

Competitive Bidding (FCC Form 470) E-Rate Question & Answer (Q&A) Session

E-Rate Q&A Session

January 23, 2024



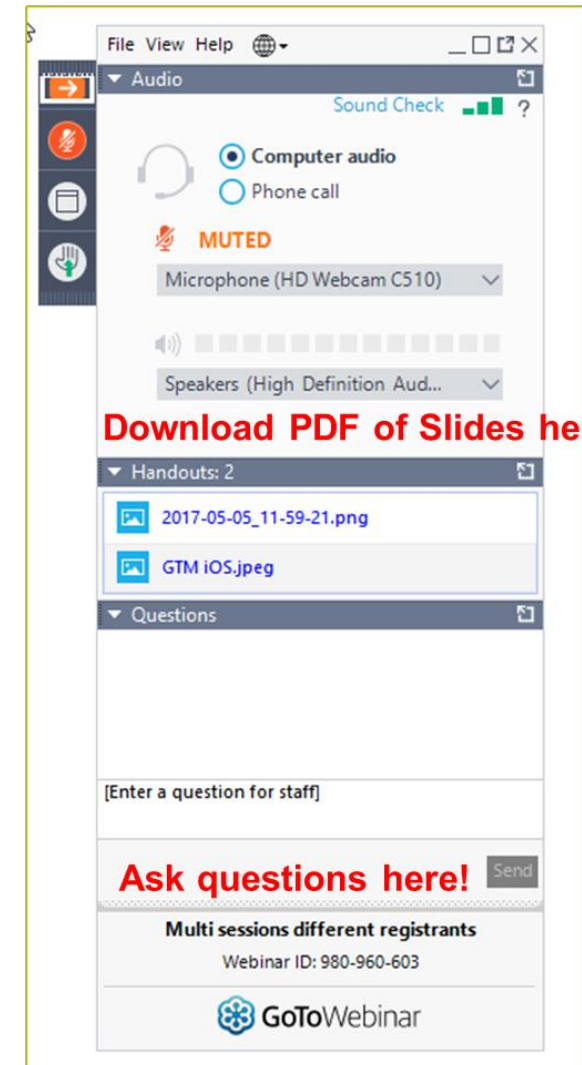
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Disclaimer

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

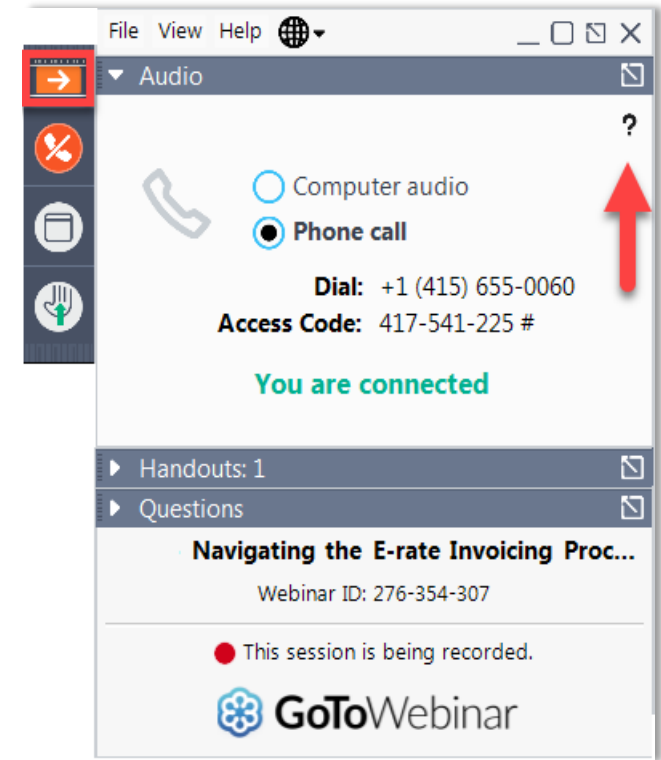
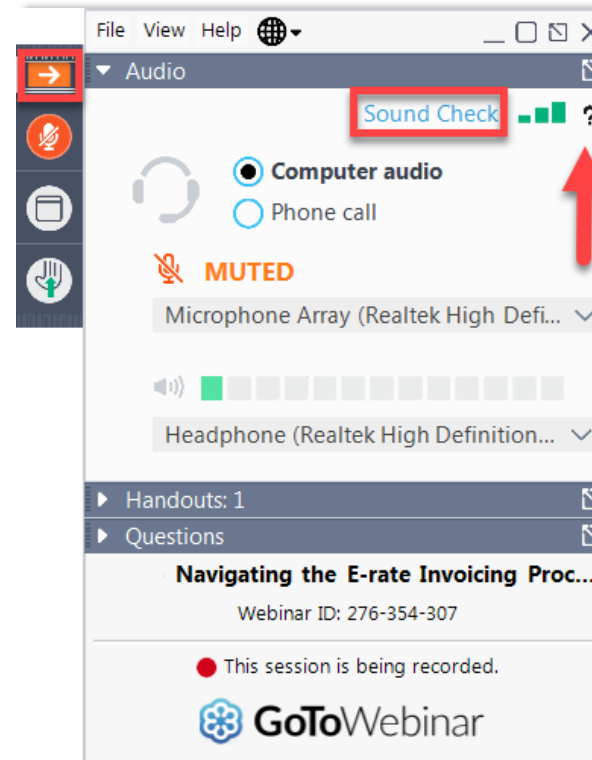
Housekeeping

