

# **Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) Review and Selective Review**

**E-Rate Program Participant Webinar  
May 26, 2021**



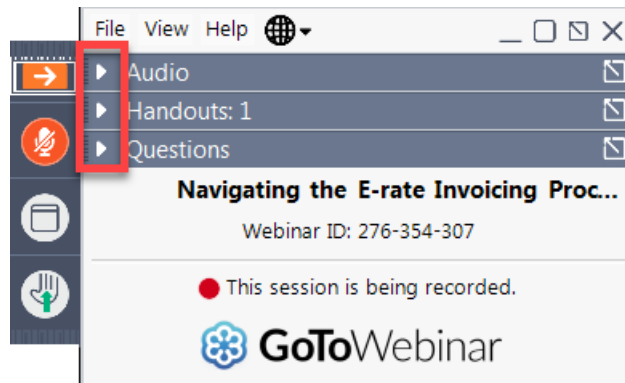
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# HOUSEKEEPING – WEBINAR PANEL

- The webinar panel is located on the right-hand side of the screen.
- Open the panel by clicking the orange arrow.

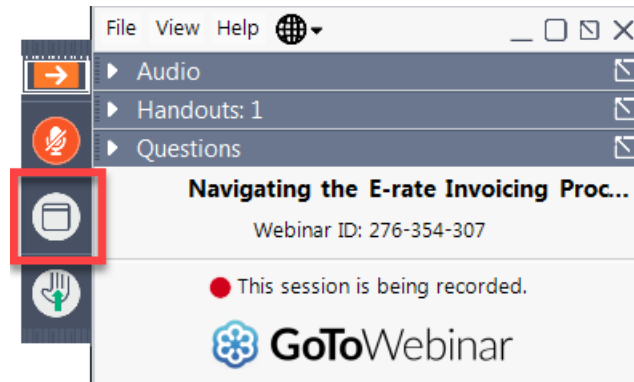


- Use the white arrows to open the sections in the panel.

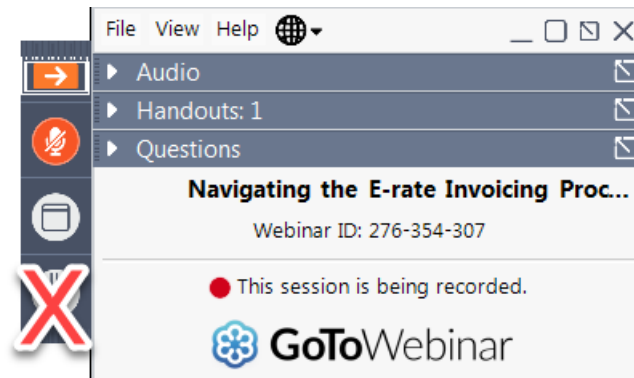


# HOUSEKEEPING – WEBINAR PANEL

- You can use the panel to view the presentation in full screen or window mode.

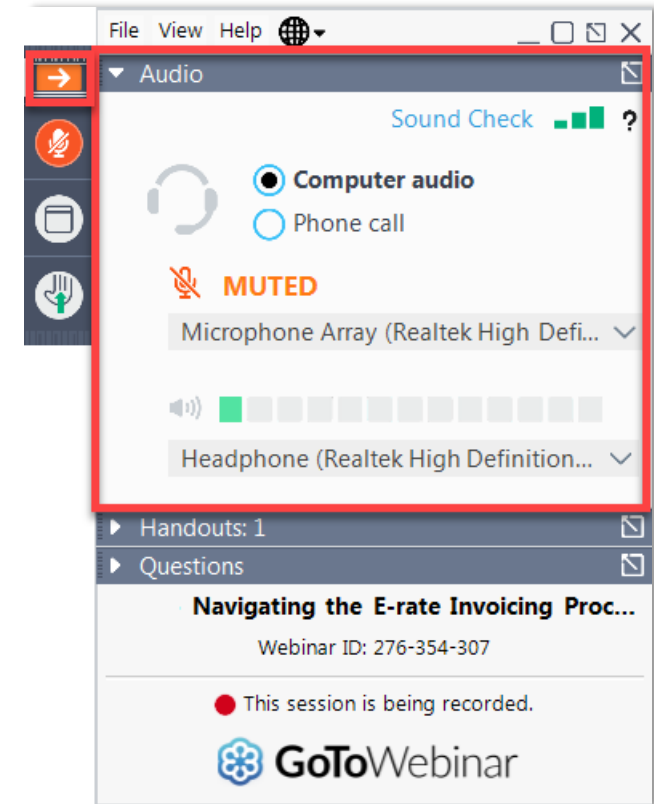


- We are not using the hand raise function.



