Meet the RHC Director of Operations
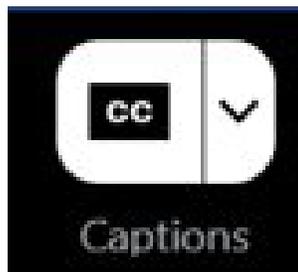
Office Hours February 25, 2026

Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Housekeeping – Closed Captioning (CC)

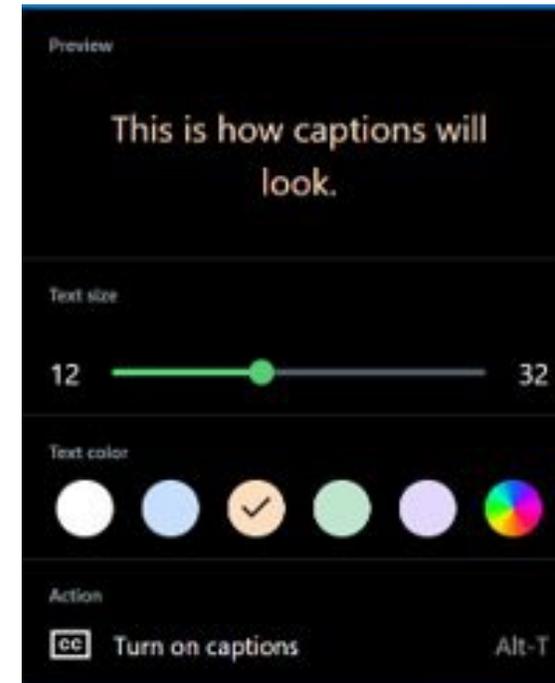- Attendees control their own captioning.

- You control the caption font size and color.

- Toggle CC off and on at your preference.

Captions ON

Captions OFF

2

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.

- Use the "**Raise Your Hand**" button to be unmuted and ask a question to the team!

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Meet the Presenters

Jeff Walsh

Director of Program Management | RHC

Blythe Albert

Advisor of Program Management | RHC

Ecatarina Grant

Manager of Communications | RHC Outreach

Introduction – Office Hours

- Subject matter experts are available to answer live questions from program participants.

- Send FRN or HCP-specific questions to the RHC Customer Service Center at RHC-Assist@usac.org.

- Raise your hand or ask your question in the questions box.

- Please note, recordings of Office Hours webinars are not posted to the USAC website.

Agenda

- Introduction

- Common Findings in Review

- Best Practices

- Questions

- Upcoming Webinars

Common Findings in Review

Meet the Director – Office Hours

Competitive Bidding

- FCC Forms 461, 465, and RFP (if applicable) criteria do not match the bid evaluation matrix.

- Price Criterion – Same points and/or percentage given to service providers that quote different prices.

- One vendor received a higher score when evaluating using the posted evaluation criteria, but the award was given to another vendor.

- FCC Form 461 or 465 states that HCP is looking for contracted services up to 3 years, but the bid evaluation states that they are not looking to sign a contract at this time.

Contracts

- Multi-Year contracts
  - The contract sign dates are not going to normally align with the funding start and end dates
  - For example, contract signed on February 25, 2026, for 36 months will end on February 24, 2029.

- If you want your contracts to align with RHC program funding years, have it stated in the contract that the 36-month term will not begin until July 1 so you will get the full 36 months of funding.

- If the contract is for a new service or equipment, please provide the expected start and/or installation dates from the service provider(s).

Information Requests

- Please read the Information Requests!

  - Message the reviewer if you don't understand the request.

- Incomplete responses that require additional follow-ups will protract the review.

- If you need more time to address the request, ask for an extension.

- If your Information Request deadline expires, your application will be denied for non-responsiveness.

  - Once denied, you will have to file an appeal and provide the requested information.

Supporting Documentation

- Provided documentation does not support the FCC Form 462 or 466 application.
  - Needs to include service provider, expense type, bandwidth, circuit start and/or end location and cost.

- Documentation is not labeled/markup/or highlighted.

- Supporting documentation (service provider bills) must be dated within 2 years.

- Taxes and Fees – If you are estimating, please explain your estimate.

Equipment (HCF Program Only)

- Provide purchase dates or estimated dates when equipment is expected to be purchased along with installation dates.

- Include a network diagram (if complex, please mark it up showing related FRNs and line numbers).

- Provide the FCC Form 462 Application Number with the corresponding broadband circuit.

  - If we cannot confirm that there is a corresponding circuit funded under the HCF Program, we cannot approve funding for the equipment.

- Components of a piece of equipment should be broken out by part on the invoice or contract to determine if any ineligible components are part of the bundle, however we need to know what constitutes a unit.

  - Example: Funding would not be approved for a power cord by itself if the router is ineligible.

Network Management (HCF Program Only)

- All members of the consortium participating on the network should be registered with an FCC Form 460 and the circuits that this equipment manages should be filed as a consortium and not as an individual applicant.

- The applicant must clearly demonstrate that the requested equipment performs the function explicit in the rule, e.g., that it manages, controls or maintains a supported network and not simply one circuit.

- Provide an estimated purchase date of the equipment (may differ from 7/1/2026).

Best Practices

Meet the Director – Office Hours

Best Practices

- HCF Program FCC Form 462 Submission Checklist

- Telecom Program FCC Form 466 Submission Checklist
  - If these checklists are used, it will decrease the need for an Information Request.

- Use of a cover sheet to summarize the funding request for the reviewer
  - Provided the key elements of requested products/services
  - Various required dates (Contract Start/End, Installation, Service Start)
  - Cost Breakdowns (monthly recurring costs (MRC)/ Taxes & Fees (if applicable))
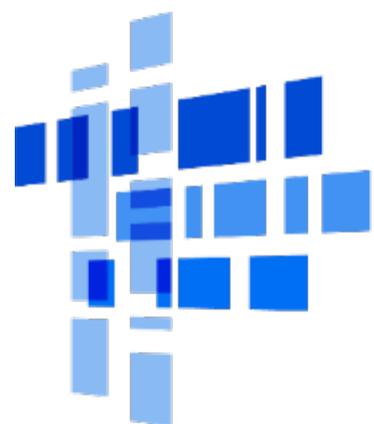
Questions?

Upcoming Webinars

Please join the RHC outreach team for the following webinars:

- HCF Program FY2026 Office Hours Webinar

    - When: Wednesday, March 11, 2026, from 2-3 p.m. ET - Register

- Telecom Program FY2026 Office Hours Webinar

    - When: Wednesday, March 18, 2026, from 2-3 p.m. ET - Register

- For a list of upcoming webinars, check the RHC Upcoming Dates webpage for dates and details.

Thank You!