Affordable Connectivity Claims System Enhancements

May 11, 2023



DISCLAIMER

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

Housekeeping

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers
- The audience will remain on mute
- Enter questions at any time using the "Questions" box
- If your audio or slides freeze, restart the webinar
- A copy of the slide deck is in the "Handouts" section of webinar panel

Meet Our Team

Elizabeth Dewey

Communications Specialist | Lifeline

Natasha Harris Business Analyst| Lifeline

Agenda

- Program Overview
- Claims Process Overview
- Partial Upload Process
- How to Claim Reimbursement
 - Certify Claims
 - Revisions
- Resources

Program Overview

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a Federal Communications Commission benefit program that helps low-income households pay for broadband service and connected devices

Eligible households can receive:



\$30 Standard Discount

Up to \$30/month discount for broadband services



\$75 Tribal Discount

Up to \$75/month discount for broadband services for households on qualifying Tribal lands



Device Discount

A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet (consumer co-pay above \$10 and less than \$50 required)

*The ACP benefit is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household

Claims Process Overview

Claims Process

Overview



Service providers use the **Affordable Connectivity Claims System (ACCS)** to claim ACP subscribers for reimbursement and to certify reimbursement claims

- The ACCS is available through USAC's <u>One Portal</u> system
- Service providers claim the monthly service reimbursement amount for each eligible subscriber, as well as any one-time device benefit reimbursement

Claims Process

Snapshot of Subscribers Eligible for Reimbursement

- On the first of the month, USAC takes a snapshot of all subscribers entered in the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) that may be claimed for reimbursement for the prior month
 - For example, a snapshot taken on April 1 shows the subscribers eligible to be claimed for the March data month
 - Consumers who have not been entered in NLAD are not eligible for reimbursement
 - Consumers who transferred to a different provider prior to the snapshot are not eligible for reimbursement
- Subscribers should only be claimed if they are receiving ACP service
 - For example, subscribers who have enrolled but have not started receiving service are not eligible to be claimed

Determining the Claim Amount ACP Reimbursement Claims

- Service providers can only claim reimbursement for the discount passed on to the consumer
- Consumers must receive service in the data month to be claimed for reimbursement
- Consumers must receive **and use service** in the data month to be claimed for reimbursement if they are not assessed and do not pay a fee for their ACP service

Determining the Claim Amount Applying the ACP & Lifeline Benefits

- Eligible consumers can choose to apply their ACP and Lifeline benefits to the same broadband service
- The full Lifeline discount must be applied first, then the ACP discount can be applied to the remaining amount
- The ACP discount cannot be applied to a service plan that is already offered with no fee to the end user as a result of Lifeline program support or other benefit programs

Determining the Claim Amount Reimbursement – Partial Months

- If a service provider prorates consumer costs for a partial month of service, the provider should only seek reimbursement for the actual discount applied to the consumer bill
- USAC does not prorate ACP claims it is the responsibility of the service provider to enter the correct reimbursement amount in the claims template
- If a consumer de-enrolls with a service provider before the snapshot date, that consumer cannot be claimed for reimbursement

Claims Process Reason Codes

Service providers are required to provide a reason code for all unclaimed subscriber records

Code	Description
U1	Signed up for ACP, no usage yet
U2	Subscriber is in a non-usage cure period (snapshot date falls within the 15-day cure period)
U3	Subscriber lost eligibility prior to snapshot, but was not de-enrolled from NLAD prior to snapshot
U4	Subscriber's account is suspended
U5	Failed to match subscriber in ETC's internal system
U6	Other

Claims Process Filing Period for Claims

- Service providers have up to **six months from the snapshot date** to submit original claims or upward revisions on previous claims (applies to March 2022 data months and on)
 - **Example 1:** For the March 2023 data month (April 1 snapshot) providers must submit original claims by October 2, 2023 (since October 1 falls on a weekend)
 - **Example 2:** If a provider submits an original claim for the March 2023 data month on September 1, they still have until October 2 (since October 1 falls on a weekend) to submit an upward revision
- There is no time restriction on downward revisions
- Providers must certify claims by the 15th to receive payment at the end of the same month