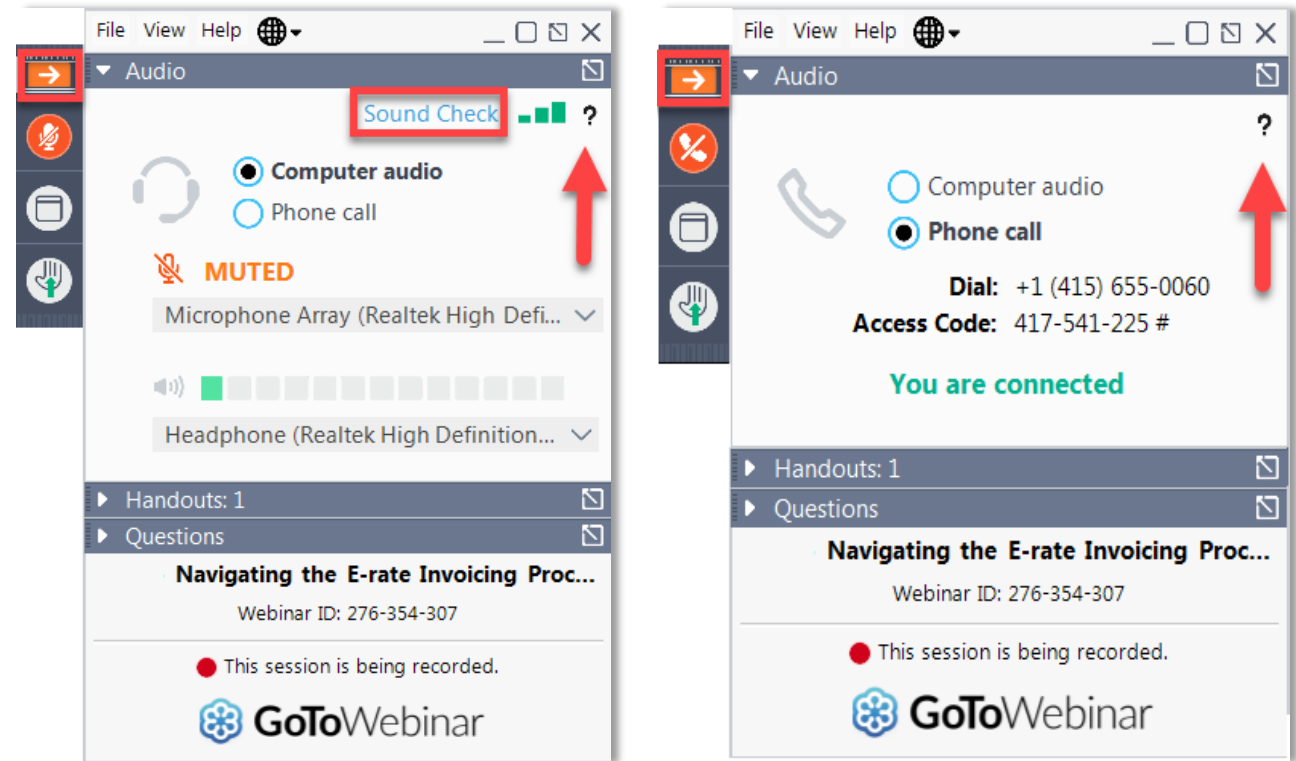
# HOUSEKEEPING – AUDIO

- Use the “Audio” section of your control panel to select an audio source.
- Choose one of the audio options:
  - Your computer's audio
  - Call in using an access code and audio PIN.
- The audience will remain on mute.



