Universal Service Administrative Co.

Tribal Outreach

May 2023 USAC Tribal Newsletter

May 31, 2023

Dear Tribal Leader,

The [Universal Service Administrative Company's](#) (USAC) invites you to attend our upcoming June Tribal Teleconference held in collaboration with the Rural Health Care (RHC) program team. USAC will provide an "RHC 101," including an overview of the RHC program, eligibility requirements, and the application process, on **Tuesday, June 13, 2023**, at 4 p.m. ET – [Register](#).

E-Rate

Overview of the PIA Review Process

Now that E-Rate applications have been submitted for Funding Year (FY) 2023, you may receive outreach from a [Program Integrity Assurance](#) (PIA) reviewer. PIA is the process USAC uses to review applications for compliance with E-Rate program rules and policies. USAC reviews the information on your FCC Form 471 and may contact you with additional questions on specific items. Below is a summary of steps in the PIA review process. You can find more details about how to find pending inquiries in the [April 21, 2023 E-Rate News Brief](#).

USAC assigns an initial reviewer to process your FCC Form 471. The information you provided on your form may be sufficient for the initial reviewer to complete your review. If not, the initial reviewer prepares the questions that USAC must ask based on your application.

The PIA reviewer issues questions to you via the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC). You will receive an email when the questions are available. If you are a public school or library, we also notify your state E-Rate coordinator.

Please respond promptly to any PIA requests for information or documentation. Reviewers will continue their attempts to contact applicants to ensure that they are available to respond to inquiries.

During the PIA review process, you always have the following options:

- If you do not understand one or more questions, you can ask your initial reviewer what the question means or what information USAC expects in your response.

- You can ask for more time to respond. However, note that your initial reviewer may not be able to return to your application quickly once you provide the information.

- You can ask to speak to a manager if you are having trouble communicating with your initial reviewer. USAC will not penalize you for doing so, and the manager can help you understand the questions USAC is asking and the responses USAC expects to receive.

If USAC intends to modify or deny a funding request, your PIA reviewer will notify you through EPC. You can provide additional information at this point, but you must respond quickly because we do not stop the review process to wait for a response.

Rural Health Care (RHC) Program

New! Submit Your Post-Commitment Change Requests in RHC Connect

The following post-commitment change requests are now available in RHC Connect, USAC's online system, for Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program applicants:

- Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes (corrective and operational)

- Site and service substitutions

- Service delivery deadline extensions for non-recurring charges

- Invoice filing deadline extensions

A new webpage for Post-Commitment Actions is published on the USAC website as well as specific webpages for SPIN Changes and Site and Service Substitutions . A step-by-step Post-Commitments Change Request user guide is available to help you submit these requests correctly.

Let's Plan a Virtual Site Visit or an In-Person Visit!

During the COVID-19 pandemic, RHC staff suspended travel to conferences and sites. In calendar year 2023, RHC staff plans to resume travel to conferences and in-person site visits. In prior years, RHC staff has attended conferences and visited sites to connect with program participants and see first-hand how health care providers (HCPs) benefit from the RHC program. We would like to continue to learn more about the people and communities who benefit from RHC program support. If we can't visit in person, we can schedule a virtual event. This is a great opportunity to introduce RHC staff to participating HCPs and to deepen the relationship between RHC staff and applicants. If you are planning a trip to Washington, DC, and you would like to meet RHC staff, please reach out so that we can plan accordingly. If you are interested in having your HCP or Consortia featured in an upcoming virtual site visit or if you would like to plan a visit, please send a request to Blythe.Albert@usac.org. Please also reach out to us if you are not currently participating in the RHC program and would like to learn more about the program and whether your Tribal health care provider may be eligible to receive support.

To learn more about RHC program rule changes, important reminders, RHC Connect updates, and online tools, please check out the May 2023 RHC Newsletter.

Lifeline and ACP

Recertification Notice

Recertification is an annual requirement for Lifeline and ACP subscribers. USAC conducts recertification to ensure that active Lifeline and ACP subscribers are still eligible for their benefit.

On May 1, 2023, USAC began initiating automated eligibility database checks to verify the eligibility of Lifeline subscribers due for recertification in 2023. This process will occur over the course of a few months. ACP recertification will begin in June.

- Subscribers who **pass** the automated check will complete the 2023 recertification requirement and will **not** need to take any action for their 2023 recertification.

- Subscribers who **fail** the automated check will be required to recertify their continued eligibility through a manual process. USAC will conduct outreach to those subscribers.

- Subscribers who participate in both Lifeline and ACP and pass the USAC-conducted Lifeline recertification process will not need to undergo a separate ACP recertification process.

