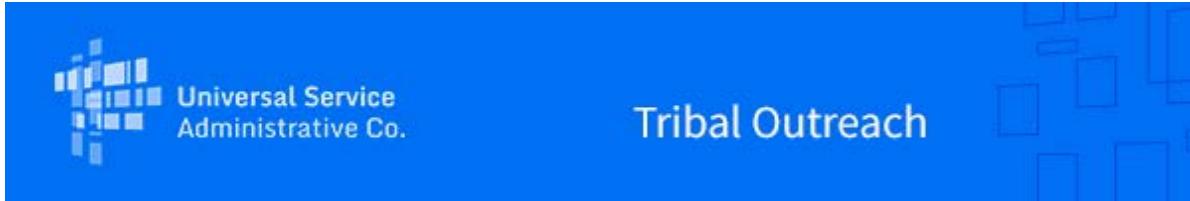


From: [USAC Tribal Outreach](#)

Subject: [External Sender] Dear Tribal Leader: FCC Makes It Easier For Tribal Libraries To Get E-Rate Support—Apply Now

Date: Thursday, January 27, 2022 5:57:04 PM



FCC Makes It Easier For Tribal Libraries To Get E-Rate Support—Apply Now

January 27, 2022

Dear Tribal Leader,

The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) E-Rate program provides eligible schools and libraries with discounts of up to 90 percent on broadband service, connections, equipment, and maintenance. The FCC adopted a Report and Order (**Tribal Library Order**) at its January 27 open meeting that amends the FCC's rules by updating the definition of a library, and clarifying that **Tribal libraries are eligible for support through the E-Rate program**. The new rules take effect in time for Tribal libraries to apply now for E-Rate support for Funding Year (FY) 2022 (which runs from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023).

The Tribal Library Order adds “Tribal library” to the definition of a “library” in the E-Rate rules, and amends the rules to recognize that Tribal libraries are eligible for support from state library administrative agencies under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018. In the Tribal Library Order, the FCC explains that Tribal Councils can designate a library as a Tribal library (for example, through a Tribal Resolution), and Tribal libraries must demonstrate that they have three characteristics commonly associated with Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS) grants to Native American libraries. The three characteristics are:

- Regularly scheduled hours,
- Staff, and
- Materials available for library users.

The FCC also directs USAC, together with FCC staff, to develop targeted outreach efforts to increase awareness of the program among Tribal libraries and adopt new metrics to gauge the participation of Tribal libraries in the E-Rate program.

The E-Rate program's FY2022 application filing window opened on January 12, and will close on March 22, 2022, which means that Tribal libraries and schools must begin the process now if they wish to apply for E-Rate support for the current funding year, which runs from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

We are asking for your help by sharing information outlined below about the E-Rate program and our upcoming Training opportunities for the schools and libraries serving Tribal communities.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Kraynal Alfred, USAC Tribal Liaison, at TribalTraining@usac.org or (202) 572-5733.

Sincerely,

Radha Sekar
Chief Executive Officer

About the E-Rate Program

The Schools and Libraries (E-Rate) program provides discounts up to 90 percent to eligible public or private schools (K-12), libraries, and groups of schools and libraries (e.g., consortia, districts, systems) for E-Rate eligible internet access and data transmission services and internal connections (e.g., Wi-Fi equipment, cabling, and basic maintenance services) competitively bid and approved on the application (FCC Form 471). These discounts result in a reduction of the costs for types of service/equipment to the school or library making the purchase with the E-Rate program covering the discounted percentage of those costs (e.g., \$1,000 worth of eligible pre-approved services/equipment for a 90 percent eligible school would result in a payment of \$900 through the E-Rate program with the school or library paying only \$100.)

Critical Deadlines

- **FY2022 FCC Form 470 (The First Form)**
 - **Tuesday, February 22, 2022** is the last date that you can certify an FCC Form 470 and still have time to wait the required 28 days and submit and certify your FCC Form 471 before the application filing window closes on March 22 at 11:59 p.m. ET.
- **FY2022 FCC Form 471 (The Second Form) application filing window**
 - All FCC Form 471 applications (the second form) must be submitted and certified during the annual filing window.
 - For FY2022, the FCC Form 471 application filing window opened on January 12, 2022 and will close on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Get Started: Create New Profiles for New Users and Entities

Applications must be filed in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) Portal, the E-Rate program account management system. Setting up new user and entity profiles in the EPC Portal can take several days to complete depending on a number of factors, including the number of entities joining a consortium and the availability of designated users to activate their EPC accounts.

Whether your schools or libraries wish to apply independently or if your Tribal government wishes to set up a consortium, the time is now to start setting up user profiles in the EPC Portal.

To create an account in the EPC Portal or for assistance with your existing EPC account, call the Customer Service Center (CSC) at (888) 203-8100. CSC is operational Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. ET.