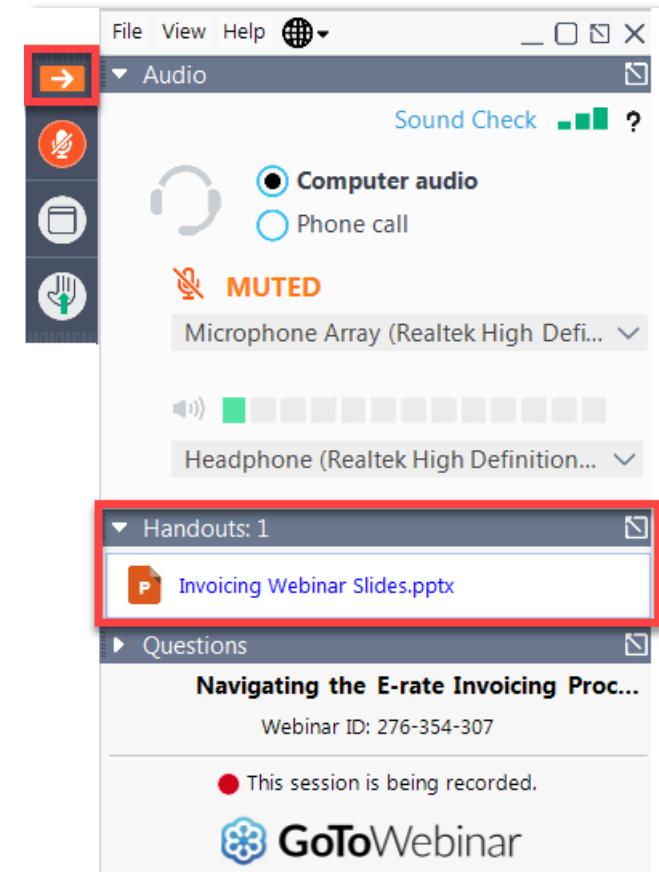
# HOUSEKEEPING – TECHNICAL ISSUES

- Use the “Sound Check” link and click question mark icon for audio help.
- Exit webinar and click the check system requirements link in the event confirmation email to determine whether your computer meets the requirements to see and hear the webinar.
- If issues persist, call 833-851-8340 to troubleshoot with GoToWebinar.



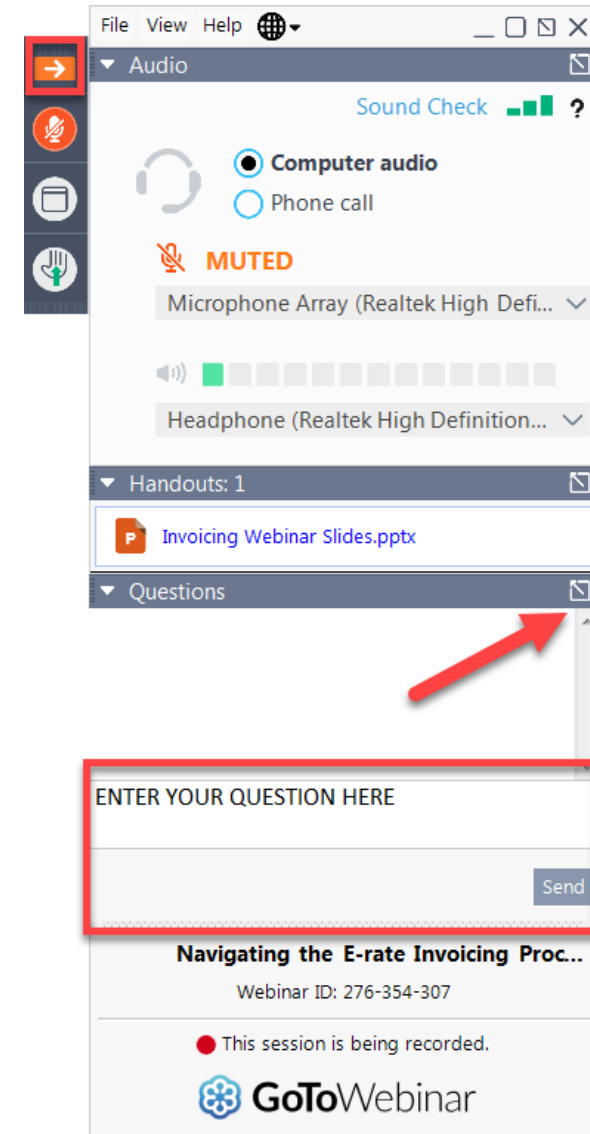
# HOUSEKEEPING – RESOURCES

- The **slide deck** is available when you click the arrow to expand the “**Handouts**” tab.
- A recording of this webinar will be available after the event via the registration link.



