

E-Rate Tribal Teleconference

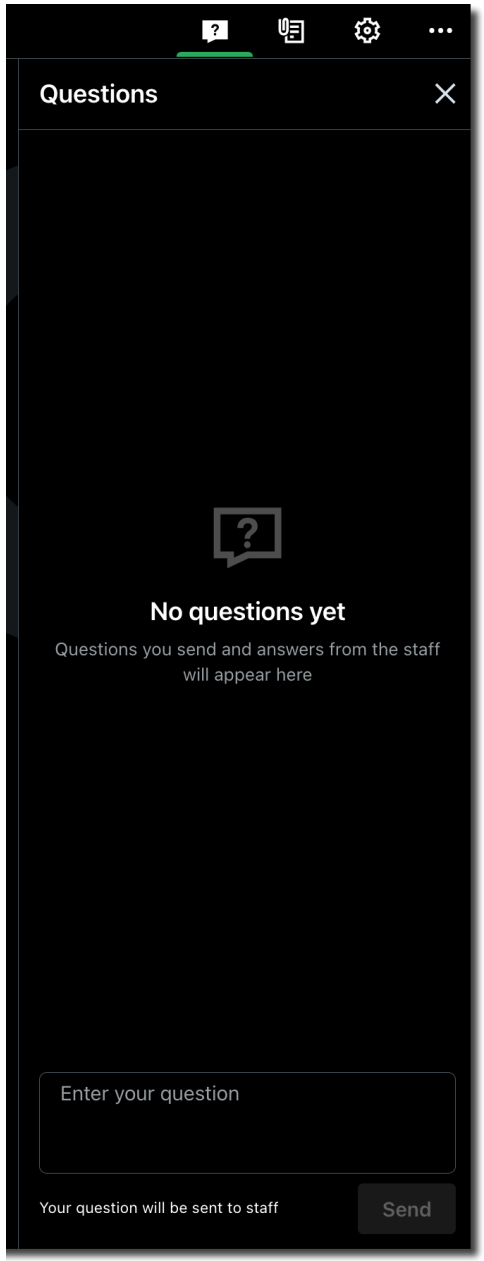
Tribal Training

November 10, 2026

Universal Service Administrative Co.

Housekeeping

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers
- Toggle Closed Captioning on or off using the GoToWebinar control panel
- The audience will remain on mute
- **Enter questions at any time using the "Questions" box**
- If your audio or slides freeze, restart the webinar
- A copy of today's presentation is available in the handouts section of the GoToWebinar control panel
- The webinar recording and slides will be posted to usac.org after today's session



Introductions and Welcome

Meet Our Team



Cedric Watkins

Tribal Library Advocate and Analyst | E-Rate

Communicates the E-Rate program's objectives and policies with stakeholders.

Cedric.Watkins@usac.org



Gem Shandiin Labarta

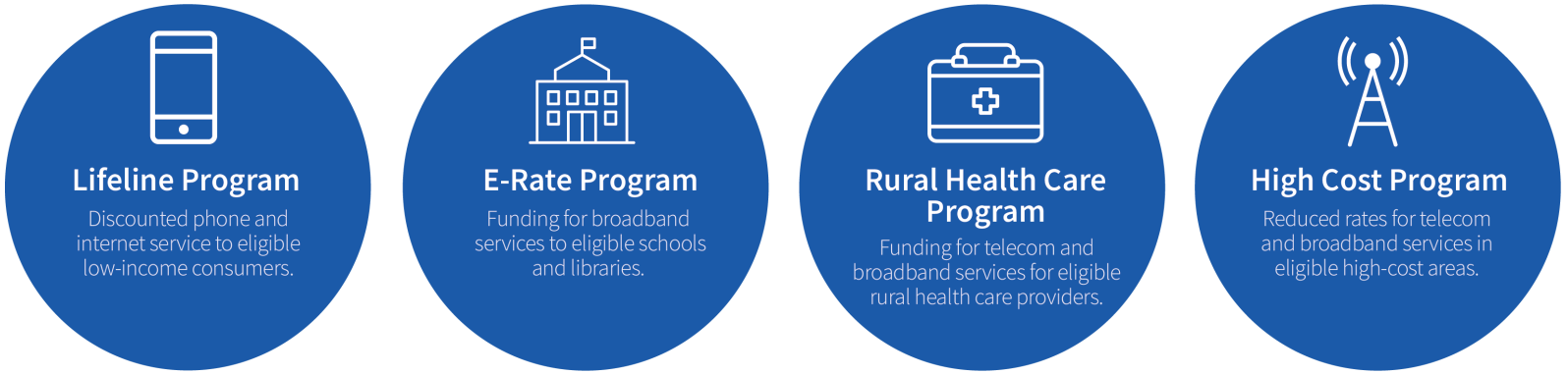
Tribal Liaison | Shared Services

Provides clear, accurate, real-time support to Tribal stakeholders.

Gem.labarta@usac.org

Welcome!

- Who are we?
  - We are the **Universal Service Administrative Company** (USAC)—an independent, not-for-profit organization designated by the FCC.
  - We are responsible for administering the **Universal Service Fund** (USF) and its four programs.
  - The USF ensures that all people in the United States have access to quality and affordable connectivity services.



Welcome!

- Who are you?
  - Where are you all located?
  - What Tribe are you affiliated with?
  - What type of school or library are you?
- Do you currently participate in the E-Rate program?
  - Have you heard about the Tribal Library E-Rate Advocacy Program (T-LEAP?)
  - Any questions about either program?

Agenda

- E-Rate Program Reminders
- Competitive Bidding (FCC Form 470) Overview
- Question & Answer Session

E-Rate Program Reminders

- Applicants and service providers can **request a one time 120-day extension** of the original invoice filing deadline, up to **15 days** after the original invoice filing deadline (FCC 26-30).
- Applicants can **modify their invoicing method** by submitting a Receipt Acknowledgement Letter (RAL) Modification Request during the review of their FCC Form 471 application **before** receiving a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL).
  - **After receiving an FCDL**, applicants should submit an FCC Form 500.
  - This change request must be submitted before any invoice is submitted for a Funding Request Number (FRN).
- USAC will use SAM.gov banking information to pay invoices. Service providers and Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) invoicing method participants **must** have:
  - An active SAM.gov account with a valid bank account associated.
  - A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) on their FCC Form 498.
- FY2028
  - A Competitive Bidding Portal will be created to strengthen E-Rate program integrity **effective FY2028.**
  - The FCC Form 486 will be sunset and rolled into FCC Form 471 in FY2028.

Competitive Bidding Overview

- Provide sufficient information for potential bidders to offer a comprehensive bid
- Ensure you conduct an open and fair competitive bidding process
- Abide by the E-Rate Gift Rules (view the Gift Rules
- Ensure that services obtained during the FCC Form 470/Request For Proposal (RFP) competitive bidding process match the information on the FCC Form 471 (including all bandwidth speeds)
- Understand how the 28-day waiting period is calculated and wait at least the full 28-day competitive bidding period before entering into an agreement with a service provider
- Ensure price is the highest weighted evaluation factor (only the costs of **eligible** equipment/services should be evaluated in this criterion)
- Follow state and local competitive bidding rules
- Retain all necessary competitive bidding documentation for ten (10) years after the last day they receive services or the end of that funding year, whichever date is later (View the Document Retention List)

Competitive Bidding Steps



Questions?

E-Rate Customer Service Center (CSC)



Call us at (888) 203-8100

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET



Create a customer service case in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC):

1. Log in to EPC.
2. Select the **Contact Us** link from the upper right menu on the landing page.



Universal Service
Administrative Co.