



## E-Rate News Brief

August 20, 2026

### Contents

- [E-Rate Tips](#)
- [Funding Year \(FY\) 2026 Commitments](#)
- [New E-Rate Post Commitment Deadline Tool Available](#)
- [FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding Resources](#)
- [Requesting Service Delivery Deadline Extensions for FY2025 Non-Recurring Services \(Other Than Special Construction\)](#)
- [E-Rate Outreach and Training](#)

### E-Rate Tips

- **SAM.Gov Transition Delayed.** USAC postponed the transition to SAM.gov banking information for paying E-Rate invoices (FCC Form 472/BEAR and FCC Form 474/SPI) to perform additional testing and validation for a smooth stakeholder transition. Once a new transition date is determined, USAC will share that information. August invoices will continue to be paid using USAC's current process and the banking information included on the FCC Form 498. To prepare for the coming transition, visit USAC's [SAM.gov UEI Requirement](#) webpage.
- **Sign Up for USAC's In-Person E-Rate Training.** USAC is holding two [in-person training sessions](#) in September to provide updated information on program processes, recent updates, and upcoming activities. The first in-person training will be held on **September 15 in Phoenix, AZ** ([view agenda](#)) and the second will be held on **September 24 in Washington, D.C.** ([view agenda](#)). The sessions will cover topics including submitting FCC Form 471 applications for FY2027, the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review and selective review processes, responding to PIA inquiries, and next steps after receiving a positive funding decision from USAC. Use the [registration links below](#) to sign up.
- **Cybersecurity Pilot Program (Pilot or Pilot Program) Update.** USAC has completed processing all timely filed Pilot FCC Form 471 applications. Any certified applications that were submitted late (i.e., after the close of the filing window) have been designated as out-of-window (OOW) and will not be processed unless a waiver request has been timely filed and granted by the Federal Communications

Commission. USAC is continuing to process timely submitted Pilot Program invoices (Pilot FCC Form 472/BEAR and Pilot FCC Form 474/SPI) and post-commitment requests (Pilot FCC Form 488).

- **Summer Deferral Period Ends September 11.** Our summer deferral contact period runs from the Friday before Memorial Day through the Friday after Labor Day. For 2026, the summer deferral contact period began May 22, and **will end Friday, September 11**. If participants were unable to respond to PIA or other USAC requests during this period, any associated form or request was placed in a deferred status. However, once the deferral period ends, USAC will continue its regular review process and, if it cannot contact the applicant, it will continue reviewing the associated form or request with whatever information is available, which may result in a reduction or denial of funding.
- **Visit our updated webpages**, including the [Consortia](#), [Get Started](#), and [Before You Begin](#) pages and an updated [Application Process Flow Chart](#).

## E-Rate Funding Year (FY) 2026 Commitments

**FY2026.** USAC released FY2026 Wave 16 on August 13. As of August 19, FY2026 commitments total over \$1.66 billion.

On the date that Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) are issued, you can access your FCDL notification letter from the **Notifications** section of your landing page in EPC.

You can also use the [E-Rate Search Commitments Tool](#) to look up prior funding year commitment data.

## New E-Rate Post Commitment Deadline Tool Available

USAC has created a new [E-Rate Post Commitment Deadline Tool](#) so that applicants and service providers can **better track critical post-commitment deadlines** applicable to the E-Rate program. Specifically, the tool allows users to track invoicing deadlines, FCC Form 473 (*Service Provider Annual Certification*, or SPAC) status, and the FCC Form 486 status in a unified interface to ensure applicants and service providers have visibility into the final stages of the funding lifecycle.

The tool displays remaining invoice balances alongside filing deadlines, so applicants do not miss out on committed funding due to a missed deadline. Users can see if an unapproved FCC Form 473/SPAC or a pending FCC Form 486 is holding up an invoice. For state coordinators or large consulting groups managing hundreds of Billed Entity Numbers (BENs), the tool can aggregate large datasets, allowing coordinators to identify statewide compliance trends or pinpoint systemic vendor delays in filing annual certifications.

The new tool allows users to visualize data in three ways:

- The **bar chart** displays the invoice delivery deadline, which is plotted on the x-axis against the invoicing amount on the y-axis. The bars are color-coded to compare total disbursements against the remaining Funding Request Number (FRN) balance.
- The **grid** displays data in a familiar spreadsheet format, providing detailed, line-item information for an FRN.

- The **table summary** data appears similar to the grid with horizontal rows and vertical columns, but it provides limited information on individual FRNs.

The visual will display an error message if no data is available. This may be the result of certain data not existing. For example, an invoiced FRN may be available, but a SPAC or FCC Form 486 may not have been filed yet. Users can readjust the filters to display data that is currently available in the tool.