Before your first call, review the [Registration Checklist for New Tribal Libraries](#) (PDF) for a list of

information to gather and the action items to complete.

Service and Entity Eligibility (includes Updated Tribal Library Eligibility)

- **Service Eligibility**

- The full list of eligible services is available in the [FY2022 Eligible Service List](#) (ESL) issued by the FCC and more information is available on USAC's [Eligible Service Overview](#) webpage and in the [ESL Glossary](#) (PDF).

The ESL includes the following service types that fall in one of two funding categories:

- **Category One (C1) Services** are services needed to support broadband connectivity to eligible schools and/or libraries.
 - Category One services include Data Transmission Services and/or Internet Access.
- **Category Two (C2) Services** are services needed for broadband connectivity within schools and/or libraries, and services needed to bring broadband into and provide it throughout schools and libraries. Category Two services include:
 - Internal Connections or the equipment and services used to bring broadband into, and provide it throughout, schools and libraries.
 - Managed Internal Broadband Services (MIBS) is when a third-party operates, manages, and monitors eligible broadband internal connections (owned or leased equipment).
 - Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections (BMIC) is the basic maintenance and technical support appropriate to maintain reliable operation for eligible broadband internal connections.

Note: For Tribal schools and libraries, the E-Rate program will also [match special construction funding](#) provided by states, Tribal governments, or other federal agencies on a one-to-one basis, up to an additional ten percent for the applicant's discount rate. Total E-Rate support with matching funds may not exceed 100 percent.

- **Entity Eligibility**

- **Eligible Schools Overview**

Visit the [Schools and Library Eligibility](#) webpage for more details.

- Must provide elementary and/or secondary education, as determined under state law.
- Cannot have an endowment exceeding \$50 million.
- Cannot operate as a for-profit business.

Eligible Libraries Overview

Visit the [Schools and Library Eligibility](#) webpage for more details.

- Budget must be completely separate from any school budget.
- Cannot operate as a for-profit business.
- Must be eligible for assistance from their state library administrative agency under the Library Services Technology Act (LSTA), as amended by the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018.
- A library may be designated as a Tribal library by a Tribal Council (e.g., pursuant to a Tribal Resolution).
- Tribal libraries designated by a Tribal Council must demonstrate three characteristics commonly associated with Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS) grants to Native American libraries:

- Regularly scheduled hours,
- Staff, and
- Materials available for library users.

Non-instructional facilities (NIFs) are eligible for discounts on certain services.

Visit the [Non-Instructional Facilities](#) webpage for more details.

- In general NIFs are:
 - School buildings that do not have classrooms; or
 - Library buildings that do not have public areas.

Non-Traditional Education Eligibility – Certain non-traditional education students and facilities may also be eligible for E-Rate support. Eligibility is based on whether under state law the entity provides elementary or secondary education to its student population and whether the school facility is eligible for support because elementary and secondary education is provided at that facility.

Visit the [Non-Traditional Education Eligibility](#) webpage for more details.

- The [Eligibility Table](#) for non-traditional K-12 students and facilities provides information on E-Rate program support eligibility for students and facilities in Head Start programs, pre-kindergarten programs, adult education programs, and juvenile justice programs.
- **Consortia** are not themselves eligible for E-Rate support, but they can conduct competitive bidding processes and/or apply for E-Rate support on behalf of their consortium members.

Visit the [Consortia](#) webpage for more details.

- Schools and libraries can join together to form a consortium.
- **Note:** A Tribal government can also create a consortium for its Tribally controlled schools and libraries, and a Tribal government employee can act as the consortium leader.

Upcoming E-Rate Tribal Training

During the upcoming FY 2022 Tribal Training Series, USAC will offer an E-Rate Information Session, a walkthrough of the FCC Form 470 (the First Form), and a walkthrough of the FCC Form 471 (the Second Form). Future training will be offered for later stages in the application process as those milestones draw closer.

The E-Rate Tribal Training sessions are focused on schools and libraries that self-identify as a Tribal Entity but are also open to anyone who would like to learn more about applying and receiving E-Rate support for Tribal schools and libraries.

Note: For data reporting purposes, any eligible E-Rate applicant may self-identify as a Tribal school or library in their EPC entity profile if the majority of students or library patrons served are Tribal members; the school or library is located partially or entirely on Tribal land; is a school operated by or receiving funding from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE); or is a school or library operated by a Tribal Nation.

There is also no cost associated with attendance at this online E-Rate Tribal Training series or with any USAC E-Rate Training session.

Session 1: E-Rate Tribal Information Session

February 3, 2022

4 p.m. ET

[**Register Here**](#)

Overview: In this session, we will present an overview of the E-Rate program and cover general topics such as the application process, the competitive bidding requirements, important program terms, eligibility, and program discounts. Additionally, we will focus on the recently proposed Federal Communications Commission (FCC) order to amend the definition of library in the FCC's rules to clarify that Tribal libraries are eligible for support through the E-Rate program.

