



Universal Service  
Administrative Co.

E-Rate

January 12, 2023

### Funding Year (FY) 2023 FCC Form 471 Filing Window Opens January 18

The Funding Year (FY) 2023 FCC Form 471 application filing window will open on **Wednesday, January 18, 2023**, at 12:00 noon ET and will close on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. ET. In addition, the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) [Administrative Window](#) will close Monday, January 16, 2023 (see below).

**Tuesday, February 28, 2023** is the last date that you can submit and certify an FCC Form 470 and still wait the required minimum 28-day period before submitting and certifying your FCC Form 471 by March 28, 2023, the last date of the FY2023 application filing window.

#### E-RATE TIPS:

- **Customer Service Center (CSC) Open January 16.** The CSC will be open January 16 (Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday) from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to assist applicants on the last day to make EPC profile updates during the [EPC Administrative Window](#).
- **Fall 2022 Training - Recordings Available on Demand.** USAC offered a series of online training sessions for E-Rate program participants, including Tribal applicants, in October and November to help prepare for the FY2023 FCC Form 471 application filing window. You can register to watch a recording using the links available under **Previous Trainings** on the E-Rate [Webinars](#) page and the [Tribal Training](#) page.
- **Service Providers: Find FCC Forms 470 to bid on.** You can find and view a PDF version of any certified FCC Forms 470 and associated Request for Proposals (RFP) documents using the [View an FCC Form 470](#) tool on the [Tools](#) page. You can also download summary information for service requests posted by applicants using the [Download 470 Information](#) tool. Service providers with EPC accounts can search for and download certified FCC Forms 470 in EPC. Additional information can be found in the [FCC Form 470 Search User Guide](#).
- **Visit our updated web pages** including [Obtain an Applicant 498 ID](#), the Service Provider page [Step 1: Obtain a SPIN](#), and [Competitive Bidding & FCC Form 470 FAQs](#).

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#### Commitments for Funding Year 2022

**Funding Year 2022.** USAC released Funding Year (FY) 2022 Wave 38 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on January 5. As of January 11, FY2022 commitments total over \$2.8 billion.

On the date that FCDLs are issued, you can access your FCDL notification from the **Notifications** section of your landing page in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC).

## **Upcoming E-Rate Application Filing Window Webinars**

During the FY2023 FCC Form 471 application filing window, USAC will conduct a series of webinars focused on E-Rate topics related to FCC Forms 470 and 471 and the FY2023 Eligible Services List. Below is the schedule of January webinars with the topic, the time, and the recommended audience. We also list the specific materials that attendees should review in advance of the Office Hours webinars.

Office Hours webinars are intended to take questions from E-Rate program participants and do not include a formal presentation. You can provide your questions when registering for a session and also be prepared to ask them during the session so that our E-Rate subject matter experts can respond to your questions.

If you are interested in attending, register for the webinar and review all materials referenced for the webinar in advance of the office hours question and answer session (see links below). Attendees will use the webinar's chat function to ask questions. We will identify questions of general interest that are submitted through the chat function, read and respond to them, and answer specific questions individually using the chat function. As with our regular webinars, we will give preference to questions about the topic under discussion.

### **Competitive Bidding (FCC Form 470) Office Hour** **Thursday, January 19 at 2 p.m. ET**

[Register](#)

- E-Rate subject matter experts will walk you through competitive bidding and the FCC Form 470 with a focus on the FCC Form 470 Guiding Statements Document for all experience levels. Materials to review before the training include:
  - [FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding Videos](#)
  - E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process [webinar recording](#) and [slides](#)
  - [FCC Form 470 Filing EPC System Guide FY2022-FY2023](#)
  - [FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Reference Table \(FY2023\)](#)
  - [Lowest Corresponding Price](#) web page
  - [FCC Form 470 Search User Guide](#)
  - [Competitive Bidding & FCC Form 470 FAQs](#)

### **Service Provider Selection and the FCC Form 471 Office Hour** **Tuesday, January 24 at 2 p.m. ET**

[Register](#)

- E-Rate subject matter experts will provide an overview of how to apply for program discounts on the FCC Form 471 for applicants of all experience levels. Materials to review before the training include:
  - E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process [webinar recording](#) and [slides](#)
  - [FCC Form 471 video series](#)

**E-Rate Eligible Services Office Hour**  
**Thursday, January 26** at 2 p.m. ET

[Register](#)

- E-Rate subject matter experts will provide an overview of FY2023 E-Rate eligible services for applicants and service providers of all experience levels. Materials to review before the training include:
  - [FY2023 Eligible Services List](#)
  - FY2023 E-Rate Eligible Services [webinar recording](#) (January 5, 2023)(Click webinar image to request access to recording)
  - Eligible Services 101 [webinar recording](#) and [slides](#)

As a reminder, there were no changes made to the services and equipment eligible for E-Rate support in the FY2023 ESL. Currently, only basic firewall services provided as part of a vendor's Internet services is available as a Category One service, and separately-priced basic firewalls and services are eligible as a Category Two service.

### **Preparing for the FY2023 Application Filing Window**

The FCC Form 471 application filing window **opens Wednesday, January 18** and **will close Tuesday, March 28, 2023** at 11:59 p.m. ET.

**Tuesday, February 28** is the last date that you can submit and certify an FCC Form 470 for FY2023 and still have time to wait the required minimum 28-day period before submitting and certifying your FCC Form 471 before the filing window closes on March 28.

