



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

May 2026 Tribal Nation Newsletter

May 29, 2026 | [Universal Service Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#)



Tribal Nation News

Join the [Universal Service Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#) and the Lifeline team for the June 2026 Tribal Teleconference on navigating USAC systems. During the session, the Lifeline team and USAC's Tribal Liaison will provide attendees with important program announcements, followed by an overview of USAC's systems, their uses, and how to gain user access. Time will also be allotted for Q and A.

Please join us on **Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET** – [Register](#).

Notes from USAC's Tribal Liaison

Tribal Library E-Rate Advocacy Program Summer Tribal Teleconference

Join USAC to learn about the Tribal Library E-Rate Advocacy Program (T-LEAP). During this webinar, USAC's Tribal Liaison and Tribal Library Advocates will share general information about the E-Rate program, including eligibility and program requirements, and how T-LEAP can support your Tribal library in receiving E-Rate funding. There will be time for Q&A.

Please join us on **Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET** – [Register](#).

What is T-LEAP?

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

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

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

[E-Rate](#)

Filing the FY2026 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 allows the applicant to certify their compliance with the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#) (CIPA).

Applicants can file an FCC Form 486 for FY2026 **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 an 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 Funding Request Number (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 or legally binding agreements covering all the services listed on the FCC Form 486, except for those services provided under a 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.

CIPA Reminders

In general, school and library authorities must certify that: (1) they have complied with the requirements of CIPA; (2) they are undertaking actions, including any necessary procurement procedures, to comply with the requirements of CIPA; or (3) CIPA does not apply because the services do not require compliance with CIPA.

The administrative authority – the relevant authority with responsibility for the administration of the school or library – must report the status of compliance with CIPA.

- If you are the administrative authority for the school or library and you are the billed entity, you certify your status of CIPA compliance on your FCC Form 486.
- If you are the administrative authority but not the billed entity (e.g., a member of a consortium and the consortium files for discounted services on your behalf), certify your CIPA compliance status on the [FCC Form 479](#) and provide a copy of that form to your consortium leader. Your consortium leader must have copies of FCC Forms 479 on file from all its members before it can accurately make the appropriate CIPA certifications on the FCC Form 486 on behalf of its members.

The [CIPA](#) page explains the requirements and actions you must undertake to demonstrate CIPA compliance, including having an Internet safety policy, using a technology protection measure, and holding a public hearing/meeting to present the Internet safety policy. It also has information on the timing of CIPA compliance and the documentation required to demonstrate CIPA compliance.

In-Person Training

USAC is coming to an event near you in 2026. E-Rate experts will provide training, discuss program updates, and answer questions from new and experienced participants. Registration is still open for these in-person training events.

- E-Rate Training – Phoenix, AZ: **September 15, 2026**, at the Salvation Army Kroc Center, 1375 E. Broadway Road, Phoenix, AZ. [Register](#).
- E-Rate Training – Washington, DC: **September 24, 2026**, at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) headquarters, 45 L Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. [Register](#).
 - The training will also be available live on the FCC's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/@FCC>.

Conferences

- American Libraries Association (ALA) Conference from **June 25-29, 2026** (Chicago, Illinois). [Event link](#).
- International Society for Technology in Education's ISTE Live and ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) Conference from **June 28-July 1, 2026** (Orlando, Florida). [Event link](#).

Reminders

To learn more information about filing the FCC Form 486, FY2026 commitments, the new competitive bidding portal, and more, please review the [May 2026 E-Rate News Brief](#).

[Lifeline](#)

Reminder: FCC Form 481 Filing Window Closes July 1

The 2026 annual FCC Form 481 filing window will close on July 1, 2026. The FCC Form 481 collects financial and operations information. Eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) participating in the High Cost and/or Lifeline programs must annually file the FCC Form 481 in accordance with [47 C.F.R. § 54.313](#) (High Cost) and [47 C.F.R. § 54.422](#) (Lifeline/High Cost and Lifeline-only).

All ETCs participating in Lifeline **must file and certify** the FCC Form 481, even if the provider is not seeking Lifeline support.

