E-Rate Program Registration Checklist for New Tribal Libraries

Getting Started

There are a number of initial steps that you can take to get ready to submit your E-Rate program application:

1   Obtain an FCC Registration Number.

2   Obtain a Billed Entity Number (BEN) and create a user profile in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) Portal.

3   Designate your entity's Tribal status.

4   Solicit bids for eligible services and equipment by completing an FCC Form 470, and wait at least 28 days before selecting your service provider(s). If your purchase meets the requirements under Commercially Available Business Internet Access E-Rate rules, proceed to step 5 without completing this step.

5   Create your Contract Record and file your FCC Form 471 funding application to request E-Rate support.

> Ready to start or need help? Reach out to the **E-Rate Customer Service Center (CSC) at (800) 203-8100, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.**

FCC Registration Number

All entities must have an FCC Registration Number issued by FCC's Commission Registration System (CORES) to participate in the E-Rate program. If you have questions about creating an FCC Registration Number, please contact the CORES customer service team at (877) 480-3201.

Billed Entity Number (BEN)

USAC assigns a unique identifying number to each entity that participates in the E-Rate program. This number assigned by USAC is called an entity number. Schools and libraries that are not registered in EPC and do not have an entity number in EPC will need to obtain one. Contact the CSC to set up your BEN, EPC account, and Account Administrator once you have the information below. Additional information is available on the Entity Numbers page.

What You Will Need to Request Your BEN

- Entity's legal name
- Physical address
- Mailing address or PO Box, if different than physical address
- County name
- Telephone number
- Information about the organization (e.g., is it an independent library? Part of a library system? Part of a library consortium?)
- The square footage of library buildings receiving discounted service, as well as whether the entity is the main branch in a library system

- For Libraries that are part of a library system: the library system's entity number is used to link child libraries appropriately to its parent entity (e.g., Te-Moak Tribe Of Western Shoshone Library System is the parent entity, while the individual libraries are child entities).
- Organization sub-type(s): public, private, religious, Tribal, new construction, etc.
- Email address for the EPC account administrator (must be an employee of the entity organization)
- FCC Registration Number (for all entities that file program forms)

➢ **Tribal Entity Designation:** Please designate your entity as a Tribal entity (<u>instructions</u> are available) to help us track Tribal participation.

➢ **File FCC Form 470:** Create and file your FCC Form 470 to start the competitive bidding process and solicit bids for eligible services. (FY2022 deadline for submitting the FCC Form 470 is **April 28, 2022**. This date allows applicants time to wait the required 28 days and be able to submit the FCC Form 471 before the FY 2022 filing window closes on **May 26, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. ET**.)

➢ Wait at least **28 Days**, carefully consider all bids received, select your service provider(s) using price of the eligible equipment and services as the primary factor in your bid selection process, and follow your local or Tribal procurement rules.

➢ **File FCC Form 471:** File FCC Form 471 requesting funding (**FY2022 deadline is May 26, 2022**).

➢ **Retain Documentation**

Special Information for Tribal Governments

A Tribal government can create a consortium for its Tribally controlled schools and libraries, and a Tribal government employee can act as the consortium leader.

The consortium as an entity is not eligible for discounted services, but they can run competitive bidding processes and/or apply for discounted services on behalf of their eligible member entities. Any schools or libraries can join together to form a consortium.

What You Will Need Before Calling the CSC…

➢ **Identify a Consortium Leader: Name and contact information for the Tribal government employee designated as the Consortium Leader.** The Consortium Leader is responsible for ensuring that necessary certifications are made and for responding to USAC inquiries on behalf of the consortium members during the entire E-Rate process.

➢ **Identify the Account Administrator for each school/library that will join the consortium:** The name and contact information for staff member(s) who will serve as the Account Administrator(s). The Account Administrator can add users on their organization's account and assign them rights (permissions) to file Program forms.

> **NOTE:** After making contact with the CSC, the CSC may determine that the potential consortium members require new entity numbers and request additional documentation. The requested documentation must be sent from the organization's email domain and include an email signature containing the requestor's name, title, and contact information OR include a written request on the organization's letterhead. Each consortium member's Account Administrator will need to activate the account before the CSC can link the entity's account to the consortium.

➢ **Letter of Agency (LOA):** An LOA establishes that applicant entities have authorized the person identified in the letter to act on their behalf. An LOA is evidence that establishes the relationship between the authorized person executing any program forms, and the entities featured on those forms. Consortium members and agents can use an LOA, a project agreement, a contract, a letter agreement, or other similar document to establish this authorization. A consortium LOA is most commonly signed by consortium members and kept on file by their Consortium Leader to verify their knowledge of their membership and participation in the consortium. The E-Rate program offers a sample <u>LOA</u> that you may modify.

➢ **Tribal Entity Designation: After Entity profiles are created:** Account Administrators should review entity profile(s) for accuracy and apply Tribal Designations as appropriate. <u>Instructions</u> are available.