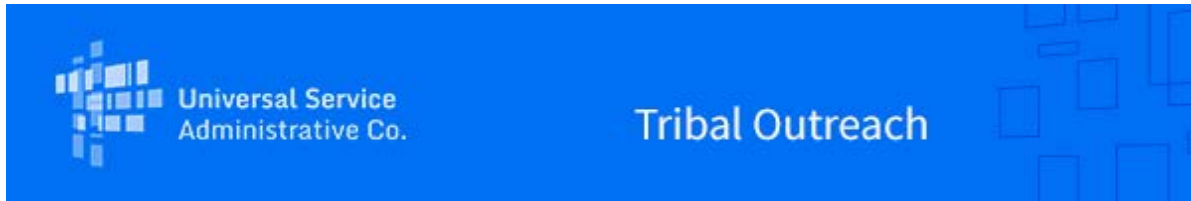| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | USAC Tribal Outreach |
| **Subject:** | [External Sender] Dear Tribal Leader: FCC WCB Extends the E-Rate Application Deadline for New Tribal Library Applicants to May 26 |
| **Date:** | Friday, March 11, 2022 12:01:15 PM |

Universal Service Administrative Co.    **Tribal Outreach**

# FCC WCB Extends the E-Rate Application Deadline for New Tribal Library Applicants to May 26

March 11, 2022

## Dear Tribal Leader,

We want to alert you about an important update for your Tribal libraries interested in applying for FY2022 E-Rate support. The E-Rate program provides eligible schools and libraries with discounts of up to 90 percent on the costs of eligible broadband service, connections, equipment, and basic maintenance services. Last Friday, the FCC Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) **extended the funding year (2022) application filing deadline for new Tribal Libraries to Thursday, May 26, 2022**. The filing window for all other applicants remains unchanged and will close on **March 22, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Details about the FCC's recent decision to amend the E-Rate program's definition of "library" to include "Tribal library" and to clarify Tribal Libraries are eligible to receive support and the newly announced extended filing window deadline are below.

We will soon conclude the FY2022 E-Rate Tribal Training Series, but we will schedule more training sessions for Tribal libraries in the coming weeks during the extended filing window. For the current series, the registration information for the remaining session and links for recorded sessions are available in this email. We encourage interested entities looking for an overview of eligible equipment and services to start with Session 2 before watching Session 1: E-Rate Information Session for Tribal Applicants. Please continue to check the E-Rate Tribal Training page for new training opportunities.

We also prepared a Registration Checklist for New Tribal Libraries to help new entities prepare for their first steps.

Please help us share these updates with the libraries serving Tribal communities.

If you have questions, you may contact the USAC Tribal Liaison, Kraynal Alfred, at TribalTraining@usac.org.

**WCB Extends FY2022 FCC Form 471 Filing Window for New Tribal Libraries**

The FCC released an order (DA 22-231) waiving the E-Rate application filing window for new Tribal libraries. Applications with at least one **new** Tribal library listed as recipient of service will have until

**Thursday, May 26, 2022** at 11:59:59 p.m. ET to submit and certify the FCC Form 471 in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) without requiring an additional waiver.

Please note that **Thursday, April 28, 2022 is the last date for these applicants to submit and certify an FCC Form 470** and still wait the required 28 days before submitting and certifying the FCC Form 471 by the May 26 filing deadline. We encourage applicants to file their FCC Form 470 as soon as possible and not to wait until April 28, 2022.

**Clarifying Tribal Library Eligibility**

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 should be able to demonstrate that they have three basic characteristics of a library:

- 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.

Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1. What types of Tribal documentation is acceptable for designating a Tribal Library?**

> **Answer.** Any Tribal library that is eligible for LSTA funding under the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 and has not been validated in the E-Rate program should be prepared to demonstrate their eligibility by providing:
>
> Documentation from an authorizing Tribal government entity (such as a charter or ordinance or letter from the Tribal Council), as well as documentation that shows that the applicant has the three characteristics of a library, including regular hours, staff, and materials available for library users, or a signed letter from a state library administrative agency.

**Q2. Should Tribal libraries seeking eligibility under a Tribal resolution or letter wait until the Tribal Library Order takes effect on March 16 to certify the FCC Form 470 or create user accounts and profiles in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC)?**

**Answer.** There's no need to wait until March 16. Tribal libraries should create user accounts and profiles in the EPC now. Please call the Customer Service Center (CSC) at (888) 203-8100, Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. ET for help to access EPC and set up your account. Tribal libraries should also start their competitive bidding process as soon as possible by completing and certifying the FCC From 470.

## 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, 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 these services/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 discount rate Tribal library would result in a payment of $900 through the E-Rate program with the Tribal library paying only 10 percent of the costs (i.e., $100).

# FY2022 E-Rate Tribal Training Series

A recording is available for each completed session. If you have questions about any material covered during the recorded sessions, please send an email to the USAC Tribal Liaison at [TribalTraining@usac.org](mailto:TribalTraining@usac.org) or register below for Office Hours scheduled for March 15, 2022 at 4 p.m. ET. You are able to ask the USAC's E-Rate team questions during Office Hours.

## Upcoming Sessions

### 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 also email questions to [TribalTraining@usac.org](mailto:TribalTraining@usac.org).

## Completed Sessions: Recordings and Slide Decks are Available

### Session 1: E-Rate Information Session for Tribal Applicants

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

- **[Watch a Recording](#)**

- **Slide Deck**

We recommend that you also review:

- 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)

**Overview:** In response to a popular request, we adjusted the agenda for this session to provide an introductory overview of eligible equipment and services and walked through three training samples for FCC Forms 470 and 471.

- **Watch a Recording**
- **Slide Deck**
    - Training Sample 1: FCC Form 470
    - Training Sample 2: FCC Form 471 (Category 1)
    - Training Sample 3: FCC Form 471 (Category 2)

We recommend that you also review:

- The step-by-step guides offered in the instructional video series for FCC Form 470.
- 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.

### Session 3: Office Hours for Tribal E-Rate Applicants

**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.

If you have questions about the information covered in the recorded webinar, you may email questions to TribalTraining@usac.org.

- **Watch a Recording**
- **Slide Deck** (contains a list of FAQs answered during the recorded session)

### Session 4: FCC Form 471 Walkthrough for Tribal E-Rate Applicants (The Second Form, which requests funding for the eligible equipment and/or services)

- **Watch a Recording**
- **Slide Deck**

**Overview:** Join us for the second webinar in the series designed to walk applicants through an FY2022 FCC Form 471 application. 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](#).
- Download the [E-Rate Program FCC Form 471 Submission Checklist](#)

# 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.