The FCC Forms 470 and 471 must be filed in EPC. The dates and times above apply to the time the form is certified in EPC. If you complete all of the required information on the form before the deadline but certify it after the deadline, the form will not be considered as timely filed.

Below are the next steps for applicants who have not accessed EPC in the last six months; applicants who are ready to start the competitive bidding process; and applicants who have completed their competitive bidding process and signed a contract.

#### **Applicants who have not accessed EPC in the last six months**

In 2021, we added an additional step to the login process. To access EPC, you must first log in to One Portal, our multi-factor authentication (MFA) system. MFA is a method of authenticating a computer user

during the login process by requiring the user to enter two or more separate pieces of information, such as a password known to the user and a code we generate and send to the user by email or text.

For existing EPC users, we have created accounts for you in One Portal. To set up your credentials in One Portal, click the blue **Sign In** button at the top of any USAC web page and follow the instructions. To see a demonstration of the login process, you can watch the [Forgot Password](#) video. (The process of logging in for the first time and resetting your existing password are essentially the same.)

Newly created users in EPC will automatically be set up with a One Portal account using their email address as their username. As above, click the blue **Sign In** button to get started. If you need assistance, call our Customer Service Center (CSC) at (888) 203-8100.

### **Applicants who are just starting the application process for FY2023**

Applicants begin the process of applying for discounts on eligible services by completing and certifying an [FCC Form 470](#) (Description of Services Requested and Certification Form) in EPC. This [opens the competitive bidding process](#), which is a formal process to identify and request the products and services needed so that potential service providers can review those requests and submit bids for them. The entity that will run the competitive bidding process must be prepared to receive and evaluate bids and negotiate with service providers.

You do not have to file an FCC Form 470 for FY2023 if:

- You will be purchasing services from a state master contract where your state filed an FCC Form 470 and conducted a competitive bidding process and that resulting state master contract covers those services for all of FY2023; or
- You posted an FCC Form 470 for a previous funding year and conducted a competitive bidding process that resulted in a multi-year contract that covers your services for all of FY2023; or
- You are purchasing a commercially available, high-speed business-class internet service that meets ALL of the requirements listed in the **Exemption from Filing an FCC Form 470** section of the [Applicant Step 1: Competitive Bidding](#) guidance document on the USAC website.

Remember that you **must wait at least 28 days** after you submit and certify your FCC Form 470 before you can select a service provider, sign a contract, and complete and certify your FCC Form 471.

### **Applicants who have completed their competitive bidding process and signed a contract**

If you are using a new or existing contract on your FCC Form 471, you must have a contract record for that contract in your EPC profile. A contract record provides specific details about a contract – e.g., the establishing FCC Form 470, the number of bids received, the service provider, the contract term and associated dates – so that the contract information can be auto-populated from your profile to the appropriate funding request on your FCC Form 471.

You can create contract records in your EPC profile even though the EPC administrative window is closed. To create a contract record, go to the organization page for the parent organization (independent school, school district, independent library, library system, or consortium), click **Contracts** from the menu choices at the top of the page, then choose **Manage Contracts**, then choose **Add a New Contract**.

- You do not need to create a new contract record for a multi-year contract or a contract with voluntary extensions if you previously created the contract record in EPC for that contract.
  - For a contract that has been voluntarily extended through FY2023, you can include the existing contract record on the appropriate funding request on your FCC Form 471 and then enter the extended date in the field labeled "What is the date your contract expires for the current term of the contract?"

- If you have a new contract or need to make changes to an existing contract record, **you must create a new contract record**. EPC does not allow edits to a contract record after it has been submitted. You are encouraged – but not required – to upload a copy of your contract into your contract record. If you do not upload your contract, be sure to keep a copy handy in case USAC requests it during the review of your application. In addition, FCC document retention rules require you to retain and provide documentation when requested by USAC for at least 10 years after the end of the applicable funding year or last date of service, whichever is later.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they **had a contract or other legally binding agreement in place at the time they submitted and certified an FCC Form 471**. Find more information on the [Contracts](#) page.

## AUP Audit Confirmation Letters

Each year, USAC undergoes an agreed-upon-procedures (AUP) review. The firm performing the review this year will email a number of balance verifications ("confirmations") to applicants and service providers. The purpose of these confirmations is to verify that the balances reported by USAC on specific Funding Request Numbers (FRNs) match the balances in the records of the applicants and service providers.

In February 2023, the firm will send the confirmations to a number of applicants and service providers. Each confirmation features the balance reported by USAC on a specific FRN **as of October 31, 2022**.

Applicants and service providers should review their records and respond by either:

- Agreeing with the balance featured on the confirmation, or
- If it is different, noting the balance as of October 31, 2022 on their records and explaining how they determined that balance.

**A common error that occurs is** that the recipient of the confirmation checks their FRN balances when they receive the letter, instead of looking back to what the balance was as of October 31, 2022. Be sure that you **check the confirmation letter balance as of October 31, 2022 before responding**.

The confirmations are being sent from [confirmation@us.PWC.com](mailto:confirmation@us.PWC.com). We ask that you add this email address and domain to your safe senders list, check your email filters for messages from this email address, and respond promptly to any confirmation requests you receive.

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USAC | 700 12th Street NW | Suite 900 | Washington, DC 20005