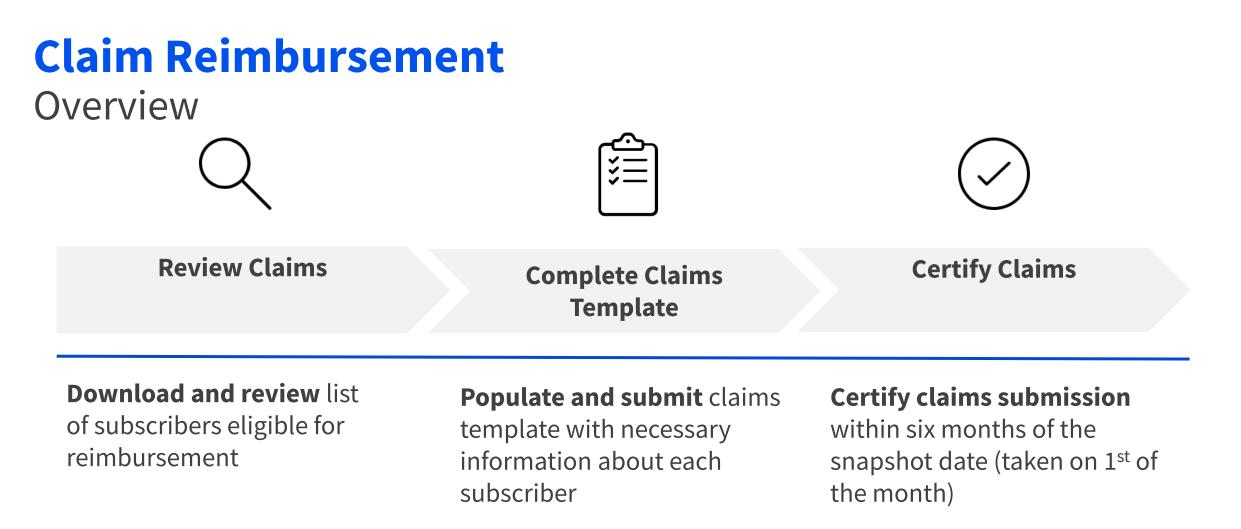
Questions?

Partial Upload Process

Partial Upload Process Overview

- Aims to improve the claims upload process for service providers
- All rows in a claims template that successfully pass row level validations are saved and do not need to be resubmitted if other rows have errors
 - Service providers are no longer required to include all subscribers for a SAC in their claims upload, then can now upload smaller batches of subscribers
 - There is a new **partial filing template** that providers can download
 - The new "**Partially Uploaded**" SAC status indicates if some, but not all subscribers in a SAC have a rate
- These enhancements are optional, and providers can continue to file ACP claims using the same process they have been
- These changes do not impact the Lifeline claims process

How to Claim Reimbursement



Claim Reimbursement

User Accounts and Responsibilities

=	

497 Officer

Must certify reimbursement claims, and can upload, modify, and submit claims

Ξ×	-0-	
— X	=炎	
— ×	= *	

497 User

Can upload, modify, and submit claims, but **cannot** certify claims

Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs) that participate in Lifeline and ACP:

 The 497 Officer and 497 User roles are assigned and managed in E-file, which can be accessed through USAC's <u>One</u> <u>Portal</u> system

ACP-only Providers:

- The 497 Officer is assigned during the election process
- To change the 497 Officer or add a 497 User, email <u>ACProgram@usac.org</u> with the subject "ACP 497 Officer Request"

ing menuor

Claim Reimbursement Log In

- Log in to <u>One Portal</u>
 - Select Affordable Connectivity Claims System (ACCS) under the Lifeline section of the dashboard
 - **Reminder**: ACCS users must have 497 Officer or 497 User entitlements to access the system

In accordance with the Supply Chain orders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 and the Telecom invoice, E-rate - FCC Form 473, > and High Cost & Lifeline - FCC Form 481. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional information, visit the USAC Supply Chain page.

