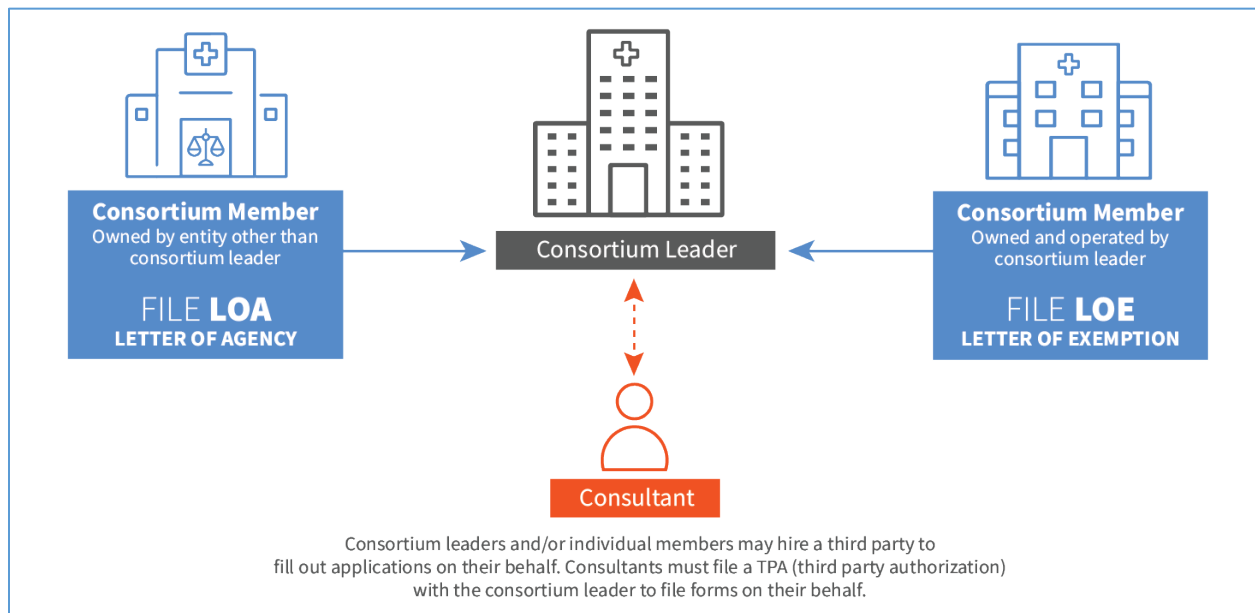**Universal Service Administrative Co.**

Consortia: Forming a Consortium

Forming a New Consortium

This guide contains general information for applicants interested in forming a consortium. It is the responsibility of the a consortium leader seeking support for broadband service from the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program to make sure they are familiar with program and eligibility requirements before beginning the application process. All authorizations including Letter of Authorization (LOA), Letter of Exemption (LOE), and Third-Party Authorizations (TPA) must be valid and up to date before filing any forms in the HCF Program.

Authorizations

- **Letter of Authorization (LOA):** Provides written authorization to the consortium project coordinator to act on behalf of each participating health care provider (HCP) within the consortium. This is mandatory for HCP member sites not owned and operated by the consortium
  - An LOA/LOE submission guide can be found online.
- **Letter of Exemption (LOE):** Provides written authorization to the consortium project coordinator to file forms for sites that are owned and operated by the consortium.
- **Third Party Authorization (TPA):** Provides written authorization to a third party/consultant to complete and submit forms on behalf of an HCP. If the consortium lead entity and the consortium project coordinator wish to have a third party to file forms on behalf of the consortium, the parties must have a valid TPA on file connecting the third party with the consortium.
  - A TPA submission guide can be found online.

Preliminary Steps

1. Identify if member HCP sites already have approved FCC Form(s) 460 on file.

2. Identify the Consortium Leader (entity) and the Consortium Project Coordinator (person) who will be responsible for filing forms on behalf of the consortium.
3. Review necessary authorizations such as Letter of Agency (LOA), Letter of Exemption (LOE), and Third-Party Authorization (TPA) to determine which ones should be filed.
4. Understand that the consortium must meet the majority rural quota in order to continue receiving eligible funding (i.e., more than 50 percent of HCP sites are rural).
5. Please be aware that if an individual HCP site is assigned as the consortium leader, this site must already have eligibility determined via an Individual FCC Form 460.

If Member HCPs Currently Participate in the HCF Program

- Ensure member sites have an approved FCC Form(s) 460 on file.
- Do not file a *new* FCC Form 460 for an existing site. This will be denied as a duplicate within our system.
- If you do not have access to that HCP, email rhc-assist@usac.org with the HCP # in the subject line to find out who the current account holders are.
- Connect individual member sites to the Consortium via LOA in RHC Connect, see RHC Connect LOA/LOE User Guide.

If Member HCP(s) Do NOT Currently Participate in the HCF Program

- Project Coordinator must identify the new HCPs that will participate as member sites.
- Submit individual FCC Form 460s to determine eligibility of individual member sites.
    o Refer back to the Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 460 webpage and submit an FCC Form 460 for each member site location.
- Must verify that at least one HCP location is rural and wait for FCC Form 460 approval for a rural site.
- Once the FCC Form 460 is approved, file the FCC Form 460 for the Consortium.
- Once Form 460 consortium is approved, connect member site with consortium via an LOA in My Portal.