# HOUSEKEEPING – Q&A

- **There will be a live Q&A session focused on today's topics.**
- Tips for submitting questions:
  - Use the “Questions” box in your webinar control panel anytime during the presentation.
  - Click the box with the arrow above the questions box to expand it and see all written answers.
  - Write in full sentences.
  - Ask one question at a time.
  - Ask questions related to webinar content.



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**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 your landing page.





# MEET OUR TEAM



**Nkeshi Free**

Communications Specialist | E-Rate



**Dusan Stamenkovic**

Manager | E-Rate

# MEET OUR TEAM



**Latoya Anderson**

Senior Manager | E-Rate



**John Noran**

Senior Manager | E-Rate

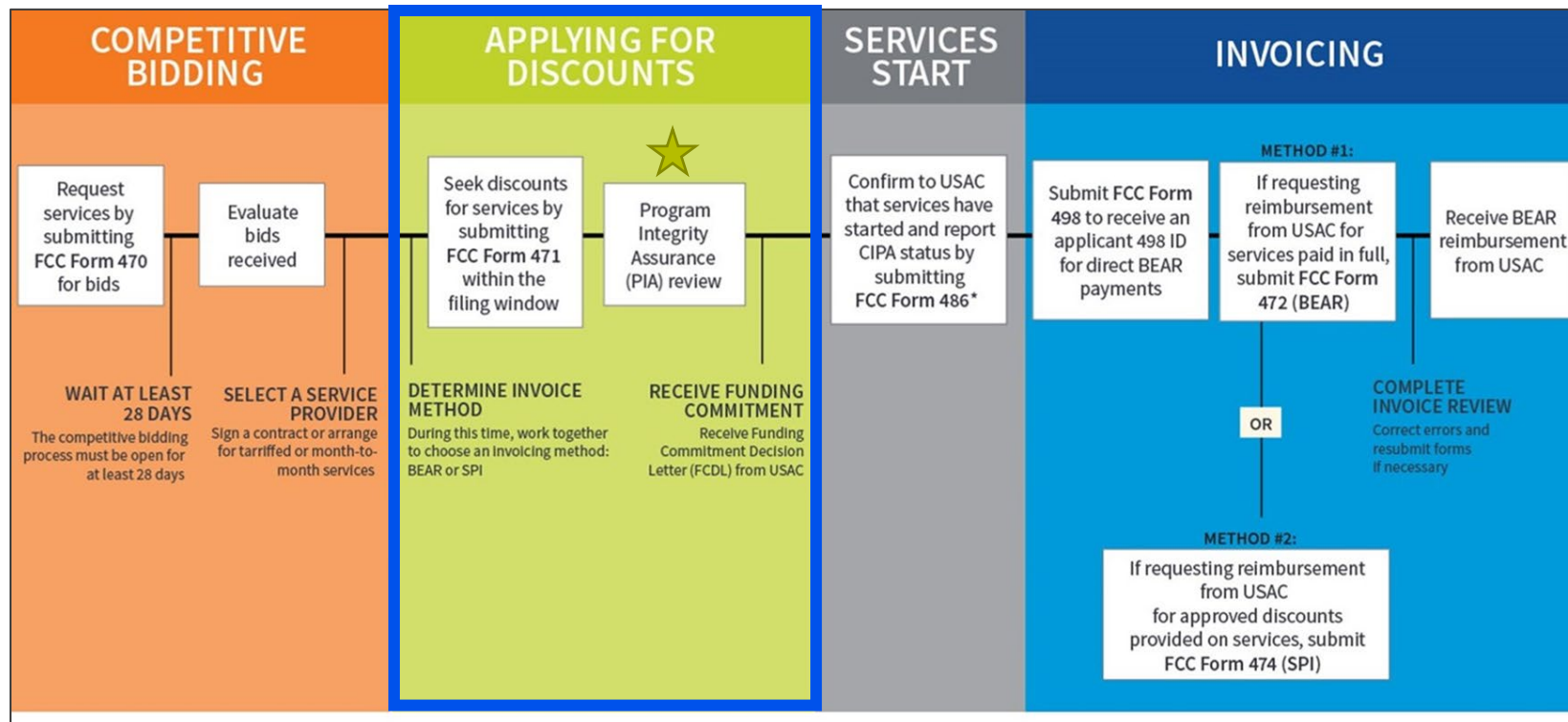
# Agenda

- Application Review Process
- Preparing for PIA Review
- PIA Inquiries
- Selective Review
- Funding Decisions
- Q&A