💾 Upcoming Dates	High Cost	\checkmark	Help?
05/02 Quarterly Filing 2022 due May 2	Lifeline	^	Send us a message Click here
05/04 New Filer ID 2022 Basics	National Verifier - All participating service providers use the National Verifier to help prospective consumers apply and verify eligibility for the federal Lifeline benefit or the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).		Call us (888) 641-8722
Office Hours: 05/05 2022 After Filing an FCC Form 499 see full calendar	National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) - Service providers enro Lifeline or ACP subscribers in NLAD to identify recipients, prevent duplicate benefits, and track household usage. Service providers must register a subscriber in NLAD for a company to claim Lifeline or ACP reimbursement.		
	National Lifeline Accountability Database Staging Environment - The NLAD staging environment allows Lifeline and ACP providers to test system features.		
	Lifeline Claims System (LCS) - Lifeline service providers file monthly reimbursement claims using the Lifeline Claims System.		
	Affordable Connectivity Claims System (ACCS) - Affordable Connectivity Program service providers file monthly reimbursement claims using the ACCS.		

Claim Reimbursement Log In

 Under the Claims section of NLAD, select the Affordable Connectivity Program Claims link

Subscriber Management	ACP Subscriber Management	Claims	Account Management	Tools & Resources
USAC Home Lifeline Program NLAD	Claims			
Claim	S			
 Lifeline Clain 	ns - File and certify Lifeline subscribers.			

Affordable Connectivity Program Claims - File and certify Affordable Connectivity Program subscribers.

Claim Reimbursement Download Claims (1 of 2)

On the **ACP File or Revise Claim** page of ACCS, providers can file an original claim or a revision

- Select the data month, year, and filing type
 - Search results will generate in the SAC Status section based on the applied filters
 - New SAC Status for **Partially Uploaded**
 - Click **Continue** to begin filing

Note: The claims template is typically available for download after 11:30 a.m. ET on the 1st of the month

P File or Revise Claim	ACP Certify Claim Filing	History
CP File or	Revise Clair	() Instructions
Select a month to file	or revise a claim.	
Month	Year	Filing Type
Select a Month	Select a Year	Select Filing Type
Select a Month SAC Status Not Started	50	(B77)-384-2575 ACProgram@wsac.org Website & Prhacy Policies Website
SAC Status		
SAC Status Not Started	50	
SAC Status Not Started Partially Uploaded	50 2	

Claim Reimbursement

Download Claims (2 of 2)

- To download a filing template, click on the **Download original filing** template link
 - This list includes subscriber data from the NLAD subscriber snapshot report, which is taken on the 1st of the month
 - Subscriber data can be pulled for a specific SPIN/SAC
- The **partial filing template** is also available for providers
- Click **Download** to review list of subscribers eligible for reimbursement

File Claim)							(i) Instruct
November 20 Filing Data	022							
ast updated 04/10/23 1:50 PM	I EDT							
() One or more subscribers a template of subscribers w			the "Downlo	ad partial fi	ling templ	ate" link for a	1	
Upload Data		_↓	Download (original filin	g template	(j)		
		<u> </u>	Download p	artial filing	template(D		
File format must be .csv								
File format must be .csv								
					• Type	a keyword to s	earch :	Q
C Upload File	Status	Non-Tribal Reported	Non-Tribal Claimed	Tribal Reported	• Type Tribal Claimed	a keyword to s Total Reported	earch Total Claimed	Q. Devices Claimed
C Upload File scriber Counts sying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Status Not Started	Non-Tribal Reported			Tribal	Total		Devices
C Upload File scriber Counts nying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Not	Reported	Claimed	Reported	Tribal Claimed	Total Reported	Total Claimed	Devices Claimed
C Upload File scriber Counts nying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Not Started	Reported 3	Claimed 0	Reported	Tribal Claimed	Total Reported	Total Claimed	Devices Claimed
C Upload File scriber Counts nying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Not Started Not Not	Reported 3 3	0 0	Reported 0	Tribal Claimed 0	Total Reported 3 3	Total Claimed 0	Devices Claimed 0

