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May 2025 Tribal Nation Newsletter

May 30, 2025 | [University Service Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#)



Tribal Nation News

USAC's June Tribal Teleconference, held in collaboration with the Lifeline team, will provide an overview of how to apply to Lifeline. There will be time for Q&A, as well. Please join us on **Tuesday, June 10, 2025, at 4 p.m. ET** – [Register](#).

USAC Webinar Enhancements

USAC has been hard at work on improvements to the webinar experience for stakeholders. Visitors to [USAC.org's](#) webinar pages will now see:

- **Unique URLs for recorded webinars.** All recordings have their own dedicated page to make watching and sharing easier than ever.
- **Longer descriptions on recorded webinars.** More detailed descriptions better explain what each recorded webinar has on offer.
- **A new “Intended Audience” field.** All webinars are labeled with a target audience to show users at a glance whether the content is right for them.
- **Expanded topic tagging.** Recordings have up to 3 topics attached to make them more searchable.

These improvements are all about helping site visitors find the information they need for a more streamlined, more user-centric [USAC.org](#) experience. We're excited for you to see them!

[Tribal Library E-Rate Advocacy Program \(T-LEAP\)](#)

Participating in T-LEAP

Tribal libraries and Tribal college and university (TCU) libraries can receive direct support in navigating the E-Rate application process, including one-on-one assistance in applying to the program, preparing applications, and receiving E-Rate support.

Interested Tribal libraries can [sign up here](#) year-round.

New! T-LEAP Page Redesign

USAC has made updates to the [T-LEAP page](#), including adding a side navigation bar to quickly access [learning materials](#) or learn more about the [participant process](#). Part of the redesign includes a new [What is T-LEAP?](#) video that explains eligibility and what to expect while participating in the T-LEAP program.

To learn more, please visit the [T-LEAP page](#) or contact the [USAC Tribal Liaison](#).

E-Rate

Funding Year (FY) 2024 Recurring Services

June 30, 2025, is the last day to receive recurring services for FY2024. If the same service provider will continue to provide your recurring service after June 30, 2025, you must use the Funding Request Number (FRN) approved for FY2025 when you are invoicing for recurring services that start on or after July 1, 2025.

Summer Contact Period ("Summer Deferral") Started May 23, 2025

USAC processes program forms and requests as promptly as possible to issue timely decisions. If information is missing or incomplete, we may request additional information and/or documentation about your form or request. During this time of year, our most common reason for initiating contacts is to obtain more information about your FCC Form 471 to complete Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) reviews.

Our "summer deferral period" extends from the Friday before Memorial Day (**i.e., May 23, 2025**) through the Friday following Labor Day (**i.e., September 5, 2025**). Starting May 23, if our first attempt to contact you is on or after May 23, and we do not receive a response to our questions, we will put your application(s) on a deferred status and will continue the review of your application(s) sometime after September 5.

During this period, please note:

- You can always contact us or respond to our pending questions to restart the review of your application(s) if you become available before September 5, and we encourage you to do so to expedite the review of your application(s).
- If the PIA reviewer has already contacted you and you wish to designate someone to answer questions in your absence, be sure to send your designee's contact information to your PIA reviewer. If the PIA reviewer has not contacted you and your designee will be checking your messages, be sure that you have provided written authorization for your designee to answer questions about your application(s).
- If the PIA reviewer makes contact with someone representing your organization but that person is not in a position to answer PIA questions, they should clearly state to the PIA reviewer that the review of your application(s) should remain on hold until you are available.

PIA questions are posted in EPC, and you will also receive an email from EPC notifying you to respond to the questions. Full- and partial-rights users on the organization's account can see and respond to the PIA

questions.

If our first attempt to contact you was before May 23, the non-summer deferral PIA review process will continue, and you will be required to timely respond to PIA requests. Please respond promptly to any PIA requests for information or documentation. During the summer deferral period, USAC will only continue reviews of forms and requests where documentation has already been received or participants have responded to information requests sent in EPC. If participants do not respond during these periods, the form or requests will be placed in a deferred status until the deferral period ends, at which time we will continue our regular review process.

Filing the FY2025 FCC Form 486

After applicants have received a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) with a positive funding commitment and services have started for the funding year, they must [file an FCC Form 486](#) (Receipt of Service Confirmation and Children's Internet Protection Act Certification Form). The FCC Form 486 notifies USAC that services have started and certifies the status of the applicant's compliance with the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#) (CIPA).

Applicants will be able to file an FCC Form 486 for FY2025 **as soon as they receive a funding commitment** from USAC. Be sure to verify your status under CIPA and, if you are a member of a consortium, that you have completed your [FCC Form 479](#) (Certification by Administrative Authority to Billed Entity of Compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act Form) and provided it to your consortium leader.