# **Application Review Process**

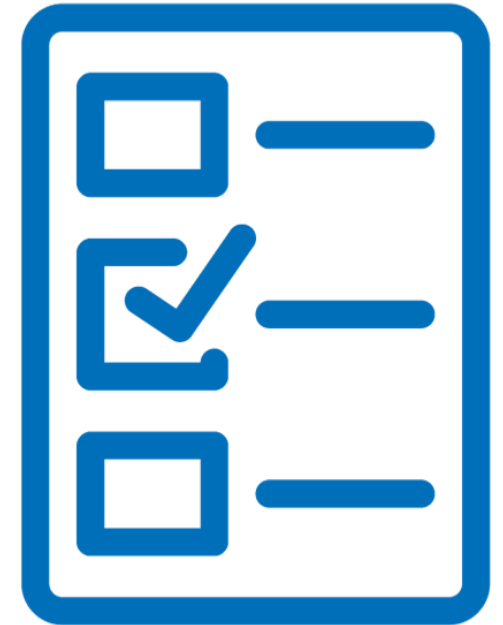
# Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) Review

After applicants certify an FCC Form 471 within the filing window, PIA reviewers check the information on the form for completeness and accuracy.



# Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) Review

- Your PIA reviewer may contact you to verify:
  - [Eligibility of one or more of your schools or libraries.](#)
  - [Eligibility of the requested services.](#)
  - Compliance with program rules.
- Additional information may be requested such as:
  - Vendor documentation that supports the funding request amount.
  - Supporting documentation that validates the requested discount percentage.
  - Supporting documentation that validates entity's eligibility for E-Rate funding.



# FCC Form 471 Modifications

- As part of the review process, PIA may be required to modify information on your funding request.
  - For example: PIA may change student count, service type or remove ineligible services based on the information available.
- If a PIA reviewer discovers ineligible services in a funding request, applicants can ask to have them moved to a separate funding request or removed altogether.



# Application Status

- While your form is under review, its status changes as the review process progresses.
- During the review process, your application may change status several times, including reverting back to a previous status.
  - This may occur due to the various levels of review involved.
  - Applications reflecting a PIA review status of “wave ready” may be excluded from the upcoming wave if the application is between review levels (for example, if the application is randomly selected for a quality check which is still pending at the time the wave runs.)




# Preparing for PIA Review

# Organize Documentation

- Save and organize copies of all your documentation such as:
  - Competitive bidding documentation
  - Contracts
  - Network diagrams
  - National School Lunch Program (NSLP) documentation
- Use the [E-Rate Program Applicant Document Retention List](#) as a guide.

Available for Public Use



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Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program Applicant Document Retention List

This list provides guidance regarding what E-rate Program related documents should be retained by applicants to comply with FCC [document retention](#) requirements. This guide provides document retention guidance to E-rate Program applicants. It includes items that do not apply to every applicant and is not an exhaustive list.

For forms filed in the [E-rate Productivity Center \(EPC\)](#), you can print a PDF copy of forms, letters and correspondence for your records.

1. FCC FORMS & CERTIFICATIONS

1.1. FCC Form 470

1.2. FCC Form 471

1.3. FCC Form 498 - applicants filing FCC Form 472 (BEAR)

1.4. FCC Form 472 - Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR)

1.5. FCC Form 479 - consortium members & consortium leaders only

1.6. FCC Form 486

1.7. FCC Form 500

1.8. Delivery confirmations for forms filed outside of EPC

2. USAC LETTERS

2.1. FCC Form 470 Receipt Notification Letter (RNL)

2.2. FCC Form 471 Receipt Acknowledgment Letter (RAL)

2.3. FCC Form 471 Out Of Window Letter (OOW)

2.4. Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)

2.5. Revised Funding Commitment Decision Letter (RFCDLs)

2.6. FCC Form 486 Notification Letter

2.7. FCC Form 486 Urgent Reminder Letter

2.8. FCC Form 500 Notification Letter

2.9. FCC Form 472 (BEAR) Notification Letter

2.10. Quarterly Disbursement Reports (QDR)

2.11. Other USAC letters

usac.org/e-rate

Updated April 2021

# Document Retention Requirement

Applicants and service providers are required to keep records relating to the application process for at least **ten years** after the latter of the last day of the applicable funding year or the service delivery deadline for the funding request.