Show 5 V records/page

< 1 > of 4 pages

Claim Reimbursement Complete Claims Template (1 of 6)

Populate claims template with necessary information (rate, reason code, and device benefit) for each subscriber

- Rate enter the dollar amount for each subscriber that should be claimed or unclaimed
- **Reason Code** enter a reason code for each unclaimed subscriber record
- **Device Benefit** enter rate for one-time device benefit (if applicable), which should be no more than the market rate minus the co-pay amount
 - This should correspond to the information in NLAD and the <u>ACP Device Information Form</u>

А	В	С	D
Subscriber ID	Rate	Reason Code	Device Benefit
123456789A	30		
123456789B	0	U1	
123456789C	50		95

Claim Reimbursement Complete Claims Template (2 of 6)

- Save as a .csv file
- Select **Upload File** to submit claims template

March 2022 Filing Data								
Upload Data		↓ Download a r	ew filing templa	ate				
File format must be .csv								
Subscriber Counts								
Displaying 1 to 5 of 18 records					• Туре	a keyword to se	earch	(
	Status	Non-Tribal Reported	Non-Tribal Claimed	Tribal Reported	• Type Tribal Claimed	a keyword to so Total Reported	Total Claimed	(Devices Claime
Displaying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Status Not Started	Non-Tribal Reported	Non-Tribal Claimed	Tribal Reported	Tribal	Total	Total	Devices
Displaying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Not	Reported	Claimed	Reported	Tribal Claimed	Total Reported	Total Claimed	Devices Claime
Displaying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Not Started	Reported	Claimed 0	Reported	Tribal Claimed	Total Reported 3	Total Claimed	Devices Claime
Displaying 1 to 5 of 18 records	Not Started Not Not	Reported 3 3	Claimed 0 0	Reported 0 0	Tribal Claimed 0	Total Reported 3 3	Total Claimed 0	Device: Claime 0

Instructions

Claim Reimbursement Complete Claims Template (3 of 6)

- For a successful upload, users receive a success message
- The **Subscriber Counts** table updates to reflect the latest uploaded claims template
- View a detailed report by clicking on the Download to review uploaded data link

File Claim

November 2022

Filing Data

One or more subscribers are still missing a rate. Select the "Download partial filing template" link for a template of subscribers who still need a rate.

Upload Data

File format must be .csv

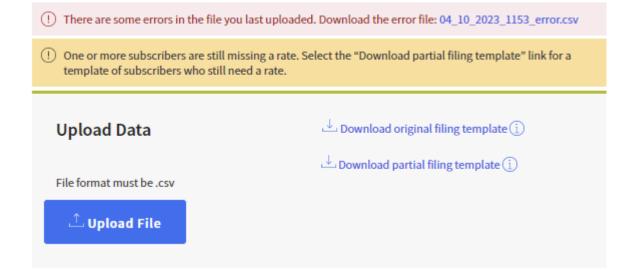
Upload File

Subscriber Counts

isplaying 1	to 5 of 52 re	cords					Тур	e a keyword to:	search	q
SPIN *	SAC	Name	Status	Non-Tribal Reported	Non-Tribal Claimed	Tribal Reported	Tribal Claimed	Total Reported	Total Claimed	Devices Claimed
		117 -	Not Started	5025	0	11	0	5036	0	0
		i01	Not Started	22628	0	0	0	22628	0	0
		117 0-	Uploaded	3784	3784	0	0	3784	3784	0
		INC.	Not Started	15702	0	1	0	15703	0	0
		INC.	Partially Uploaded	1762	1257	0	0	1762	1257	0
iow 5	v records	/page		ose this link the you download v						of 11 pa
)ownload to	review uplos	aded data(j)	only contain su selected SAC(s The rate given	ubscribers in the) who have a rai will be the rate ded and that wa	e.					