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers.
- 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 the slide deck is in the "Handouts" section of webinar panel.



Housekeeping – Technical Issues

- Use the "Sound Check" link and click the question mark icon for audio help.
- Exit the 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.



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.

Meet Our Team



Ben Yehuda

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Bernie Manns

Senior Director of Program Management | E-Rate



Shawn Jensen

Senior Program Analyst | E-Rate

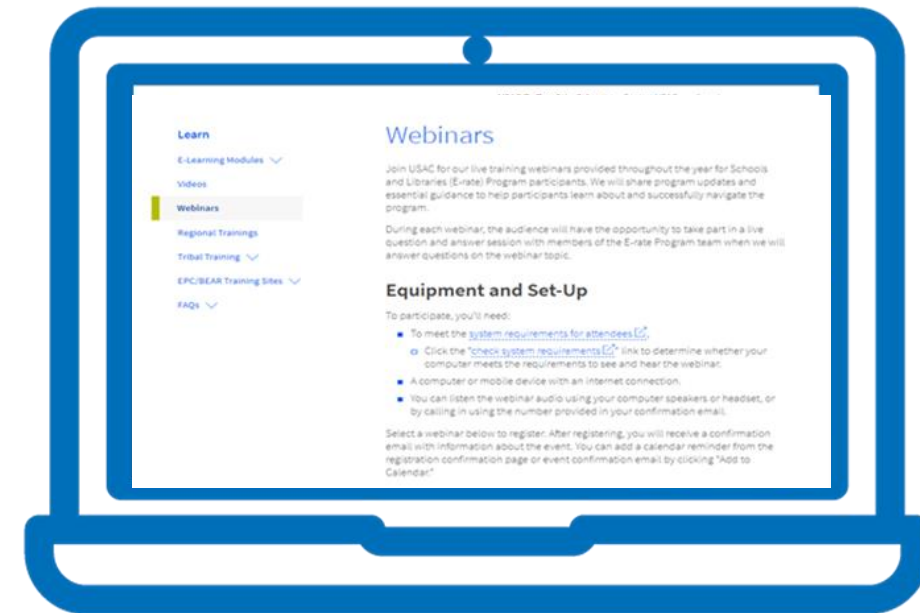
Agenda

- Question & Answer Session Overview and Purpose
- Wi-Fi on Buses
- FCC Form 470 & Competitive Bidding Resources
- Question & Answer (Q&A) for E-Rate Applicants and Service Providers

Question & Answer Session Overview and Purpose

Question & Answer Session and Training Series

- Provide targeted program information.
- Assist program participants with timely and topic relevant questions.
- Equip program participants with knowledge about E-Rate resources.
- Recommended for: Applicants and service providers
- E-Rate experience level: All



Question & Answer Structure and Format

- USAC team members will provide a high-level overview of the topic materials.
- Participants should read the assigned materials and watch assigned videos in advance of the webinar event and come prepared with questions to ask during the Q & A session.
- Questions related to the topics and experience level will be given priority.

Wi-Fi on Buses

School Busses: Now E-Rate Eligible

- Equipment and services necessary to provide mobile broadband **connectivity on school buses are E-Rate eligible** when used for **educational purposes**.
 - Installation fees and equipment needed to make the wireless service for school buses functional **are also eligible** under Category One.
- School bus Wi-Fi services are eligible for school-owned, leased or contracted school buses, **if used primarily to transport students to and from school and school-related activities** for educational purposes. Charter, municipal, city buses and other school-owned vehicles (i.e., cars and vans) are not eligible.
- Separate maintenance and operations services related to mobile broadband connectivity for school buses are also **not eligible**.