**TIP:** In your personal record keeping, use filenames and folder names that are specific and descriptive to locate them more easily.



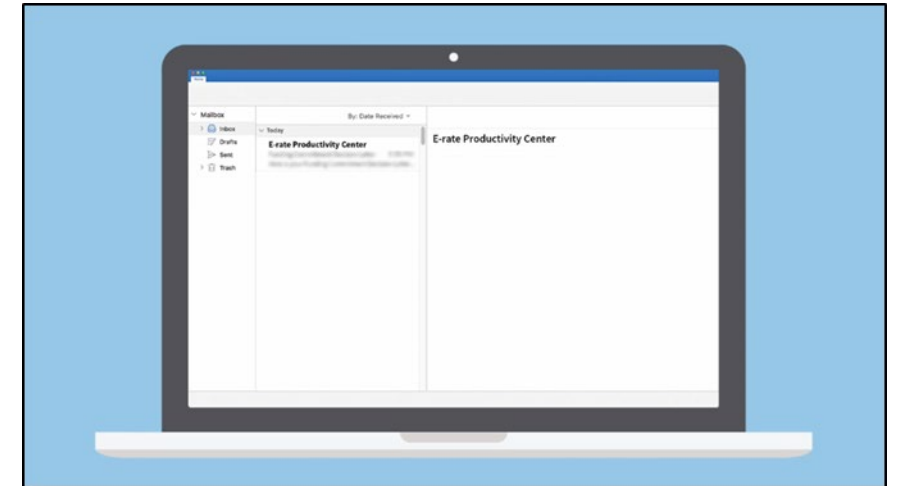
# Frequently Requested Items

- Common PIA requests for supporting documentation include:
  - Documents to validate entity information (i.e. surveys for alternative discount calculations)
  - Vendor documents such as: contracts, bills, vendor quotes, etc.
- PIA reviewers may also request information or other documents to help clarify FCC Form 471 entries.



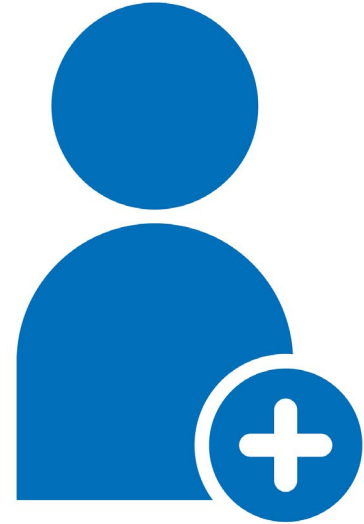
# E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) Account

- Monitor your email inbox and EPC account.
- Be ready to respond to PIA.
- The contact person identified on the FCC Form 471 should regularly monitor their email address and EPC account to check for PIA review questions.



# Update Your Contact Information

You can file a RAL modification to update your holiday/vacation contact information if we should use a different email address or telephone number to contact you, or if you have empowered someone else to answer questions on your behalf.



1. Within the FCC Form 471 record, navigate to **Related Actions**.
2. Select **Submit Modification Request (RAL)**.
3. Fill out the required information.

# PIA Inquiries

# PIA Inquiries

- To avoid delays, when you receive a PIA inquiry, you should provide:
  - Complete responses to all questions.
  - All requested documentation.
- Who can respond to PIA inquiries?
  - Applicants or authorized representatives of applicants
  - Service providers **can assist** applicants with PIA inquiries about services being provided.
- Contact your reviewer with questions.





# PIA Inquiries – EPC News Feed

News

Tasks (3)

Records

Reports

Actions



- Your reviewer will notify you by email and in your EPC **News** feed.
- The **News** feed item labeled, “From the FCC Form 471 Review Team” includes:
  - Today's date
  - Response due date
  - Contact name
  - Applicant name
  - FCC Form 471 application number
  - A brief description of the inquiry(ies)
  - Your PIA reviewer's name and telephone number
  - A hyperlink to your questions (the blue bar at the bottom of the notification)

**TIP:** Enter "471 Review Team" in the News search function and hit the "Enter" key to locate these notification(s) more easily.