## E-Rate FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding Resources

USAC posted the [How to File an FCC Form 470](#) learning module and interactive user guide along with the [FY2027+ FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table](#) on the USAC website to help you get started with your FY2027 competitive bidding process. The learning module walks you through the steps for submitting Category One and Category Two bid requests for equipment and services and the new EPC calculations for the Allowable Contract Date (ACD). The guiding statements document provides a table to help you determine which dropdown menus to select on the FCC Form 470 when requesting specific types of equipment and services.

Start your competitive bidding process on the right foot by viewing the [Competitive Bidding Infographic](#).

### THE COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCESS

allows applicants to identify and request products and/or services so that potential service providers can review those requests and submit bids for them.

The process consists of five steps:

- 1 Get Ready to File**
  - Perform a needs assessment
  - Review your state and local procurement rules
  - Review the [Eligible Services List](#)
- 2 File and certify an FCC Form 470**
  - Provide sufficient information for potential vendors to provide a comprehensive bid (e.g., for managed internal broadband services specify the exact equipment/services to be managed)
  - Potential bidders (service providers) cannot help you file FCC Form 470
  - You have the option to submit a Request for Proposals (RFP) with your form
  - There are [competitive bidding exemptions](#) for certain Category 1 and Category 2 (libraries only) equipment/services
  - After you certify your FCC Form 470, USAC issues a Receipt Notification Letter (RNL) with your Allowable Contract Date (ACD) – the earliest date you can enter into an agreement or sign a contract
- 3 Ensure an open and fair process**
  - Provide any FCC Form 470, RFP and other information/updates in EPC for all potential bidders for at least 28 days
  - “Open” means there are no secrets in the process and that all bidders know what is required of them
  - “Fair” means that all bidders are treated the same and that no bidder has project information others do not.
  - Abide by the [Gift Rules](#)
- 4 Wait at least 28 days before selecting a service provider**
  - The ACD (included on your RNL) is 28 days after the FCC Form 470 is **certified**
  - The day you **certify** the FCC Form 470 is day 1. If the FCC Form 470 is certified on the 1st of the month, you may select a service provider **on or after** the 29th of the month
  - If you later **change the information** needed to respond to the bid, you must restart the 28 days
  - If you issue an RFP on a later date, you must restart the 28 days
  - State or Local procurement rules may require a longer waiting period
- 5 Select a service provider**
  - Select a service provider after your ACD and before certifying the FCC Form 471
  - Consider all responsive bids
    - Use a Bid Evaluation Matrix
    - Ensure price is the primary evaluation factor (highest weighted factor). Only the costs of eligible goods/services should be evaluated in this criterion
  - Enter into a legally binding agreement and document selection date (after the minimum 28-day waiting period)
  - Upload your legally binding agreements and contracts to EPC




Retain all necessary competitive bidding documentation including the Bid Evaluation Matrix, for ten years after the last day you receive services or the end of that funding year, using whichever date is later.



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Available for Public Use

Here are more resources about the FCC Form 470 and the competitive bidding process:

- [Step 2: Competitive Bidding](#) webpage
- [FY2027+ FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table](#)
- [FCC Form 470 Filing](#) webpage
- Filing the FCC Form 470 and the Competitive Bidding Process [Webinar](#) (August 2026) and [webinar slides](#)
- [How to File an FCC Form 470](#) e-learning module
- Practice submitting FCC Form 470 on the [EPC Training Site](#)

## Requesting E-Rate Service Delivery Deadline Extensions for FY2025 Non-Recurring Services (Other Than Special Construction)

The E-Rate **deadline for delivery and installation of non-recurring services** (e.g., installations, equipment) is September 30 following the close of the funding year. **For FY2025, the deadline for non-recurring services, other than special construction, is Wednesday, September 30, 2026** (the deadline for FY2025 special construction requests was June 30, 2026, the end of the funding year).

This [service delivery deadline](#) (SDD) can be extended for up to one year under certain circumstances, through a timely filed extension request. In some cases, the extension will be automatically made based on the Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) date or the revised FCDL (RFCDL) date.

### Requesting Extensions

Service providers who are (1) unable to meet their service delivery deadline for reasons beyond their control or are (2) unwilling to complete delivery and installation because USAC withheld invoice payments on the services for more than 60 days, **can ask the affected applicants to request a one-year extension** with USAC.

**Applicants can request the one-year extension** by completing and certifying an [FCC Form 500](#) (Funding Commitment Adjustment Request Form) **on or before September 30, 2026 for FY2025 non-recurring services** (select "I want to request more time to get the services delivered and/or installed" for Type of Change on the form). If your service delivery deadline for an FRN is approved and the deadline extended to September 30, 2027, USAC will automatically extend the invoice deadline for that FRN to January 28, 2028. There is **no need to submit an invoice deadline date (IDD) extension request** for an extended FRN when submitting an SDD extension request. If you do submit an IDD extension request at the same time, it will count towards your one-time invoicing extension, and you will not be able to request a second IDD extension in the future if you need it.

