

Affordable Connectivity Program – Provider Election Notice Instructions

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Affordable Connectivity Program Overview

The Affordable Connectivity Program provides support for broadband services and certain devices to help low-income households stay connected.

On December 27, 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 became law and established an Emergency Broadband Connectivity Fund of \$3.2 billion in the United States Treasury to help Americans afford internet service during the pandemic. The Act directed the Federal Communications Commission to use the fund to establish an Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB Program), under which eligible low-income households may receive a discount off the cost of broadband service and certain connected devices, and participating providers can receive a reimbursement for such discounts. On November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Infrastructure Act) became law. The Infrastructure Act provides \$14.2 billion to modify and extend the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB Program) to a longer-term broadband affordability program called the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

The Infrastructure Act also directs the Commission to effectuate for the ACP specified changes, such as to program eligibility criteria and the program benefit amount, by the effective date, which the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) has determined to be December 31, 2021.

The Infrastructure Act also provided for a 60-day transition period from the EBB Program to the ACP for households fully enrolled in the EBB Program as of December 31, 2021. Accordingly, the 60-day transition period for the ACP will start on December 31, 2021 and end on March 1, 2022. The ACP began to accept enrollments on December 31, 2021.

Broadband providers wishing to participate in the ACP should review all applicable program requirements and procedures in the Commission's Order (FCC 22-2) and any subsequent guidance for compliance with the ACP's requirements. The Bureau and USAC will begin accepting new Affordable Connectivity Program provider applications and election notices on December 27, 2021 for any new provider that did not participate in the EBB Program or existing participating provider seeking to expand to new jurisdictions for the Affordable Connectivity Program. Eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) can elect to participate in the ACP by filing the appropriate information with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and do not need to seek approval from the Bureau.

For more information regarding the ACP, please refer to the Wireline Competition Bureau ACP webpage at <https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program> or on USAC's website at <https://www.usac.org/about/affordable-connectivity-program/>

Who Can File an Election Notice

Broadband providers, including those that have not been designated as eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs), can participate in the ACP Program after filing an Election Notice with USAC.

Service providers with Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) designation may go directly to USAC to complete the Provider Election Process. Non-ETCs must receive FCC approval to participate in the program prior to filing their Election Notice. ETCs who wish to provide the ACP in a state in which they do not have ETC designation must also receive FCC approval prior to filing their Election Notice with USAC.

Election Notice Sections

In order to facilitate the election review process, applicants must complete each section of the election form fully, submit any required documentation, and sign to the certifications. Failure to provide the requested information may result in an application being delayed or denied.

Section A: Election Type

- **Provider Type:**

ETC: Select this type if you are designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier by either a state commission or the FCC. (If you select this provider type you will be asked to provide a copy of your official ETC designation(s).)

Non-ETC: Select this type if you have not been designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier by a state commission of the FCC.

- **Election Type:**

First Time Election: Select this type if this is your company's first time electing to participate in the ACP.

Update to Existing Election: Select this type if you have at least one ACP SAC and are looking to either add a new SAC, update contact information, or change any responses to your previous election form.

- **Description of Updates:**

If you selected "Update to Existing Election" as your election type, please use this space to list all changes being made from your original election.

Section B: Service Provider Information

- **Provider Name:**

The legal name of the entity filing the election notice.

- **DBA Name:**

'Doing Business As' name. This is the name that will appear in our [Companies Near Me](#) tool and be visible to consumers searching for a provider.

- **Provider Address:**
Your entity's physical address is the location where the principals of your organization conduct their business. The physical address includes street number; street name; city; country; U.S. state, U.S. territory, or province; and ZIP Code or postal code. Please use the same address used in SAM.gov and your FCC application if you are applying as a non-ETC.
- **FCC Registration Number (FRN):**
An FRN, or FCC registration number, is a 10-digit number that is assigned to a business or individual registering with the FCC. This unique FRN is used to identify the registrant's business dealings with the FCC.
- **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)**
A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is a 12-digit number that identifies your entity registration in SAM.gov. This identifier is assigned by SAM.gov. A UEI and Active SAM.gov registration is required to receive reimbursement from the ACP.
- **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)**
The EFT Indicator in SAM.gov is a four-digit number used to identify additional bank accounts associated with a single SAM.gov registration. The EFT Indicator is a separate field from the Unique Entity ID field in SAM.gov. The EFT Indicator is determined by the entity during registration.
- **EIN (Federal Tax ID Number)**
An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number and is used to identify a business entity.
- **FCC Approval Number:**
For non-ETCs only, this number will begin with EBBA and is issued by the FCC. This field is **required** for non-ETCs. We cannot process an election without this number.
- **Service Provider ID Number (SPIN):**
A Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) is a unique nine-digit number assigned to service providers by USAC when an FCC Form 498 is filed. This number is also known as the service provider's 498 ID. This is only required for ETCs.
- **Business Type:**
Select from the hyperlinked list on the election form, also found [here](#).
- **Holding Company:**
A holding company is a company that owns other companies and oversees their operations but exists solely to operate those subsidiaries. This field is only required if your entity has a holding company.