Claim Reimbursement Complete Claims Template (4 of 6)

- For an unsuccessful upload, users receive an error message and can download the error file to review the failures
 - Make the necessary changes and upload the claims file again
- Users will receive a new error message that notifies them if some subscribers are missing a rate
 - Providers can download the partial filing template to see which subscribers need a rate entered



Claim Reimbursement Complete Claims Template (5 of 6)

- A file can contain only some of the subscribers in a SAC and be accepted if there are no errors
- However, a SAC must have the "Uploaded" SAC status in order to be submitted and certified
 - All subscribers in a SAC must have a rate or reason code in order to be certified

You updated 2 subscribers successfully. Y claim.	/ou must still submit your claim and your Officer must certify the			
() One or more subscribers are still missing a rate. Select the "Download partial filing template" link for a template of subscribers who still need a rate.				
Upload Data File format must be .csv	⊥ Download original filing template (í) ⊥ Download partial filing template (í)			

Last updated 04/10/23 1:50 PM EDT

Claim Reimbursement Complete Claims Template (6 of 6)

- After successfully uploading a claim, click on the **View Support Summary** link to review a summary of claims before submitting the filing to the 497 Officer to certify
- From the **Support Summary** page, users can select filings to submit to the 497 Officer to certify
 - Select the claims that are ready to be submitted and enter required contact information
 - Click Submit to Officer to Certify

playing 1 to 1 of 1 record	ds							
Select All Filter claims by U		Uploaded	~			Type a keyword to search		
eady to ubmit SPIN	SAC N:	ame 🔻		Status	ACP	One-Time Device Benefit	Total Support	Support Details
Z				Uploaded	\$90.00	\$.00	\$90.00	View
w 5 v records/page	ubmit for certific	cation.					<	1 > of1;
Please fill out the f claim.	following info	ormatio	on in case we	e need to co	ntact yo	ou with any que	estions about	your
Contact Name				Contac	t Phone N	lumber		
Contact E-mail Address Address 1	5							
	S							
	5							
Address 1	5							
Address 1	5			State			Zīp	
Address 1 Address 2	5			State			Zip	
Address 1 Address 2	5			State		×	Zip	
Address 1 Address 2	5			State			Zip	

Questions?

Certify Claims

Claim Reimbursement Certify Claims

- As a 497 Officer, log in to USAC's <u>One</u> <u>Portal</u> to access the ACCS
 - In NLAD, click on Affordable
 Connectivity Program Claims link under the Claims section
 - Under the **ACP Certify Claim** page, select the Month and Year to certify original claims and revisions
 - Click **Continue** to begin certifying the claim(s)

P File or Revise Claim	ACP Certify Claim Filin	g History
CP Certif	v Claim	(1) Instructions
Select a month to c		
	Mana	
Month	Year	

(i) Instructions

Claim Reimbursement Certify Claims

- Select the claims that are ready to certify
- Click **View** under the Support Details column to confirm the information

EBBP/ACP Certify Claim

March 2022 Claims to Certify

Displaying 1 to 2 of 2 records

								_
Ready to Certify	SPIN	SAC	Name 🔻	Status	ACP	One-Time Device Benefit	Total Support	Support Details
				Ready to Certify	\$90.00	\$.00	\$90.00	View
				Ready to Certify	\$90.00	\$.00	\$90.00	View

Claim Reimbursement Certify Claims

- Review the Certify and Sign page
 - Sign at the bottom of the page
 - Select Certify Claims
 - A success message is displayed "Claim has now been successfully certified."