Applicants can file an FCC Form 486 **early** – that is, before services have started, under certain conditions. For the applicant to file early, all the following must be true:

- **Receipt of positive funding decisions.** You must have received an FCDL with at least one positive funding commitment. In EPC, you will not be able to file an FCC Form 486 for an FCC Form 471 FRN unless USAC has issued a commitment for that FRN.
- **Service start dates and contracts.** You must confirm with your service provider(s) that the service(s) for your approved funding commitments will start in July of the funding year. You must also confirm that those services will be provided to the eligible entities identified on the FRNs. Except for services to be delivered under non-contracted, tariffed, or month-to-month arrangements, applicants must have a contract or other legally binding agreement with the service provider(s).
- **Certifications.** You must certify that there are signed contracts covering all the services listed on the FCC Form 486, except for those services provided under tariff or on a month-to-month basis. You must also certify that you are authorized to submit the FCC Form 486 on behalf of the billed entity; that you have examined the form; and that to the best of your knowledge, information, and belief, all statements of fact provided on the form are true.

You can review the text of all the certifications on the FCC Form 486 after you have completed your entries for the required information on the form. Please review the certifications carefully to make sure that you can accurately make them as of the start of the receipt of discounted services. **Do not forget** to check the **Early Filing** box if you are filing on or before July 31 and services have not yet started.

[Rural Healthcare](#)

Deadline Approaching for Post-Commitment Change Requests

The service delivery deadline for all single year Funding Year (FY) 2024 commitments is June 30, 2025. The service delivery deadline is included in the funding commitment letter (FCL), which USAC sends via email after processing the [FCC Form 462](#) for the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) program and the FCC Form 466

for the Telecommunications (Telecom) program. Per [FCC Order 19-78](#), applicants must submit the following post-commitment change requests on or before the service delivery deadline of the affected Funding Request Number (FRN):

HCF Program:

- [Site and Service Substitutions](#)
- [Service Delivery Deadline extension requests](#) (for non-recurring costs)

Post-commitment change requests for the HCF Program must be submitted in RHC Connect. For more information, please visit the [Post-Commitment Actions](#) webpage on the USAC website. A [step-by-step user guide](#) is available on that webpage to assist you. More information about post-commitment change requests for the Telecom Program will be available soon.

Please note: Per [FCC Order 23-110](#), Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) change requests are now aligned with the invoice filing deadline rather than the service delivery deadline. For more information, please use the [SPIN changes](#) webpage as a resource.

RHC Program Inflation-Based Cap Announced for FY2025

The RHC program funding cap for FY2025 is \$723,892,841. The internal cap for upfront payments and multi-year commitments under the HCF Program is \$182,780,877. The caps will apply only if the RHC program demand exceeds available funding. These new caps represent a 2.4 percent inflation-adjusted increase to the \$706,926,603 RHC program funding cap and the \$178,496,951 internal cap on multi-year commitments and upfront payments from FY2024. Read the [announcement](#).

FCC Released Order DA 24-366 Directing USAC to Accept Late-Filed Funding Requests

On April 18, 2024, the FCC released [Order DA 24-366](#) waiving the application filing deadline and directing USAC to allow health care providers to submit funding requests for the RHC program for 30 days after the close of each application filing window. These applications will be considered for funding only if the health care provider requests a waiver for filing late and if the request is approved by the FCC. Otherwise, USAC will dismiss late filed funding requests.

[Lifeline](#)

FCC Form 481 Filing Now Open – Deadline: July 1, 2025

All service providers participating in the Lifeline and/or High Cost programs are required to file and certify the FCC Form 481 annually. This form collects financial and operational data that USAC uses to validate service provider support.

The filing window is now open, and providers can log into [One Portal](#) to access and submit their FCC Form 481. All filings must be completed by **July 1, 2025**.

USAC's High Cost team recently hosted a [webinar](#) outlining the filing process and updates to this year's form. Additional resources and step-by-step guidance are also available on the [File FCC Form 481](#) page.

June 2024 Monthly Webinar: Representative Accountability Database (RAD) 101

Join us on **Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 3 p.m. ET** for our next Lifeline program webinar to learn how to navigate and use the Representative Accountability Database (RAD) system. [Register](#) for the 2025 monthly webinar. Recordings of previous webinars are available on our [Webinars](#) page.

Key Dates and Trainings

E-Rate

2025 In-Person E-Rate Trainings:

- September 9, 2025, Denver, Colorado – Registration coming soon.
- September 16, 2025, Washington DC – Registration coming soon.

E-Rate Webinars

- Invoicing: Applicant & Service Provider Training – June 12, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)
- Service Provider Webinar – June 24, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

RHC | Telecom Post Commitment Change Request Webinar

June 11, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

RHC | Service Provider Training

June 18, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

Lifeline | How to Apply to Lifeline

June 10, 2025, at 4 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

Lifeline | Representative Accountability Database (RAD) 101

June 11, 2025, at 3 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

USF Program Technical Assistance

The USAC Customer Service Center (CSC) provides customer service for all USF programs. Visit the [Contact USAC](#) page to get in touch with specialized agents trained in the specifics of each program.

Questions or suggestions? Contact USAC's Tribal Liaison at TribalLiaison@usac.org.

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