School Buses: Competitive Bidding

- School bus Wi-Fi is subject to **all** existing E-Rate rules and requirements, including competitive bidding, cost allocation, and discounting rules.
 - Applicants are not required to compare costs between a given service plan for providing school bus Wi-Fi and other technological approaches to deliver connectivity to end user devices.
- Applicants who entered into multi-year agreements for Bus Wi-Fi in the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) program are **not exempt** from competitive bidding requirements.
- The competitive bidding exemption for Commercially Available Business Class Internet Option (CABIO) services **does not apply to bus services**. It only applies to services delivered to a school or library building.
- Service provider selection must be consistent with E-Rate program rules including selecting the most cost-effective service offering(s), using **price of the eligible equipment and services as the primary factor** in the evaluation matrix.

School Buses: Restrictions/Limitations on Usage

- Equipment and services must primarily be utilized for **educational purposes** as defined by E-Rate rules.
- There are no new user or CIPA restrictions for Bus Wi-Fi. All restrictions must be consistent with those placed on building-based broadband networks.
- Wi-Fi should **only be active during school bus normal operating hours** (i.e., when students are being transported to and from school or school-related activities) or when there is a **clear educational purpose** for enabling school bus Wi-Fi connections outside of these hours.
- Bus Wi-Fi service must be disabled outside of these hours and cannot be utilized for community use purposes.

School Buses: How to Seek Bids on the FCC Form 470

- USAC released an article on [how to seek bids for Wi-Fi on school buses in FY2024](#)
- The FY 2024 FCC Form 470 **has not changed** since USAC posted it in July 2023. Applicants seeking bids for Wi-Fi on buses should use the following drop-downs:
 - Select “Category 1 — Data Transmission and/or Internet Access” in the **Service Requests** section under **Category(s) of Service**.
 - You will be required by EPC to upload a Request for Proposal (RFP) document. Select YES under RFPs for Service Requests.
 - Add a narrative (e.g., “Applicant seeks bids for wireless school bus service and (if applicable) associated equipment to make the service functional to provide Wi-Fi. Reference the associated “RFP” document for additional information.”)
 - Add a new service request, selecting the following EPC guiding statements in sequential order:
 - I seek bids for internet access and/or data transmission service.
 - I seek bids for Internet access and data transmission service (provided over any combination of transmission medium, e.g., fiber-only networks, fiber/non-fiber hybrid networks, or non-fiber networks such as cable, DSL, copper, satellite, or microwave).
 - I seek bids for data plans or wireless adapters (Air Cards) for mobile devices for commercial wireless service for a school or library that does not have an existing broadband internal connections.
 - Provide remaining details like quantity and entities.

Question & Answer Session: Prerequisites

- [FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding Videos](#)
- [E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Webinar Recording](#) and [Slides](#)
- [FCC Form 470 Filing EPC System Guide FY2022-FY2024](#) (PDF)
- [FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Reference Table](#) (PDF)
- [Lowest Corresponding Price](#) (Page)
- [FCC Form 470 Search User Guide](#)
- [Competitive Bidding & FCC Form 470 FAQs](#)
- [12/15/2023 E-Rate News Brief](#)
 - Article: How to Apply for Wi-Fi on School Buses in FY2024
- [Service Providers Webinar](#) (September 2023)
- [Eligible Services Q&A](#) (January 2024)



FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding Video Series

FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding Video Series

- How to File an FCC Form 470
- How to Search for FCC Forms 470
- E-Rate Competitive Bidding Process



E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Webinar

E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Webinar: 10/05/2023


- Application Process
- Competitive Bidding (FCC Form 470)
- Evaluating Bids
- Requesting Funding (FCC Form 471)
- Application review
- Funding commitments
- Document retention



FCC Form 470 Filing EPC System Guide

FCC Form 470 Filing EPC System Guide

- Form Assistance
- One Portal
- Begin the form: Basics
- Categories of Services
- Certifications
- Signatures



Available for Public Use

Form Assistance

Program applicants file the FCC Form 470 (Description of Services Requested and Certification Form) in USAC's [E-Rate Productivity Center \(EPC\)](#). You can find information about this form on the [FCC Form 470 Filing](#) web page.

If you have any questions about completing this form, please contact the Schools and Libraries (E-Rate) program Client Service Bureau (CSB) at (888) 203-8100 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday.

