



E-Rate Special Edition News Brief

January 21, 2026

The FY2026 FCC Form 471 Filing Window is Now Open

The Funding Year (FY) 2026 **FCC Form 471 application filing window opened today** – Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at noon Eastern Time (E.T.) – and **will close on Wednesday, April 1, 2026**, at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Below are **important dates for FY2026**.

- **FY2026 FCC Form 470** (The First Form): **Wednesday, March 4, 2026** is the **last date that you can submit and certify an FCC Form 470 and still wait the required minimum 28-day period** before submitting and certifying your FCC Form 471 by April 1, 2026, the last date of the FY2026 application filing window.
- **FY2026 FCC Form 471** (The Second Form): **Wednesday, April 1, 2026** at 11:59 p.m. E.T. is the **deadline for submitting your FCC Form 471 before the application filing window closes**.

The FCC Forms 470 and 471 must be filed in the [E-Rate Productivity Center](#) (EPC). The dates and times above apply to the time the form is certified in EPC. If you complete all the required information on the FCC Form 471 before the deadline but certify it after the deadline, the FCC Form 471 will not be considered as timely filed.

Applicants must now select their **invoicing method** (applicant invoicing through the FCC Form 472/BEAR or service provider invoicing through the FCC Form 474/SPI) when filing the FCC Form 471 for each funding request number (FRN). If an applicant wants to change the invoicing method after an FRN is funded, there will be a way to make this change by submitting an FCC Form 500.

Get Started - File Early

USAC recommends that you submit your FCC Form 471 application(s) as early in the filing window as possible so USAC can begin the processes necessary to review your applications and issue timely funding commitment decisions. To start the FY2026 FCC Form 471 [application filing process](#), follow the steps below.

- **Obtain EPC Access** - EPC is the account and application management portal for the E-Rate program.
 - **First-time Filers** – If you are new to the E-Rate program, you will need a user account in EPC and a login and password for One Portal, our multi-factor authentication security system. Our Customer Service Center (CSC) can help you

set up your organization's EPC profile and your account administrator and can be reached at (888) 203-8100.

- **Review the FY2026 Eligible Services List** - The Eligible Services List (ESL) for each funding year provides guidance on the eligibility of products and services under the E-Rate program. Below are links to the ESL and related documents.
 - [FY2026 Eligible Services List](#) (PDF)
 - [ESL Glossary](#) (PDF)
 - Eligible Services [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
 - [Eligible Services List](#) page
- **File FCC Form 470 (The First Form)**
 - Start the [Competitive Bidding Process](#) by filing your [FCC Form 470](#), which is the first form in the application process.
 - Remember you **must wait the required minimum 28-day period** after filing the FCC Form 470 before entering into an agreement with your selected service provider(s) and filing your FCC Form 471 application(s).
 - Review the related user guides:
 - [FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table \(FY2025-2026\)](#)
 - Instructional videos on FCC Form 470 are available online:
 - [FCC Form 470/Competitive Bidding eLM and User Guide](#) learning module
 - [How to Search for an FCC Form 470](#) (12:25 min.)
 - [E-Rate Competitive Bidding Process](#) (5:00 min.)
- **File FCC Form 471 (The Second Form)**
 - Submit and certify your FY2026 FCC Form 471 application, the second form in the application process, **before the April 1, 2026 11:59 p.m. E.T. filing window deadline.**
 - Watch the [FCC Form 471 video series](#) for step-by-step filing guidance or go to the [How to File the FCC Form 471](#) learning module.
 - [Bulk upload templates](#) are available on the [FCC Form 471](#) page for applicants with large numbers of eligible services and/or large numbers of recipients of service.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

USAC will conduct webinars during the FY2026 application filing window period focused on E-Rate topics related to FCC Forms 470 and 471. Regularly check the [E-Rate Webinar](#) and [E-Rate Tribal Training](#) pages for the latest schedule.

If you are interested in attending, register for the webinar you want to attend, and review all materials referenced below for the webinar in advance of the Q&A session. Below are some upcoming webinars.

- **E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process**
Thursday, January 22, 2026 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. E.T. [Register](#).

This webinar will discuss the E-Rate Pre-Commitment process. This includes how to get started, competitive bidding, applying for funding, and Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review. This webinar is intended for program participants of all levels and will include a question-and-answer session.

- **E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Question & Answer (Q&A) Session**
Thursday, February 19, 2026 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. E.T. [Register](#).

E-Rate subject matter experts will answer questions about the competitive bidding process, Category Two budgets, and the Eligible Services List. This is recommended for applicants and service providers of all E-Rate experience levels. Materials to review before the session include:

- [E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Webinar](#)
- [Filing the FCC Form 470 and the Competitive Bidding Process Webinar](#)
- [FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table \(FY2025-2026\)](#)

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