# Accessing PIA Inquiries in EPC

- To view your PIA inquiries within the FCC Form 471 record:
  1. Navigate to **Review Inquiries**.
  2. Select **Respond to Inquiries**.
  3. Click on the blue hyperlink under **Name** to get to the actual questions.
    - Be sure to also read the information under **Outreach Type**.
- Requests for documentation
  - Select the **Submit** button after uploading documents.



# PIA Inquiry Status

- The dashboard lists the status of the PIA outreach:
  - "Pending" inquiries are questions submitted by PIA to the contact person.
  - "Submitted" inquiries are responses you submitted to PIA.

# Responding to PIA Inquiries

- You have **15 days** to respond to PIA inquiries.
- You may ask for one extension, which is automatically granted for an additional seven days.
- You may request more than one extension.
  - Additional extensions are considered on a case-by-case basis.



# Requesting Additional Time

How to request an extension for your response:

1. Navigate to the FCC Form 471 in EPC
2. Choose **Review Inquiries**.
3. Select **Request Extension**.



# Tips for Responding to Inquiries

- Enter a response in **all fields**; enter “N/A” when not applicable.
- Do not open the same task (inquiry) in multiple tabs or windows.
- What to do when you encounter “incomplete tasks”:
  - Answer the questions again and verify that all fields are populated.
  - If incomplete tasks warnings persist, open a customer service ticket.



# Tips for Responding to Inquiries

- How to address identical questions for an entity across multiple applications:
  - Provide the response on the first application.
  - For subsequent inquiries, you may direct the reviewer to the first application that contains the response.



# Tips for Responding to Inquiries

- Contact your state E-Rate coordinator if you are having difficulty responding to or obtaining documentation for an inquiry relating to entity or discount validations.
  - Supporting documentation must show that the response came from the state E-Rate coordinator.





# Selective Review

# Selective Review

- Some applications undergo additional review.
- USAC may request more detailed responses than those that are required in PIA review.
- Selective reviews include all aspects of the competitive bidding process.
- This review is independent of other reviews conducted by PIA which may or may not still be in progress.



# Selective Review

- USAC will email a **Selective Review Information Request (SRIR)** to the FCC Form 471 contact to inform them that their entity has been chosen for selective review.
- The email will provide information about how to submit a response and include a link to access the SRIR in EPC.



# Selective Review

If you receive an SRIR you should:

- Confirm receipt of the SRIR by contacting the reviewer named in the request.
- Provide a complete response and all requested documentation to avoid delaying the review.
- Label each document and include Funding Request Numbers (FRNs) and descriptions that identify them.



# Selective Review

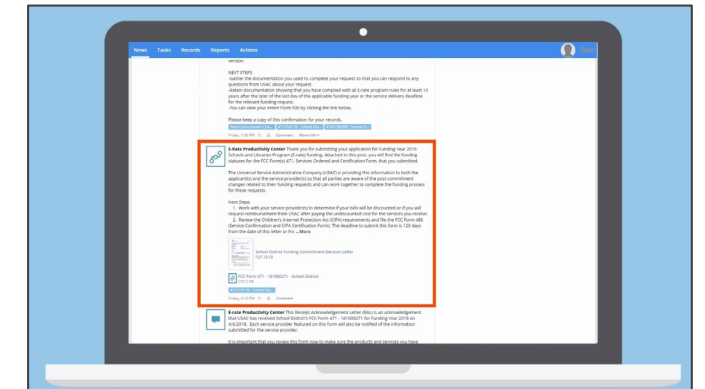
- Who can respond to SRIRs?
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  - Service providers can assist applicants but cannot complete the SRIR.
- Contact your reviewer with questions.