You can also create a customer service case in EPC by selecting the **Contact Us** link on your EPC landing page or by using the **Actions** tab.



One Portal

To file an FCC Form 470, all users must first log in to One Portal, USAC's [multi-factor authentication \(MFA\)](#) system. MFA is a method of authenticating a computer user during the login process by requiring the user to enter two or more separate pieces of information, such as a password known to the user and a code we generate and send to the user by email or text. MFA helps safeguard access to data and applications, and provides additional security. One Portal complies with both federal and Federal Communication Commission (FCC) information security guidelines.

To learn more about USAC's MFA and to find a list of all Universal Service Fund (USF) IT applications included in the single portal, visit [USAC's website](#).

If you are also an EPC user, USAC has already created an account for you in One Portal. To set up your credentials in One Portal, click the blue **Sign In** button at the top of any USAC page and follow the instructions.

4 | Universal Service Administrative Company | FCC Form 470 User Guide

FCC Form 470 Search User Guide

FCC Form 470 Search User Guide

- How to search for certified FCC Form 470s in EPC
- Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470
- Exporting Search Results

SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES (E-RATE) PROGRAM


Last Modified: April 2018

How to Search for FCC Forms 470 in EPC

Any user with an E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) account can search for and view certified FCC Forms 470 using a number of different criteria. Criteria include, for example, funding year, service type(s), state, or zip code.

Service Providers

Log in to EPC. Service provider users will see **Search FCC Forms 470** in the top right-hand menu of their landing page and can click this link to access the search function.



All Other Users
Log in to EPC, click the **Actions** tab, and select **Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470**.

Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470

1. Enter the search criteria:
 - Funding Year
 - Date Posted Online*
 - Service Type(s)
 - Applicant Type*
 - Zip Code
 - State*


*mandatory field
2. Click **Continue**.

3 Universal Service Administrative Company | FCC Form 470 Search User Guide

FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table

FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table

- Category One vs Category Two
- Leased Dark and Lit Fiber
- Internet Access
- Data Transmission

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|--|--|---|
| FY22 FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table | | |
| Starting with Funding Year 2022, the FCC Form 470 includes guiding statements to help applicants request E-Rate eligible services and/or equipment for the upcoming funding year. The following tables provide a quick way to reference the options provided in the form along with guiding messages. | | |
| Please see footnotes for additional information where provided. | | |
| Category One | | |
| If you intend to request bids for: | You should first select "I seek bids for internet access and/or data transmission service." Next, choose the following FCC Form 470 statement: | Then, choose the following FCC Form 470 statement: |
| Internet Access and Data Transmission Service | I seek bids for internet access and data transmission service (provided over any combination of transmission medium, e.g., fiber-only networks, fiber/non-fiber hybrid networks, or non-fiber networks such as cable, DSL, copper, satellite, or microwave). | I seek bids for internet access and data transmission services, whether offered by one service provider(s) as a bundled package or offered by one or more service providers as independent services. ¹ |
| Cellular Data Plan/Air Card Service | I seek bids for internet access and data transmission service (provided over any combination of transmission medium, e.g., fiber-only networks, fiber/non-fiber hybrid networks, or non-fiber networks such as cable, DSL, copper, satellite, or microwave). | I seek bids for data plans or wireless adapters (Air Cards) for mobile devices for commercial wireless service for a school or library that does not have existing broadband internal connections. ² |
| ¹ Applicants can use the narrative field on the FCC Form 470 and/or their RFP, if applicable, to provide additional details regarding their service need requirements. ² Cellular data plans and air cards for mobile devices are eligible only when the applicant seeking support demonstrates that the individual data plans are the most cost-effective option for providing internal broadband access for mobile devices at schools and/or libraries. | | |
| usac.org/e-rate | | Updated December 2021 |

Service Provider Webinar

Register Your Entity

- **Register on SAM.gov** to [obtain a Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#).
- **Register with USAC** to provide services to our applicants by [completing an FCC Form 498](#).
 - This results in the creation of your **SPIN ID/498 ID**.
 - USAC sets your access to [the E-File System](#).
 - You receive an email letting you know you can create a password in the **E-Rate Productivity Center** (EPC).
 - Keep this information current.

Bid on Services

- The **applicant** starts the [competitive bidding process](#) by posting one or more FCC Forms 470 and Request(s) for Proposals (RFP) documents, if applicable, to the USAC website.
 - These documents may include specific requirements for service providers to follow during the competitive bidding process.
- **Service providers** [review the information and bid on the requested services](#).
 - The bid should include information on E-Rate eligibility percentage and category of service.
 - The bid should be responsive to the equipment and services being requested.