To prepare for the webinar, we recommend that you review the E-Rate program's website:

- Brand new to E-Rate?
 - Learn how to [Get Started](#).
 - Explore the [Application Process](#).
 - Review the “Get Started: Create New Profiles for New Users and Entities” section of this email and download the [Registration Checklist for New Tribal Libraries](#) (PDF).

Session 2: FCC Form 470 Walkthrough for Tribal E-Rate Applicants (The First Form)

February 8, 2022

4 p.m. ET

[**Register Here**](#)

Overview: Join us as we walk applicants through the steps for filing an FY2022 FCC Form 470. The webinar will include a step-by-step demonstration of filing the form and will be followed by a Q&A session.

- **Recommended for:** Tribal E-Rate Applicants
- **E-Rate Experience Level:** All levels

To prepare for the webinar, we recommend that you review the E-Rate program's website:

- [FCC Form 470 Filing EPC System Guide FY2022](#) (PDF).
- [FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Reference Table \(FY2022\)](#) (PDF).
- Learn more about the [FCC Form 470](#) and [Eligible Services](#).
- Review the steps in the application process:
 - Step 1: [Competitive Bidding](#).
 - Step 2: [Selecting a Service Provider](#).
- Follow the step-by-step guides offered in the [instructional video series for FCC Form 470](#).

Session 3: Office Hours for Tribal E-Rate Applicants

February 15, 2022

4 p.m. ET

[**Register Here**](#)

Overview: This session provides an opportunity for Tribal E-Rate applicants and consultants to ask the USAC E-Rate team questions regarding the FY2022 E-Rate funding application process and the recent E-Rate Tribal training sessions.

In advance of this session, you may email questions to TribalTraining@usac.org.

Session 4: FCC Form 471 Walkthrough for Tribal E-Rate Applicants (The Second Form)

March 8, 2022

4 p.m. ET

[**Register Here**](#)

Overview: Join us for the second webinar in the series designed to walk applicants through an FY2022 FCC Form 471. It will include a step-by-step demonstration of filing the form and a Q&A session.

- Recommended for: Tribal E-Rate Applicants
- E-Rate Experience Level: All levels

To prepare for the webinar, we recommend that you review the [E-Rate program](#)'s website:

- Brand new to E-Rate? Learn how to [Get Started](#).
- Learn about [FCC Form 471](#).
- Review the steps in the application process:
 - Step 3: [Applying for Discounts](#)
- Follow the step-by-step guides offered in the [instructional video series for FCC Form 471 and creating a contract record](#).

Session 5: Office Hours for Tribal E-Rate Applicants

March 15, 2022

4 p.m. ET

[**Register Here**](#)

Overview: This session provides an opportunity for Tribal applicants and consultants to ask the USAC E-Rate team questions regarding the FY2022 E-Rate funding application process and the recent E-Rate Tribal training sessions.

In advance of this session, you may email questions to TribalTraining@usac.org.

Resources

Ready to Apply for E-Rate Support?

- Before your first call, review the [Registration Checklist for New Tribal Libraries](#) (PDF) for a list of information to gather and the action items to complete.
 - Review the “**Get Started: Create New Profiles for New Users and Entities**” section of **this email** for additional information on how to set up an entity number and register for EPC, the E-Rate online application portal.

- See the [E-Rate Productivity Center \(EPC\)](#) page for more information about registering and using the E-Rate online application portal.
- [Subscribe](#) to the monthly E-Rate News Brief and the E-Rate Tribal e-Newsletter to receive valuable deadline reminders, information on any program rule change or update, prompts for the monthly call, and training announcements.
- Explore the training on the E-Rate program's website.
 - Visit the [Videos](#) page to watch Step-by-Step tutorials that are designed to help you understand and manage the form filing process, FCC requirements, and other elements of the E-Rate program.
 - Register for a webinar or watch a recording on our [Webinars](#) page to learn about E-Rate program updates, including E-Rate program rules and orders, guidance about compliance and filings, and stakeholder support.
 - Visit the [E-Rate Tribal Training](#) page for a list of recent recorded FY 2022 E-Rate Trainings and selected E-Rate Tribal Trainings.

E-Rate Program Technical Assistance

The USAC Customer Service Center (CSC) provides customer service for the Universal Service Fund (USF) programs, including the E-Rate program, with specialized agents trained to answer your E-Rate program questions.

You have two options for requesting assistance:

- Call the CSC at (888) 203-8100. CSC is operational Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. ET; or
- Open a customer service case in the [E-Rate Productivity Center \(EPC\)](#), if or once you are registered user.

Questions or Suggestions?

Contact USAC Tribal Liaison, **Kraynal Alfred**, at TribalTraining@usac.org or (202) 572-5733.

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