



E-Rate Special Edition News Brief

January 8, 2026

E-Rate Funding Year 2026 Application Filing Window Opens January 21, 2026

Dear E-Rate Participant:

I am pleased to announce that the Funding Year (FY) 2026 FCC Form 471 application filing window will open on **Wednesday, January 21, 2026**, at noon E.T. and will **close on Wednesday, April 1, 2026**, at 11:59 p.m. E.T. The E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) Administrative Window will close Friday, January 16, 2026 (see below).

The [E-Rate section](#) of USAC's website provides resources for new applicants or applicants continuing to participate in the program. I recommend that you review these resources, or any others that apply to your situation, as you begin your FY2026 preparations:

- **First-time Filers** – If you are new to the E-Rate program, you will need a user account in the [E-Rate Productivity Center](#) (EPC), our applicant and service provider portal. For security purposes, you will also need 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.
- **Update Your EPC Profile During the Administrative Window** – Update your EPC profile **by January 16, 2026**, at 11:59 p.m. E.T. to ensure a smoother filing process and more timely review of your applications. You will not be able to make changes to your EPC profile after that date. View the [EPC Administrative Window](#) webinar, which includes information about establishing accounts and user rights for EPC and view the [webinar slides](#). You can also reference the [EPC Administrative Window](#) learning module to help guide you through the update process.
- **Category Two (C2) Budgets** – FY2026 is the first year of the new five-year [C2 budget](#) cycle that runs from FY2026 to FY2030. The [Category Two \(C2\) Budget Tool FY2021+](#) can assist applicants in determining their estimated C2 budgets for each five-year cycle. The [Category Two Budget Management Guide](#) can help applicants learn about C2 budgets and how to use the tool to manage them. Please view the [Category Two Budgets](#) webinar and view the [webinar slides](#) for more information.
- **Review the FY2026 Eligible Services List (ESL)** – The ESL for each funding year provides guidance on the eligibility of products and services under the E-Rate program. Go to the [Eligible Services List](#) page for guidance on the eligibility of products and services for

FY2026. Please view the [Eligible Services 101](#) webinar and [webinar slides](#) for more information.

- **Proceed With Competitive Bidding** – If you have not started the [competitive bidding](#) process by filing your [FCC Form 470](#), please begin now. Remember that you must wait at least 28 days after filing the form before entering into an agreement with your selected service provider(s) and filing your FCC Form 471 application(s). View the [E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process](#) webinar and the [FCC Form 470 and the Competitive Bidding Process](#) webinar for more information.
- **Prepare to File Your FCC Form 471** – 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.
- **Install Browser Updates** – Google Chrome is the recommended browser for EPC, but no matter which browser you use, be sure the latest version is installed on your computer.

USAC remains dedicated to efficient and effective review of your FY2026 applications. We encourage everyone to **submit their applications as early in the filing window as possible** so USAC can begin the review processes necessary to process your applications and issue timely funding commitment decisions.

USAC is ready to assist applicants and service providers with their E-Rate issues. We wish you a successful FY2026 and, as always, we are here to help. Open a customer service case in EPC or call CSC at (888) 203-8100 on weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. E.T. for assistance.

Sincerely,

Craig Davis
Vice President, Schools and Libraries Division

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USAC | 700 12th Street NW | Suite 900 | Washington, DC 20005