- **Provider Officer Name:**
This contact will automatically be designated as your 497 Officer in NLAD. This user role assigns the ETC administrator in NLAD and can access the Lifeline Claims Systems (LCS). This user will also receive outreach from USAC regarding system notifications, updates, potential de-enrollments, etc.
- **Provider Officer Phone Number**
Provide a phone number where the officer can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service phone number in this field.
- **Provider Officer Email Address**
Provide an email address where the officer can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service email in this field.
- **General Contact:**
This contact will be used for general outreach from USAC regarding any system notifications, updates, potential de-enrollments, etc.
- **General Contact Phone Number**
Provide a phone number where the general contact can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service phone number in this field.
- **General Contact Email Address**
Provide an email address where the general contact can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service email in this field.
- **Billing Contact**
Provide a phone number where the billing contact can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service phone number in this field.
- **Billing Contact Email Address**
Provide an email address where the billing contact can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service email in this field.
- **Regulatory Contact**
Provide a phone number where the regulatory contact can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service phone number in this field.
- **Regulatory Contact Email Address**
Provide an email address where the regulatory contact can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. We do not recommend entering a customer service email in this field.

- **Preparer Name**
Name of election preparer. This field is only required if the preparer is not the company officer.
- **Preparer Company**
Name of preparer company, if a preparer company was used to submit the election. This field is only required if the entity used a preparer to submit their election.
- **Preparer Phone Number**
Provide a phone number where the preparer of the election form can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. This field is only required if the preparer is not the company officer.
- **Preparer Email Address**
Provide a phone number where the preparer of the election form can be reached by USAC in case of questions or concerns. This field is only required if the preparer is not the company officer.
- **Consumer Website URL**
Provide the website where consumers can find your company. This will be displayed on our Companies Near Me tool.
- **Consumer Support Phone Number**
Provide the phone number where consumers can reach your company. This will be displayed on our Companies Near Me tool.

Section C: Service Provider Operations

- **Does your company plan to offer connected devices?**
Under the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), service providers may offer eligible households a one-time device discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if the household contributes more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price of the device.

Providers intending to offer devices must complete the [ACP Device Information Form](#) for each unique device it offers to subscribers or intends to offer subscribers through the ACP.
- **Does your company plan to connect to NLAD and/or the National Verifier using an application programming interface (API)?**
Select “yes” only if your company plans to utilize the API to connect to NLAD and/or the National Verifier.
- **Does your company operate on Tribal lands?**
The ACP uses the same definition of Tribal lands as the Lifeline program. For informational purposes, a [nationwide map](#) is available showing Tribal lands eligible for enhanced support.
- **Does your company offer pre-paid service?**

Pre-paid service means the consumer pays for the service before they use it.

- **Does your company offer a plan that would be fully covered by the ACP benefit?**
Select “yes” only if your company has a plan that would be fully covered by the ACP benefit. The ACP benefit is up to \$30.
- **Is your company facilities based?**
Facilities-based means a service provider who builds, owns and operates the network.
- **If non-facilities based, list the underlying provider(s) that provides your network facilities**
If you selected “no” to facilities-based, list all providers that provide your underlying network.

Section D: Broadband Service

Please select each state/territory where your company will offer ACP service and identify the service(s) available in the state/territory and the ETC/Non-ETC status of your company in the state/territory. You may select both “fixed” and “mobile” if you offer both types of services.

Section E: Affiliate Information:

Please list any parent/subsidiary or affiliate relationships the provider has with other broadband service providers and whether they intend to participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Section F: API Access to USAC Systems:

This section provides information on API Access to USAC systems; no action is needed for this section by the provider.

Section G: Certifications and Signature:

Providers should read all certifications in this section and provide a signature, printed name, and date.

Final Steps

After receiving a company’s completed election notice (and successfully processing), USAC will assign the service provider an ACP Study Area Code(s) (SAC(s)). A SAC is a unique number that USAC assigns to a service provider that uniquely identifies that company based on its service area. Companies have one SAC for each state where they operate. In the NLAD, consumers are enrolled into the SAC associated with the state or territory where they live. USAC will also assign a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) to any provider who does not have one.

When service providers have completed the election process and received their ACP SACs, they can begin to access USAC’s IT systems for participating providers. USAC will offer trainings to help service providers use the USAC systems.

Updates to Election Notices

Service providers are required to maintain up-to-date election notice information on file with USAC. Any change to the information provided on the election form must be updated within ten business days of the change in the information. All updated elections must be fully completed and include a valid electronic signature and date.

To submit a change in election information, please submit an updated election form to ACProgram@usac.org.