Note: Claims must be certified (not

just uploaded) by the 15th (or next business day if the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday) to receive payment at the end of the same month

Certify and Sign

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that

- 1) I am an officer authorized to submit the reimbursement request on behalf of the participating provider;
- 2) Have read the instructions relating to the reimbursements and the funds sought in the reimbursement request are for services and/or devices that were provided in accordance with the purposes and objectives set forth in the statute, rules, requirements, and orders governing the Alfordable Connectivity Program;
- 3) The participating provider is in compliance with and satisfied all of the rules set forth in 47 CTR Part 54, Subpart R, the statute, requirements, and orders governing the Alfordable Connectivity Program reimbursement, and the provider acknowledges that failure to be in compliance and remain in compliance with Alfordable Connectivity Program statutes, rules, and orders may result in the denial of reimbursement, cancellation of funding commitments, and/or recoupment of past disbursements;
- 1) The participating provider has obtained valid certification and application forms as required by the rules in 47 CFR Part 54, Subpart R for each of the subscribers for whom it is seeking reimbursement;
- 5) The amount for which the participating provider is seeking reimbursement from the Alfordable Connectivity Fund is not more than the amount charged to the eligible household and the discount has already been passed through to the household;
- 6) Each eligible household for which the participating provider is seeking reimbursement for providing an Internet service offering discounted by the affordable connectivity benefit has not been and will not be charged for the amount the provider is seeking for reimbursement;
- 7) Each eligible household for which the participating provider is seeking reinbursement for providing an Internet service offering discounted by the affordable connectivity benefit 1) will not be required to pay an early termination fee if such eligible household elects to enter into a contract to receive such Internet service offering if such household later terminates such contract; 2) was not, after the date of the enactment of the Consolidated Appropriations Act; 2021, as anneeded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act; subject to a mandatory waiting period for such Internet service offering based on having previously received broadband Internet access service from such participating providers; and 3) will otherwise be subject to the participating providers; generally applicable terms and conditions as applied to other customers;
- 8) Each eligible household that is receiving a supported service offering that does not require the participating provider to assess and collect a monthly fee from the household has used the supported service, as usage is defined by 47 CFR § 54.407(c)(7), at least once during the service month being claimed;
- 9) Each eligible household for which the participating provider is seeking reimbursement for supplying such household with a connected device was charged by the provider and paid more than \$10.00 but less than \$50.00 for such connected device, and that no such household had already received a reimbursable connected device from the participating provider or any other participating provider when the connected device was distributed to the household;
- 10) If seeking reimbursement for a connected device, the connected device meets the Commission's requirements, the representations regarding the devices made on the provider's website and promotional materials are true and accurate, that the reimbursement claim amount reflects the market value of the connected device less the amount charged to and paid by the eligible household, and the connected device has been delivered to the household;
- If seeking reimbursement for a connected device, the provider has retained the relevant supporting documents that demonstrate the connected devices requested are eligible for reimbursement and submitted the required information;

