Tribal Telehealth Conference

RHC Office Hours
February 13, 2024
DISCLAIMER:

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.
Housekeeping

- Use the “Audio” section of your control panel to select an audio source and connect to sound.
  - Turn on your computer’s speakers, or
  - Use the call-in instructions in your confirmation email.
- All participants are on mute.
- Use the “Raise Your Hand” button to be unmuted and ask a question to the team!
Introduction – Office Hours

• Subject matter experts are available to answer live questions from program participants.
• Today’s presentation will focus on the HCF Program.
• Send FRN or HCP-specific questions to the RHC Customer Service Center at RHC-Assist@usac.org.
• Raise your hand or ask your question in the questions box.
• Please note, recordings of Office Hours webinars are not posted to the USAC website.
• You can download a PDF copy of the slide deck from the handout section on the GoToWebinar dashboard.
Meet Our Team

Jaymie Gustafson
Director of Communications and Training | Shared Services

Blythe Albert
Advisor of Program Management | RHC Outreach
Agenda

• Introduction to the RHC Program
• RHC Program Updates
• Submitting Forms in RHC Connect
• Best Practices & Resources
Upcoming Dates

• Rural Health Care
  • Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 2 p.m. ET – Telecom Office Hours – Register.

• E-Rate
  • Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 2 p.m. ET - Pre-Commit E-Rate Q&A Session – Register.

• Lifeline
  • Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 3 p.m. ET – How to Apply for Lifeline – Register.

• Tribal Teleconference
  • Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 4 p.m. ET – Lifeline 101 for Applicants and Service Providers – Register.
Who We Are: The Universal Service Administrative Company

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is an independent, not-for-profit organization designated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as the permanent administrator of the USF and its four programs.

- **The Universal Service Fund (USF):** Exists to ensure that all people in the United States have access to quality, affordable connectivity service.

![Programs Diagram](image)
Who We Are: The Universal Service Administrative Company

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress created multiple temporary programs to help people stay connected during this disruptive period. The FCC designated USAC to administer these programs with oversight by the Commission.

- Congressional Response Programs
  - Affordable Connectivity Program
  - Emergency Connectivity Fund Program
  - COVID-19 Telehealth Program
Overview: Who Makes the Rules?

• Congress enacted the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which directed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish the E-rate program and other programs.

• The FCC sets rules and policies for the program and gives direction to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).

• USAC is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the E-rate program.
Introduction to the RHC Program

Tribal Teleconference – RHC Office Hours
# Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FCC</td>
<td>Federal Communications Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCF</td>
<td>Healthcare Connect Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>Funding Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCP</td>
<td>Health Care Provider (your site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCP Number</td>
<td>Number associated with your site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAH</td>
<td>Primary Account Holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCL</td>
<td>Funding Commitment Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCW</td>
<td>Network Cost Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Billing Account Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIN/498 ID</td>
<td>Service Provider Identification Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rural Health Care Programs

- Telecom Program
  - The original RHC program established in the 1996 Telecommunications Act
  - Funds urban/rural rate difference for telecommunications services for eligible HCPs
- Healthcare Connect Fund Program
  - Supports broadband connectivity and broadband networks for eligible HCPs
  - Eligible services and equipment receive a 65% discount
- Connected Care Pilot Program
  - Three-year pilot program
  - Projects were selected by the FCC
  - Program covers 85% of the eligible costs of broadband connectivity, certain network equipment and information services necessary to provide connected care services to the intended patient population
  - Emphasis is on low-income Americans and veterans
What does it mean to be rural?