News
Tasks (8)
Records
Reports
Actions

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### Type of Change

I want to change the service start date. \* [\(More Info\)](#)  
 Complete if you wish to change the Service Start Date you listed on a previously filed FCC Form 486. This action will NOT increase funding.

YES NO

I want to change the contract expiration date. \* [\(More Info\)](#)  
 Complete if the contract expiration date has changed and you wish to report the change to USAC. This action will NOT increase funding but you could combine it with a funding reduction.

YES NO

I want to request more time to get the services delivered and/or installed. \* [\(More Info\)](#)  
 Complete if you are requesting an extension of the deadline for delivery and installation of non-recurring services or to complete Category One special construction and light the new fiber. For most non-recurring services, you must submit this request to USAC on or before the September 30 following the close of the funding year. For an extension of the deadline to complete Category One special construction and light the associated fiber, you must submit this request to USAC on or before the June 30 of the funding year. This action will NOT increase funding.

YES NO

I want to cancel one or more of the FRNs. \*

YES NO

I want to change the Invoicing Method. \* [\(More Info\)](#)  
 Complete this section if you wish to change the Invoicing method (BEAR/SPI) approved for the FRN. This request must be received before the invoice filing deadline.

YES NO

I want to partially reduce the funding in one or more of the FRNs. \*

YES NO

CANCEL CONTINUE

If, as a service provider, you are aware of the need to request an SDD extension, work with your customer (the applicant) to have the FCC Form 500 completed and certified **no later than September 30, 2026**.

### Automatic Extensions

If USAC issues a FY2025 FCDL on or after March 1, 2026, the SDD is automatically extended for one year to September 30, 2027. This also applies to RFCDLs issued on or after March 1, 2026, for one of the following:

- Approval of an appeal for a funding request that was originally denied or for which funding was reduced,
- Approval of a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) change, or
- Approval of a service or equipment substitution.

The FCDL or RFCDL contains the extended SDD date when it is issued. You can also find the SDD by searching for the FRN using the [E-Rate FRN Status Tool FY2016+](#).

### E-Rate Outreach and Training

USAC is coming to an event near you in 2026. Below are events that we will attend in the next few months, where we can answer your E-Rate questions, and upcoming E-Rate [Webinars](#).

#### In-Person Training

E-Rate experts will provide training, discuss program updates, and answer questions from new and experienced participants. **Registration is still open for these in-person training events.**

Below are events where we can answer your E-Rate questions. You can submit your programmatic questions in advance when you register for a training session.

- **E-Rate Training – Phoenix, AZ: September 15, 2026 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. local time** at the Salvation Army Kroc Center, 1375 E. Broadway Road, Phoenix, AZ ([view agenda](#)). [Register](#).
- **E-Rate Training – Washington, DC: September 24, 2026 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. local time** at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) headquarters, 45 L Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. ([view agenda](#)). [Register](#). Please note that there is limited seating for this venue.
  - Once you click **Reserve a spot** on the registration page, you will have the option to indicate in-person or virtual attendance.
  - The training will also be available live on the [FCC's YouTube page](#). You won't be able to ask questions if you are tuning in to the webcast, but you can submit questions in advance when you register.

### Upcoming Webinars

#### E-Rate Program Overview

**September 10, 2026**

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. E.T.

[Register](#)

This webinar will provide an overview of the E-Rate application process and explain basic program concepts. We will also highlight recent program changes, including the recent FCC Form 470 updates and managing your Category Two (C2) budget. This webinar is intended for program participants of all experience levels and will include a question-and-answer session (remember to submit any questions when you register).

### **Category Two Budgets**

**October 1, 2026**

2 p.m. to 3 p.m. E.T.

[Register](#)

In this applicant-focused presentation, USAC will provide an overview of C2 budgets and C2 budget guidance for the FY2026-2030 C2 budget cycle. After the presentation, we will conduct a Q&A session (remember to submit any questions when you register). This webinar is intended for program participants of all experience levels.

### **Webinar Recordings**

- **E-Rate FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding** (August 6, 2026). This [webinar](#) provides E-Rate participants with information on how to file the FCC Form 470 and start the E-Rate competitive bidding process. The webinar covers topics such as planning your project, ensuring an open and fair competitive bidding process, and common errors. It is for all levels of E-Rate experience, and for both applicants and service providers with an emphasis on beginner level participants. View [webinar slides](#).

### **Conferences**

- **Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference** (Montgomery, Alabama) from **September 16-19, 2026**. [Event link](#).

To subscribe, click here: [Subscribe](#).

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