Open and Fair

The [competitive bidding process](#) must be [open and fair](#).

- “Open” means there are no secrets in the process. Information shared with one bidder must be shared with all. All bidders know what is required of them.
- “Fair” means that all bidders are treated the same throughout the competitive bidding process, and that no bidder has advance knowledge of the project information.

Open and Fair – Service Providers

To help ensure an open and fair process, service providers should:

- **Review all the requirements**, including the FCC Form 470 and any RFP(s).
- Provide a responsive bid to what was requested by the applicant.
- Ask questions if the information provided by the applicant is unclear.
- Separate the eligible, mixed bucket, and **ineligible services** in your bid response.
- **Do not offer gifts, free services, devices, or non-E-Rate discounts** to make your response more attractive.
- **Do not offer to help** an applicant if you are also planning to respond to their bid request.

Bid should include Lowest Corresponding Price

Service providers must charge the [Lowest Corresponding Price](#). (See 47 C.F.R. § 54.500.) This is the lowest price that a service provider charges to non-residential customers who are **similarly situated** to a particular school, library, or library consortium for **similar services**. This ensures that:

- Service providers do not charge applicants more than they would charge their other customers for the same services.
- Any lack of experience in negotiating in a service market does not prevent applicants from receiving competitive prices.

Note – [document retention](#) rules apply even in the event of a merger or acquisition.

How Applicants Select a Service Provider

- Applicants must wait **at least 28 days** after posting their FCC Form 470 and then can they:
 - [Evaluate the bids received](#)
 - See [sample evaluation matrix](#)
 - Select a service provider **on or after the 29th day**.
 - The day the applicant certifies the FCC Form 470 counts as day 1. For example, if they file and certify an FCC Form 470 on September 1, they may select a service provider on or after September 29.
- **The price of eligible equipment and services** must be the **primary** selection criterion (weighted more heavily than any other single criterion).

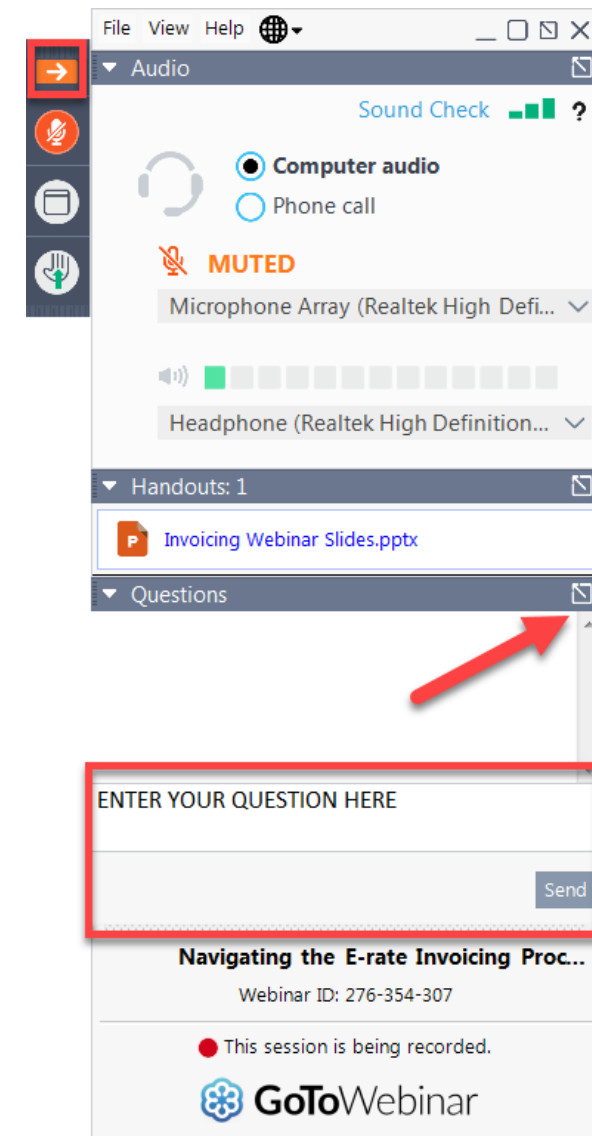
Resources

- [Competitive Bidding Page](#)
- [Competitive Bidding Infographic](#)
- [Competitive Bidding FAQs](#)
- [Competitive Bidding Webinar: July 27, 2023](#)
- [12/15/2023 E-Rate News Brief](#)



Housekeeping – Q&A

- Use the “Questions” box in your webinar control panel to submit your question in writing.
 - Click the box with the arrow above the questions box to expand it.
 - Ask questions related to webinar content.