- Rurality is based on the RHC program definition of “rural area” under the FCC’s rules (47 C.F.R. § 54.605(a)).
- Non-rural sites may participate in the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program as a member of a majority rural consortium.
RHC Program – Eligibility

• Must be a non-profit entity or a public entity.
• Must be in a rural area as defined by the FCC. Use the [Rurality Tier Search Tool](#) to check the rurality of a physical location.
• Non-rural sites may participate in the HCF program only as a member of a majority rural consortium.
• Must be one of the following types of facilities:
  • A post-secondary educational institution offering health care instruction, such as a teaching hospital or medical school,
  • A community health center or health center providing health care to migrants,
  • A local health department or agency,
  • A community mental health center,
  • A not-for-profit hospital,
  • A rural health clinic,
  • A dedicated emergency department of a rural for-profit hospital,
  • A part-time eligible entity located in a facility that is ineligible, or
  • A Skilled Nursing Facility
  • Consortium of the above ([HCF Program only](#))
RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM
Application Process

1. Determine Eligibility
   - Must meet three eligibility criteria:
     - Not-for-profit/public
     - In a rural area
     - One of the eligibility facility types
     - HCF Program: FCC Form 460
       Telecom Program: FCC Form 465

2. Develop Evaluation Criteria and Request Services
   - Describe the services you need and develop scoring criteria to evaluate bids. Your request for services is posted to the USAC website for a minimum of 28 days.
   - HCF Program: FCC Form 461
     Telecom Program: FCC Form 465

3. Evaluate Bids and Select Service Provider
   - Once competitive bidding has ended, choose the most "cost-effective" service provider.
   - HCF Program: FCC Form 462
     Telecom Program: FCC Form 466

4. Submit Funding Request
   - Provide information about the services selected: cost, service provider information, and terms of service agreement(s).
   - HCF Program: FCC Form 463
     Telecom Program: FCC Form 467

5. Certify Connection
   - Confirm service start and end dates.
   - HCF Program: FCC Form 463
     Telecom Program: Invoice

6. Invoice
   - Submit invoice before deadline:
     - HCF Program: Initiate invoicing process by submitting FCC Form 463 to service provider for review and submission to USAC.
     - Telecom Program: Service provider completes invoicing process.
     - HCF Program: FCC Form 463
       Telecom Program: Invoice
Funding Years and Filing Windows

- Funding Year (FY)
  - From July 1 to June 30 of the subsequent calendar year
  - FY2024 = July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025

- Filing Windows
  - A fixed period during which all qualifying funding requests (FCC Forms 462 and 466) that are received during a filing window are treated as having been filed simultaneously for purposes of making funding commitment decisions.
  - FY2024 filing window is December 1, 2023, through April 1, 2024.
  - FY2024 filing window opened on December 1, 2023, and will close at 11:59 p.m. ET on April 1, 2023.
Competitive Bidding

- Through competitive bidding, service providers receive an equal opportunity to bid on the HCP’s service requirements.
- Per program rules, FCC Forms 461 and 465 are posted to the USAC website, and service providers have a minimum of 28 days to respond to the applicant.
- The applicant and service provider may not enter into an agreement to purchase services until after the bidding period is over.
- After the bidding period, the HCP and service provider can sign a contract; this is the Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD).
- Program rules require that the competitive bidding process be “fair and open.”
- Service providers that plan to bid cannot help the HCP select a winner nor participate in the vendor selection process.
- All applicants and service providers must comply with applicable state or local competitive bidding requirements.
- Service Requests are posted for viewing on USAC’s Search Posted Services webpage.
Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- HCPs are exempt from competitive bidding when:
  - The HCP is seeking support for services and equipment purchased from master service agreements (MSAs) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on the applicant’s behalf, and awarded pursuant to those competitive bidding requirements. The contract must comply with RHC Program Rules.
  - The HCP is opting into an existing Master Service Agreement (MSA) and is seeking support for services and equipment purchased from the MSA, if the MSA was developed and negotiated in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Services that specifically solicited proposals that included a mechanism for adding additional sites to the MSA that was reviewed by USAC and approved for use in the original RHC Pilot program.
  - The HCP has an existing contract already endorsed by USAC as evergreen.
  - The HCP is authorized to purchase off a contract that was negotiated in the E-Rate (Schools and Libraries) program and purchasing services and/or network equipment under a contract approved under the E-Rate program as a master contract. The contract must comply with RHC program rules.
  - The HCP is seeking support for $10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year (HCF program only).
RHC Connect