# Funding Decisions

# Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)

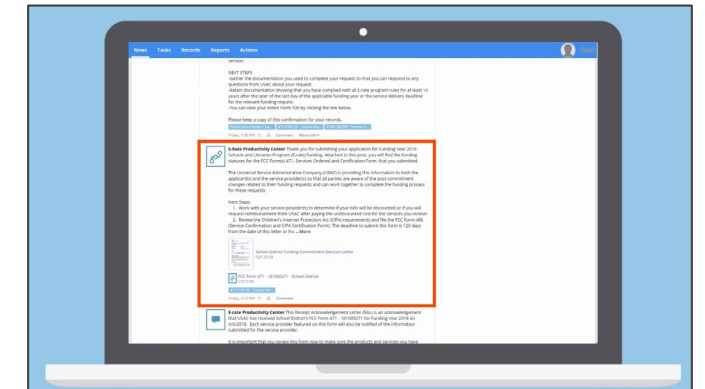
- When PIA review is complete, applicants and service provider receive a **Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)** – review it carefully!
- The FCDL includes:
  - Approved funding amounts.
  - Modified or denied funding amounts – along with the reason(s) for the changes.
  - Next steps in the E-Rate process.



# Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)

FCDLs are delivered to applicants and service providers.

- Via email
- **News** feed section of EPC



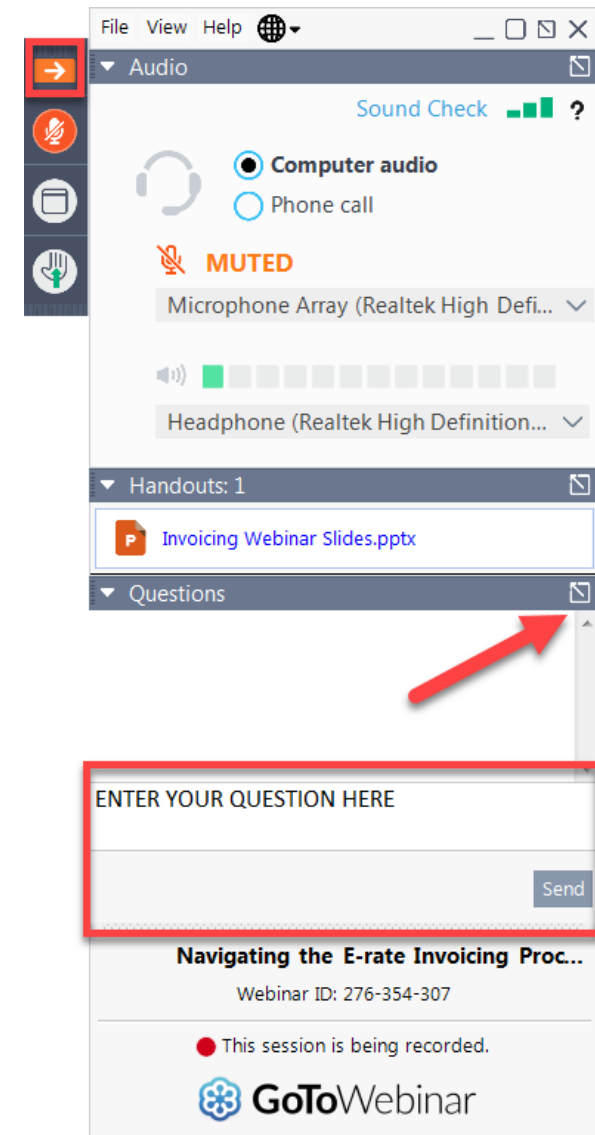


## After Receiving the FCDL

- After the FCDL is delivered, applicants can:
  - Discuss details involved in the provision of services with your service provider(s).
  - Once services have started, file the [FCC Form 486](#).
- If applicants or service providers disagree with one or more of the decisions in the FCDL, they can [appeal](#) to USAC.
  - Appeal within 60 days of the date of the letter.
  - Decisions on appeals are delivered via **Revised Funding Commitment Decision Letters (RFCDLs)**.

# HOUSEKEEPING – Q&A

- Use the “Questions” box in your webinar control panel to submit your question in writing.
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# Questions?

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# WEBINAR SURVEY

We would like your feedback on today's webinar.  
Please fill out the webinar survey by using the link emailed to you after the event.

Webinar Survey

1. Are you an applicant, a service provider, or a consultant?
  - ☐ Applicant
  - ☐ Service provider
  - ☐ Consultant
  - ☐ Other
2. Please rate your overall webinar experience.
  - ☐ Excellent
  - ☐ Good
  - ☐ Fair
  - ☐ Poor
3. The content of the webinar was (select all that apply):
  - ☐ What I expected when I signed up
  - ☐ Relevant and useful to my work
  - ☐ New information for me
  - ☐ Easy to understand
  - ☐ Other

**Thank You!**





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