Questions?

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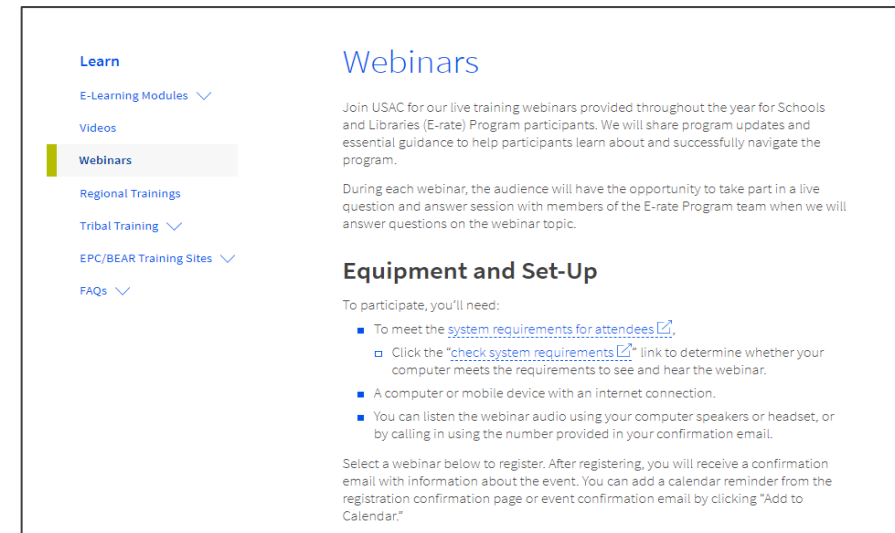
Upcoming Webinars

**Our next webinar is on:
January 25 at 2 p.m. ET**

Service Provider Selection & the FCC Form 471 Question and Answer (Q&A) Session

Recommended for: Applicants and
service providers

E-Rate Experience Level: All



The screenshot shows a web page with a left sidebar and a main content area. The sidebar has a 'Learn' header and a list of links: 'E-Learning Modules', 'Videos', 'Webinars' (highlighted with a yellow bar), 'Regional Trainings', 'Tribal Training', 'EPC/BEAR Training Sites', and 'FAQs'. The main content area has a 'Webinars' header. Below it, there is a paragraph about USAC providing live training webinars. Another paragraph explains that during each webinar, the audience can participate in a live Q&A session. A section titled 'Equipment and Set-Up' lists requirements for participation: meeting system requirements (with a link to 'check system requirements'), having a computer or mobile device with internet access, and using speakers/headset or a phone. At the bottom, it instructs users to select a webinar to register and mentions that a confirmation email will be sent, which includes a link to add a calendar reminder.

Learn

- E-Learning Modules
- Videos
- Webinars**
- Regional Trainings
- Tribal Training
- EPC/BEAR Training Sites
- FAQs

Webinars

Join USAC for our live training webinars provided throughout the year for Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program participants. We will share program updates and essential guidance to help participants learn about and successfully navigate the program.

During each webinar, the audience will have the opportunity to take part in a live question and answer session with members of the E-rate Program team when we will answer questions on the webinar topic.

Equipment and Set-Up

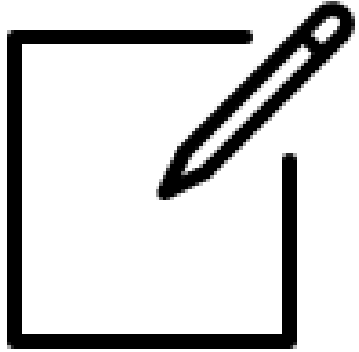
To participate, you'll need:

- To meet the [system requirements for attendees](#).
 - Click the ["check system requirements"](#) link to determine whether your computer meets the requirements to see and hear the webinar.
- A computer or mobile device with an internet connection.
- You can listen the webinar audio using your computer speakers or headset, or by calling in using the number provided in your confirmation email.

Select a webinar below to register. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about the event. You can add a calendar reminder from the registration confirmation page or event confirmation email by clicking "Add to Calendar."

Go to the E-Rate **Webinars** page for additional information.

Take Our Survey



- We want to hear about your webinar experience.
- A survey will appear on your screen at the end of the webinar.
- If you are not able to complete the survey today, one will be emailed to you within two business days.
- We appreciate your feedback!

Thank You!





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