• RHC Connect is the web-based system used to host the RHC forms and was recently updated to improve the user experience.
• RHC Connect has a new look and feel that is more intuitive and user-friendly.
• It is easier to navigate the form for submission, and it is easier for RHC program reviewers to approve funding requests.
• HCF Forms 461(Request for Services), 462(Funding Request), and 463(Invoicing) have migrated to RHC Connect.
• Telecom FCC Form 466 (Funding Request) has also moved to RHC Connect for FY2024.
• FCC Forms 460 and 465 will remain in My Portal for FY2024.
RHC Program Updates

Tribal Teleconference – RHC Office Hours
FCC Report and Order 19-78

- FCC Report and Order 19-78 webpage summarizes the Report and Order’s major changes and includes the following resources:
  - FCC Report and Order 19-78
  - Public Notice DA 19-1253
  - FCC Report and Order 19-78 Tip Sheet
  - Webinar recording and slides
On December 14, 2023, the FCC released Order FCC 23-110. This order improves RHC Program administration and facilitates participation in the program by allowing health care providers that expect to become eligible during a funding year to complete the processes required to request funding, aligns program deadlines, simplifies rules for calculating urban rates, streamlines administrative processes, and frees up unused funding for other purposes. Changes to RHC Program rules are as follows:

- Permits health care providers to be granted conditional eligibility, thus allowing them to initiate competitive bidding and request funding while awaiting a final eligibility determination (Prior to July 1, 2024, for purposes of competitive bidding FY2025).
- Provides health care providers more time to complete Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes by moving the SPIN change deadline to align with the invoice filing deadline (Beginning in FY2023).
- Simplifies urban rate calculations by eliminating the seldom-used “standard urban distance” component of the rule for determining urban rates in the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program (Beginning in FY2025).
- Allows health care providers to request changes to the dates covered by an evergreen contract post-commitment (Beginning in FY2024).
- Adopts the FCC Form 460 for eligibility determinations in the Telecom Program, which will eliminate the need for Telecom Program participants to seek an eligibility determine every time they engage in competitive bidding.
- Establishes a deadline of July 1, 2024, for health care providers to claim undisbursed funding commitments that do not currently have an applicable invoice filing deadline from FY2019 and prior years.
Reminder: Information Requests

• If USAC requires information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation, this will result in an **Information Request**.

• All account holders will receive all Information Requests.

• Applicants are given 14 calendar days to provide a response to the Information Request.
  • 11:59 p.m. ET on the 14th day would be the last time to respond to the Information Request.

• Information Requests not responded to within 14 calendar days **will result in a denial** of that form.

• An extension request must be received prior to the original 14-day Information Request deadline.
FY2024 Funding Request Reviews

- RHC may begin funding request reviews before the funding request window closes.
- **No final decisions will be made prior to the close of the filing window.**
- Some changes to submissions must occur prior to the close of the filing window.
- This means that you may receive an Information Request before April 1, 2024.
- For FY2024 FCC Forms 462 and 466, an auto-generated email will be sent with instructions to respond through RHC Connect.
  - **HCPs should respond through RHC Connect only.**
  - The auto-generated email comes from an unattended mailbox so please only respond through RHC Connect.
**Reminder: Invoice Filing Deadlines**

- Invoicing guidelines adopted in FCC [Report and Order 19-78](#) became effective beginning with FY2020 applicants.
- The invoice filing deadline will be four months (120 days) from the service delivery deadline in both the HCF and Telecom Programs, October 28 of a given funding year.
- Please use the [RHC Invoicing Deadline Tool](#) in the Open Data section of the USAC website to look up your invoicing deadline.
- For more information, please see the [HCF invoice page](#) and [Telecom invoice page](#).
Supply Chain Order

• As a reminder, when service providers login to My Portal they will see two new supply chain certifications included in the FCC Form 463 and Telecom program invoice.

• The first certification affirms compliance with the Section 54.9 prohibition on USF for specified transactions with companies deemed to pose a national security threat. The second certification affirms compliance with Section 54.10, which prohibits the use of any Federal subsidies on any communications equipment and services on the Covered List.