[Rural Health Care \(RHC\)](#)

Deadline Approaching for Post-Commitment Change Requests

The service delivery deadline for all single-year Funding Year (FY) 2025 commitments is June 30, 2026. 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.

Submit RHC Program Post-Commitment Change Requests in RHC Connect

Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program

There are several actions that may be required outside of the regular application process. The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the service delivery deadline, June 30, of a given funding year:

- Site and service substitutions
- Service delivery deadline extensions

The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the invoice filing deadline, October 28, of a given funding year:

- Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes (corrective and operational)
- Invoice filing deadline extensions

For more information, please visit the [HCF Program Post-Commitment Actions](#) webpage on the USAC website as well as specific webpages for [SPIN Changes](#) and [Site and Service Substitutions](#). A step-by-step [Post-Commitment Change Request](#) user guide is available to help you submit these requests correctly.

Telecommunications (Telecom) Program

The service substitutions option is available in RHC Connect for Telecom Program applicants. Service substitutions must be submitted by the service delivery deadline, June 30, of a given funding year.

The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the invoice filing deadline, October 28, of a given funding year:

- Invoice filing deadline extensions
- Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes (corrective and operational)

For more information, visit the [Post-Commitment Actions](#) webpage on the USAC website as well as specific webpages for [SPIN Changes](#) and [Service Substitutions](#). A step-by-step [Post-Commitment Change Request](#) user guide is available to help you submit these requests correctly.

Upcoming Office Hours and Trainings

To assist you with submitting your FY2025 post-commitment change requests, the Rural Health Care (RHC) outreach team will be hosting the following webinars:

- Post-Commitment Change Request Webinar (HCF) – **June 10, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET** – [Register](#).
- Post-Commitment Change Request Webinar (Telecom) – **June 17, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET** – [Register](#).
- Service Provider Quarterly Training (Q2) – **June 24, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET** – [Register](#).

High Cost

Verification Reviews to Confirm Broadband Deployment

Connect America Fund (CAF) broadband deployment verification reviews are coming soon for carriers in funds that had 2025 deployment milestones.

Now that the March 2, 2026, deadline for carriers to submit and certify their 2025 CAF deployment data in the [High Cost Universal Broadband](#) (HUBB) portal has passed, carriers participating in the following funds (as well as ACS) may be subject to [verification reviews](#) in 2026 to confirm deployment to a random sample of reported locations:

- [Alternative Connect America Cost Model \(Original ACAM\)](#).
- [Revised Alternative Connect America Cost Model \(Revised ACAM\)](#).
- [Alternative Connect America Cost Model II \(ACAM II\)](#).
- [Connect America Fund Phase II Auction \(CAF II Auction\)](#).
- [Rural Digital Opportunity Fund \(RDOF\)](#).
- [Bringing Puerto Rico Together \(Uniendo a Puerto Rico\) Fund and the Connect the USVI Fund \(PR/USVI Funds\) Stage 2 fixed support](#).

The verification review process is intended to ensure that carriers receiving CAF support are using it to deliver high-speed Internet access that meets mandated speeds and network performance standards to required location counts by relevant milestone deadlines in areas eligible for funding. Carriers in these funds should be familiar with the process and prepared to submit documentation that serves as proof of deployment for each HUBB record selected for review in the months ahead.

Read the [full announcement](#). For more information about the deployment verification review process, please see the [Deployment Verification Review](#) page.

Key Dates and Trainings

Tribal Teleconference with Lifeline
Managing Lifeline Systems

Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

Tribal Teleconference | T-LEAP Summer Kick-Off and Information Session

Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

E-Rate | Beginning E-Rate Services

Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

E-Rate | Open Data Webinar Part 1: Open Data Overview

Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

E-Rate | Invoicing Applicant and Service Provider

Thursday, June 18, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

E-Rate | Open Data Webinar Part 2: Creating Reports and Visualizations

Thursday, June 25, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

RHC | Post-Commitment Change Requests Webinar (HCF)

Wednesday, June 10, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

RHC | Post-Commitment Change Requests Webinar (Telecom)

Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register >](#)

RHC | Service Provider Quarterly Training (Q2)

Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at 2 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.