- The provider has not offered, promised, received, or paid kickbacks, as defined by 41 U.S.C. § 8701, in connection with the Affordable Connectivity Program;
- 15) The information contained in this form is true, complete, and accurate to the best of the officer's knowledge, information, and belief, and is based on information known to the officer or provided to officer by employees responsible for the information being submitted;
- 16) The officer is aware that any false, fictious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact on this request for reimbursement or any other document submitted by the provider, may subject the provider and the officer to punishment by fine or forfeiture under the Communications. Act (47 U.S.C. 59 502, 503(b), or 1606), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code (18 U.S.C. 59 1002, 203(b), or 1606), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code (18 U.S.C. 59 1002, 203(b), or can lead to liability under the False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. 59 3729-3733, 3801-3812);
- No service costs or devices sought for reimbursement have been waived, paid, or promised to be paid by another entity, including any federal or state program;
- 18) No Federal subsidy made available through a program administered by the Commission that provides funds to be used for the capital expenditures necessary for the provision of advanced communications services has been or will be used to purchase, rent, lease, or otherwise obtain, any covered communications equipment or service, or maintain any covered communications equipment or service previously purchased, rented, leased, or otherwise obtained, as required by 47 CFR § 54.10;
- 19) For each ACP claim, the provider certifies it did not require enrollment in the ACP as a condition for enrolling in Lifetine or some other purpose, or imply such a condition existed. Evidence that a household claimed for ACP reimbursement was enrolled without the household's consent or as a requirement of receiving Lifetine service may lead to denial of support claims, as well as other penalties and referral to law enforcement;
- 20) All enrollments and transfers completed by the provider were bona fide, requested and consented by the subscriber household after receiving the disclosures required under § 54.1810(a) and (b), and made pursuant to program rules; and
- 21) The provider used the National Lifeline Accountability Database as a tool for enrollment, reimbursement calculations, and duplicate checks in all states, territories, and the District of Columbia, and checked their records in accordance with § 54.1806(a)(4).

Date
04/21/2022
Officer Name

Officer Title

Back to

,

Revisions

37

Revisions Overview

A **revision** is when the provider submits and certifies an original filing, but then makes changes to it in a later filing period

- Service providers use the same filing process as original claims for revisions
- Providers access the revisions workflow by selecting **Revision** from the filing type dropdown on the **ACP File or Revise Claim** page
- Revisions are available beginning the first day of the next filing period after an original claim is certified
- Upward revisions are only allowed within 6 months of the snapshot, and there is no time restriction for downward revisions

When filing revisions only include the subscribers you want to revise in the claims template

Revisions Revise Claim Page

- From the **ACP File or Revise Claim** page, download the most current filing template to begin a revision
 - The template will include the most recent certified claims data
- Edit the template and then upload the file to begin a revision
 - Only subscribers with revisions should be included in the revised template
 - Upward and downward revisions can be made in the same file

March	2022
Filing Da	ata

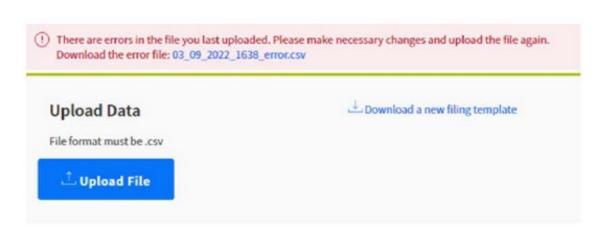
Upload Data	Download most current filing template
File format must be .csv	
🕮 Upload File	

Subscriber Counts

bal Non-Tribal Revised Claim	Tribal Last Claimed	Tribal Revised	Total Last	Total	Revised
		Claim	Claimed	Revised Claim	Devices Claim
0	0	0	3	0	0
0	0	0	3	0	0
				< 1	> of 1 pag

Revision Revise Claim

- For an unsuccessful upload, users receive an error message and can download the error file to review the failures
 - If an upward revision is submitted outside of the filing window (six months from the snapshot date) an error message will be returned
 - The subscriber's Rate cannot be increased, the revision is outside the administrative window
- Make the necessary changes and upload the claims revision file (only subscribers with revisions should be included in the revised template) again



Questions?

Resources

Resources

- Visit our <u>File ACP Reimbursement Claims</u> webpage for more information on ACCS
- Download the <u>Claims Input Template Sample</u> and list of <u>Error Descriptions</u>
- Detailed instructions are available in ACCS on the following pages:
 - ACP File or Revise Claim
 - ACP Certify Claim
 - Filing History

Stay Informed About the ACP

- <u>Sign up</u> for ACP email updates and upcoming events
- Visit <u>USAC's website</u> for service provider updates
- Find upcoming trainings and other resources on the <u>ACP Learn page</u>
- **Questions?** Email <u>ACProgram@usac.org</u>

Thank You!