• FY2023 Applicants: If you requested services or equipment provided or that contain components of products produced by any of the listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries in FY2023, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a service substitution.

• FY2024 Applicants: As you proceed with competitive bidding, please ensure you are not requesting funding for services or equipment from listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries.
Supply Chain Web Page

• Supply Chain webpage

Supply Chain

Since November 2019, the FCC has taken a number of actions to protect the national security of the United States, the security and safety of United States persons, and the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. The FCC has also implemented the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019. The FCC’s actions can be found at www.fcc.gov/supplychain.

In November 2019, the FCC released the Supply Chain First Report and Order adopting a rule (47 CFR Section 54.9) which prohibits the use of Universal Service Fund (USF) support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by companies found to pose a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain.
Resources

Tribal Teleconference – RHC Office Hours
# Milestones for FY2024: HCF Program NOT Using a Request for Proposal (RFP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RHC Program Forms</th>
<th>Last Day to Submit for Individual HCPs NOT using a Request for Proposal (RFP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FCC Form 460 &amp; 465 – Eligibility</td>
<td>January 8, 2024 Recommended Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCC Form 461 &amp; 465 – Request for Services</td>
<td>February 10, 2024 Recommended Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCC Form 462 and 466 – Funding Request</td>
<td>April 1, 2024 Deadline to Submit*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that these dates (except for the FCC Form 462 & 466 filing window deadline of April 1) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.
# Milestones for FY2024: HCF Program USING a Request for Proposal (RFP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RHC Program Forms</th>
<th>Last Day to Submit for Individual HCPs using a Request for Proposal (RFP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FCC Forms 460 &amp; 465 – Eligibility</td>
<td>January 4, 2024 Recommended Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCC Forms 461 &amp; 465 – Request for Services</td>
<td>February 1, 2024 Recommended Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCC Forms 462 &amp; 466 – Funding Request</td>
<td>April 1, 2024 Deadline to Submit*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that these dates (except for the FCC Form 462 & 466 filing window deadline of April 1) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.
Upcoming Trainings

Please join the RHC Outreach team for the following webinars:

• HCF Office Hours Webinar
  • When: Wednesday, February 7, 2024, from 2-3 p.m. ET - Register

• Telecom Office Hours Webinar
  • When: Wednesday, February 14, 2024, from 2-3 p.m. ET - Register

• Consortia Best Practices Webinar:
  • Wednesday, February 21, 2024, from 2-3 p.m. ET - Register

• For a list of upcoming webinars, check the RHC Upcoming Dates webpage for dates and details.
Online Resources - HCF Program

- RHC Learn
- Step 4: Submit Funding Request webpage
- Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 462 webpage
- Competitive Bidding Exemptions
- Consortia Majority Rural Compliance Tip Sheet
- Request for Proposals (RFPs)
- Network Plans
- Funding Limitations Tip Sheet
- Off-site Data Centers and Admin Offices Tip Sheet
- Equipment Tip Sheet
Online Resources – HCF Program (continued)

- Welcome to RHC Connect - FCC Form 461 webpage
  - RHC Connect User Guide
  - Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 461 self-paced video training guide
- Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 462 webpage
  - RHC Connect User Guide
  - RHC Connect - FCC Form 462 self-paced video training guide
- Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 463 webpage
  - RHC Connect Form User Guide
  - FCC Form 463 self-paced video training guide
- Information Request Tip Sheet
Online Resources – Telecom Program

- RHC Learn
- Step 4: Submit Funding Requests
- Funding Request Summary
- Rural and Urban Rate Information for FY2021 and FY2022
- Competitive Bidding Exemptions
- Blank FCC Form 466
- Examples of Eligible Products and Services Telecom Program
RHC Program Customer Service Center

Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org

• Include in your email:
  • HCP Number
  • FRN Number

• Phone: (800) 453-1546
  • Hours are 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. ET
  • Monday- Friday
# The RHC Customer Service Center

