicants must [send an email](#) to USAC and include the HCP number, Funding Request Number (FRN), and brief explanation for the full de-commitment request.

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# Program Update

## New Tools for Applicants

- FCC Form 460 Guide
- RHC Calendar of Events


 

## RURAL HEALTH CARE

[MY PORTAL](#) | [MAKING PAYMENTS](#) | [FORMS](#) | [TOOLS](#)

[USAC Home](#) | [Rural Health Care Program](#) | [Healthcare Connect Fund Program](#) | [Program Calendar](#)

### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- [Getting Started](#)
- [Funding Information](#)
- [Program Integrity](#)
- [FCC Resources](#)
- [Trainings & Outreach](#)
- [FCC HCF FAQs \(PDF\)](#)

### RESOURCES & TOOLS

- [My Portal](#)
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INDIVIDUAL HCPS ▾

CONSORTIA ▾

SERVICE PROVIDERS ▾

### PROGRAM CALENDAR

The following calendar lists important RHC Program deadlines as well as webinars and conferences the RHC Program team attends. For more information about any event listed below, please [email us](#).

#### JANUARY 2015

##### January 1

First day to submit FCC Forms 461 (HCF Program) and FCC Forms 465 (Telecom Program) and supporting documentation

##### January 13

HCF Program [Webinar for consortia applicants](#) (Quarterly)  
Online – hosted by USAC

#### FEBRUARY 2015

##### February 2-3

Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT ([ONC Annual Meeting](#))  
Washington, DC

## ATA Fall Forum – Washington, DC, September 17-18

- RHC Pre-Conference Session: Wednesday, September 16
  - Training for Individual HCPs
- Visit Booth #202
  - One-on-one meetings with RHC staff for submitting and FCC Form 460 and getting started with the program!

# Questions?



## Thank You!

- Thanks for joining us at this webinar
- Sign up for reminders in the subscription center
  - Go to [www.usac.org](http://www.usac.org) and click “subscribe” in the upper-right corner, then select the webinar
- Submit suggestions for the next webinar to [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org)
- Additional questions?
  - Email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org)
  - Call (800) 453-1546