What This Means for Service Providers

Service providers should regularly monitor the "Recertification Subscriber Status Report" in the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD) to identify subscribers undergoing recertification. This report will update daily to

reflect the results of the automated checks. USAC encourages service providers to educate subscribers about USAC and why we are reaching out to them, and our recertification process. However, service providers should not provide or estimate deadlines, as these deadlines are subject to change.

To learn more about the recertification process, visit the Recertification [webpage](#) or view the [Recertification 101 training](#).

What This Means for Subscribers

In May, USAC started outreach to Lifeline subscribers who fail the automated eligibility checks. Subscribers will have an approximately 60-day window to recertify through a manual process.

If a subscriber receives a letter in the mail from USAC, they must take action to recertify their benefit. These subscribers will need to complete the Lifeline Recertification Form ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)). They may also complete the recertification form [online](#). Some subscribers will need to provide income or eligibility documentation to prove their continued eligibility for the program. USAC will notify subscribers if they need to provide documentation. Subscribers who do not demonstrate eligibility for Lifeline within 60 days will be de-enrolled.

Overview of Recent ACP Enhancements

On May 4, 2023, the FCC released a [Public Notice](#) announcing a new ACP application landing page available at [GetInternet.gov](#) to make the application and enrollment process easier for consumers. The application landing page is also available in Spanish at [AccedeaInternet.gov](#). The changes below incorporate feedback from navigators and other stakeholders and include:

- Transitioning the URL for the online application from nv.fcc.gov to [GetInternet.gov](#)

- Providing a new ACP application landing page with key information on the program and how to sign up

- Improving the responsiveness of the header and site navigation for mobile device users (released April 18)

USAC and the FCC will continue making improvements to the ACP system based on future feedback.

We also take this opportunity to remind you about the [enhanced Tribal benefit](#). Households that qualify for ACP and are located on qualifying Tribal lands can receive a discount of up to $75/month on their internet service.

Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program – Round Two Funding Opportunities

On May 25, 2023, the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau issued new Notices of Funding Opportunity for the [National Competitive Outreach Program (NCOP)](#) and the [Tribal Competitive Outreach Program (TCOP)](#).

TCOP eligibility will be limited to governmental and non-governmental Tribal entities that will conduct ACP outreach and enrollment assistance to eligible households on qualifying Tribal lands:

- Tribal governments and subdivisions thereof;

- Tribal designated housing entities;

- Tribal designated community-based organizations to include social service organizations;

- Tribal designated community anchor institutions;

- Tribal designated public service organizations; and

- Consortia of the entities listed above.

ACP Outreach Grant Program's NCOP Round Two or TCOP Round Two funding is open to applicants that did not receive funding under the initial ACP Outreach Grant Program funding opportunities (NCOP, TCOP, Your Home, Your Internet Outreach Grants, and ACP Navigator Pilot Program Outreach Grants).

Broadband providers and their subsidiaries, affiliates, representatives, contractors, and agents are also not eligible to apply or receive grant awards, either as grantees, pass-through entities, or subrecipients.

The application window for TCOP Round Two will close on July 28, 2023.

For more information, please visit the FCC's ACP Grants page. For questions, please email ACPgrants@fcc.gov.

Training and Resources

Find upcoming trainings and other resources on the Lifeline Learn page or ACP Learn page on USAC's website.

To make sure you are receiving the latest information, please sign up for USAC's newsletter and, if you would like to be an outreach partner, sign up at fcc.gov/acp.

To learn more about ACP or Lifeline program updates, please review the April 2023 Lifeline Newsletter or the April 2023 ACP Newsletter.

Key Dates and Trainings

E-Rate

- **No upcoming webinars at this time. To view prior webinars, please visit the E-Rate webinar page.**

- **Although the FY2023 application filing window has closed, you can begin planning for FY2024. The FY2024 FCC Form 470 will be available starting on July 1, 2023. Please reach out to USAC's Tribal Liaison at TribalLiaison@usac.org if you would like additional information about starting the process to apply for E-Rate support.**

RHC

- **Tuesday, June 13, 2023, RHC and USAC's Tribal Liaison will host the monthly Tribal Teleconference on RHC 101 at 4 p.m. ET – Register.**

Lifeline/ACP

- **Tuesday, June 6, 2023, ACP will host their ACP Recertification training at 3 p.m. ET – Register.**

- **Wednesday, June 14, 2023, Lifeline will host their June 2023 Monthly Webinar at 3 p.m. ET – Register.**

- **Wednesday, June 21, 2023, Lifeline will host their Tribal 2Q2023 Training at 3 p.m. ET – Register.**

USF Program Technical Assistance

The USAC Customer Service Center (CSC) provides customer service for the Universal Service Fund (USF) programs. Visit our Contact USAC page to get in touch with specialized agents trained to answer your program-specific questions.

Questions or Suggestions?
Contact the USAC Tribal Liaison at TribalLiaison@usac.org.