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The RHC Customer Service Center CAN</th>
<th>The RHC Customer Service Center CANNOT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer general questions regarding both programs</td>
<td>Determine eligibility of a specific site or service before an official form submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide account holder information for an HCP</td>
<td>Review a form or document for accuracy before an official submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide clarity regarding FCC Report and Order 19-78 and other FCC orders</td>
<td>Contact a service provider or other account holder on someone else’s behalf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide helpful resources and best practices for forms</td>
<td>Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist with My Portal and RHC Connect</td>
<td>Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions?
USAC Support

Gem Labarta – USAC Tribal Liaison

• Support for all USAC programs
• TribalLiaison@usac.org
Appendix – RHC Connect and Best Practices

Tribal Teleconference – RHC Office Hours
RHC Connect – Submitting the FCC Form 462

Tribal Teleconference – RHC Office Hours
My Portal Landing Page

- Log in to My Portal and click “RHC Connect” to begin.
Dashboard

- Here you can start a new form, resume working on a draft or delete a draft FCC Form 461 or 462 for FY2023.
- There’s a countdown banner displaying the days remaining in the filing window.
Start a New Form

- Select FCC Form 462, then click “Next”.

FCC Form 461
Develop Bid Evaluation Criteria & Select Services

FCC Form 462
Evaluate Bids & Select Service Provider
This form provides information about the services, equipment, or network facilities selected, and certifies that those services were the most cost-effective option of the offers received.

FCC Form 463
Invoice USAC

Once you receive a bill from the service provider, you can create an invoice for the services received using the FCC Form 463.
Start

**Warning:** Once you select HCP and then Save & Continue, you will **not** be able to change the HCP. Please select carefully.
Competitive Bidding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provider Information</th>
<th>Expense Items</th>
<th>Additional Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Competitive Bidding**

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? :
- Yes
- No

Explanations

BACK EXIT
Competitive Bidding (Continued)

Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? Yes or No.

Explanations

If your site meets one of the competitive bidding exemptions below, you are not required to submit the FCC Form 461 and go through the competitive bidding process. You are exempt from competitive bidding if any of the following apply:

1. Government Master Service Agreement (MSA): You are seeking support for services and equipment purchased from master service agreements (MSAs) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on the applicant’s behalf and awarded pursuant to applicable federal, state, Tribal, or local competitive bidding requirements.

2. Master Service Agreements (MSA) Approved Under the Rural Health Care Pilot Program or HCF Program: You are opting into an existing MSA approved under the Rural Health Care Pilot Program or the HCF Program and seeking support for services and equipment purchased from the MSA, as long as the MSA was developed and negotiated in response to an RFP or request for services that specifically solicited proposals that included a mechanism for adding additional sites to the MSA.

3. Evergreen Contract: You have an existing contract already endorsed by USAC as evergreen.

4. Schools and Libraries Program Master Contracts: You are an eligible HCP in a consortium with participants in the Schools and Libraries (S&L) program and are purchasing services and/or network equipment under a contract approved under the S&L program as a master contract.

5. Annual Undiscounted Cost of $10,000 or Less: If you are seeking support for $10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year you may bypass the competitive bidding process.

- For some applicants, this exemption is $10,000 for all funding requests submitted for the consortium.
- Note: If you select this option on your FCC Form 461, you will not be able to request a multi-year funding commitment.
Competitive Bidding Exemptions

Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding?
- Yes
- No

Explanations

Select the exemption that the HCP is claiming:
- Annual Undiscounted Cost of $10,000 or less
- Government Master Services Agreement
- Pre-Approved Master Services Agreement
- Evergreen Contract
- Excess Approved Contract

Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract Name</th>
<th>Contract Document</th>
<th>Contract Sign Date</th>
<th>Contract End Date</th>
<th>Initial Contract Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No items available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADD CONTRACT
Competitive Bidding Exemptions (Continued)

- If “Yes” is selected, choose the exemption type.
- Upload contract.
  - For Evergreen contracts, select a contract from the drop-down menu.
  - Evergreen exemption can only be selected if the contract was approved as Evergreen on a prior funding year funding requests.
- Enter the relevant contract information in the fields.
- Use the drop-down calendar to enter dates.
Competitive Bidding Exemptions (Continued)

- Once the contract is selected, click “Save and Continue”.

![Image of competitive bidding interface with selected contract and dates]
Competitive Bidding Non-Exempt

- Click “No” if the HCP is not exempt from competitive bidding.
- Choose the related FCC Form 461 from drop-down menu.
  - All FCC Forms 461 for the HCP will be available.
- Enter the number of bids received.
- Copies of all bids received must be uploaded.
Service Provider Information

- Select 498 ID/SPIN.
- Click “Save and Continue”.
Expense Items – Summary Page

- Download the NCW Template and save.
- Populate all information and upload the NCW to RHC Connect.
- Any information entered manually will be overwritten by the NCW document once it’s uploaded.

Expense Item Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Site #</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Contract Number</th>
<th>Expense Type</th>
<th>Eligible Undiscounted Cost</th>
<th>Maximum Support Amount</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Network Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethernet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the NCW Template

- Do not disturb the formatting.
  - When using “copy” and “paste” to enter data, be sure to paste using a “text” or “values” format.
  - If any data is entered manually prior to uploading the NCW, that data will be overwritten when the NCW is uploaded.
  - If after uploading the NCW data isn’t saved or you’re directed back to the summary page, the formatting has been changed.
    - Download a new NCW template and try again.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract Status</th>
<th>Expense Information</th>
<th>Expense Type</th>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Session Level Agreement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Data</td>
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<td>100 Mbps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ethernet</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Data</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ethernet</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Data</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
<td>100 Mbps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expense Items – Contract Status

- For consortia applicants, choose a member site for each expense from drop-down menu.
- Select “no” for submission without contract (month-to-month).
Expense Items – Contract Status (Continued)

- Select “yes” for submission with contract.
- Select an existing contract or upload a new contract.
- Enter information about the contract.
Expense Items – Contract Status (Continued)

- Enter contract start date, initial contract end date, contract sign date and installation date for confirmation in review.
Enter the “Expected Broadband Service Start Date” and “Installation Date”.
Expense Items – Expense Type

- Enter “Expense Category” and “Expense Type” and an optional explanation of the eligible expense.
Expense Items – Bandwidth

- Enter Bandwidth.
Expense Items – Bandwidth (Continued)

- For equipment, installation, construction and network management services, bandwidth does not have to be entered if not applicable.
- For all other services, bandwidth is required.
Expense Items – Service Level Agreement (SLA)

- If “no” is selected, fields will not appear.
- If “yes” is selected, enter the information about the SLA.
Expense Items – Circuit Information

• Address of the HCP on expense item will pre-populate based on information in the FCC Form 460.

• “Start location” and “End location” cannot be the same address.
Expense Items – Circuit Information (Continued)

• If the HCP is an Off-Site Administrative Office or Data Center, the location on the other end of the circuit is required.
Expense Items – Financial Information

- If you select “no” for “is this entire expense eligible for support”, you’re indicating that this expense is cost-allocated.

- Enter the eligible percentage and an explanation of the methodology used to determine percent entered.

- Upload the required document.
Expense Items – Multiple Items

- The quantity of items should match the quantity on the documentation.
Expense Items – Financial Information (Continued)

• Check all that apply.
## Expense Items – Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Site #</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Contract Number</th>
<th>Expense Type</th>
<th>Eligible Undiscounted Cost</th>
<th>Maximum Support Amount</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethernet</td>
<td>$24,240.00</td>
<td>$15,756.00</td>
<td>Edit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost:** $24,240.00  
**Total Maximum Support:** $15,756.00

If you have questions, please contact our Help Desk at (800) 463-1546 or EHC-Assist@usec.org 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday for assistance.
Additional Documentation

- Consortia applicants are required, at minimum, to upload a Viable Source Letter before continuing.
Additional Documentation (continued)

- To upload more than 10 documents, follow the instructions in the blue banner.
Confidentiality

Confidentiality

Is the HCP requesting confidential treatment and non-disclosure of commercial and financial information? *

- Yes
- No

Explanation

BACK  EXIT
Certifications

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that I am authorized to submit this request on behalf of the applicant or consortium.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that I have examined this request and all attachments and to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, all statements of fact contained therein are true.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium has considered all bids received and selected the most cost-effective method of providing the requested services. “Cost-effective” is defined as the “method that costs the least after consideration of the features, quality of transmission, reliability, and other factors that the applicant deems relevant to choosing a method of providing the required health care services.” 47 CFR 54.622(e).

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that all RHC Program support will be used only for eligible health care purposes.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium is not requesting support for the same service from both the Telecommunications Program and the Healthcare Connect Fund Program.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium satisfies all of the requirements under Section 254 of the Act and applicable Commission rules, and understand that any letter from the Administrator that erroneously commits funds for the benefit of the applicant may be subject to rescission.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that I have reviewed all applicable rules and requirements for the RHC Program and complied with those rules and requirements.

☐ I understand that all documentation associated with this application, including all bids, contracts, scoring matrices, and other information associated with the competitive bidding process, all billing records for services received and any other documentation demonstrating compliance with the rules must be retained for a period of at least five years after the last date of service delivered in a particular funding year pursuant to 47 CFR §§ 54.631 or as otherwise prescribed by the Commission’s rules.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium and/or its consultant, if applicable, has not solicited or accepted a gift or any other thing of value from a service provider participating in or seeking to participate in the RHC Program.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that any consultants or third parties associated with this request or RFP do not have an ownership interest, sales commission arrangement, or other financial stake in the vendor chosen to provide the requested services, and that they have otherwise complied with RHC Program rules, including the Commission’s rules requiring fair and open competitive bidding.
Signature

• Sign by typing your first and last name in the “Digital Signature” field.
Submitting the FCC Form 466 for Telecom

• For the Telecom Program, the FCC Form 466 is used to submit funding requests.
• RHC Connect looks the same however, there are additional questions about the urban and rural rates per Telecom Program rules.
• Use the following resources to submit the FCC Form 466 in RHC Connect:
  • Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 466 webpage
  • RHC Connect User Guide – FCC Form 466
  • Urban and Rural Rate Information for FY2024-FY2025 tip sheet
  • Information Request tip sheet
Best Practices

Tribal Teleconference – RHC Office Hours
Submission Checklist

- Document(s) confirming the monthly cost for your services (e.g., a copy of your bill dated within the requested funding period) or the most currently available bill as the filing window closes before the funding year opens

- A copy of all bids that were received for your request for services including the winning bid, all bids that were rejected and any bids that were disqualified and why

- A list of the bid evaluation criteria and copy of the bidding evaluation matrix

- A list of people who evaluated bids including title, role, and their relationship to the applicant

- Internal documents related to the selection of the service provider (upon request)

- Copies of any correspondence with service providers prior to and during the competitive bidding process (upon request)

- A copy of any new contract signed for your services

- Award letter to winning vendor (upon request)

- Contact information for the service provider and all responsible account holders

- The start and end location of your services.

- Viable source letter for consortia applicants (35 percent contribution)

*Any information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation will result in an Information Request*
Best Practices – Competitive Bidding

• Begin your competitive bidding process early.
  • Bidding period opened on July 1, 2023, for FY2024.
• Once the ACSD has passed and you’ve chosen a service provider, include them when you reply to Information Requests via email.
• Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.
• All bid correspondence should be handled via email for audit purposes.
• HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a minimum of five years.
Best Practices – FCC Forms 462 & 466 (Funding Request)

- Do not enter into an agreement with a service provider until after the ACSD has passed.
- Include all required documentation when submitting your FCC Form 462 and 466.
- Include a cover letter if needed to clarify information entered into the form.
- If submitting funding requests for equipment, data center or administrative offices or network expenses in the HCF Program, tip sheets can be found on the Step 4: Submit Funding Requests webpage under the Additional Resources section.
- Be sure to actually sign, certify and submit all FCC Forms 462 and 466 before 11:59 p.m. ET on April 1, 2024 (Drafts are not considered submitted).
- HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a minimum of five years.