



# **E-Rate Pre-Commitment: Question & Answer Session**

February 19, 2026

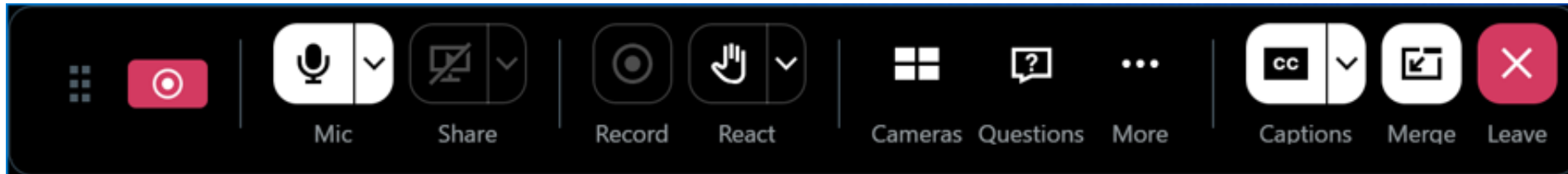
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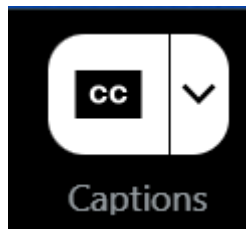
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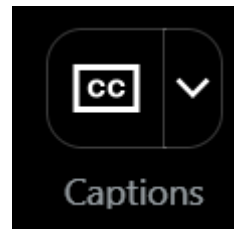
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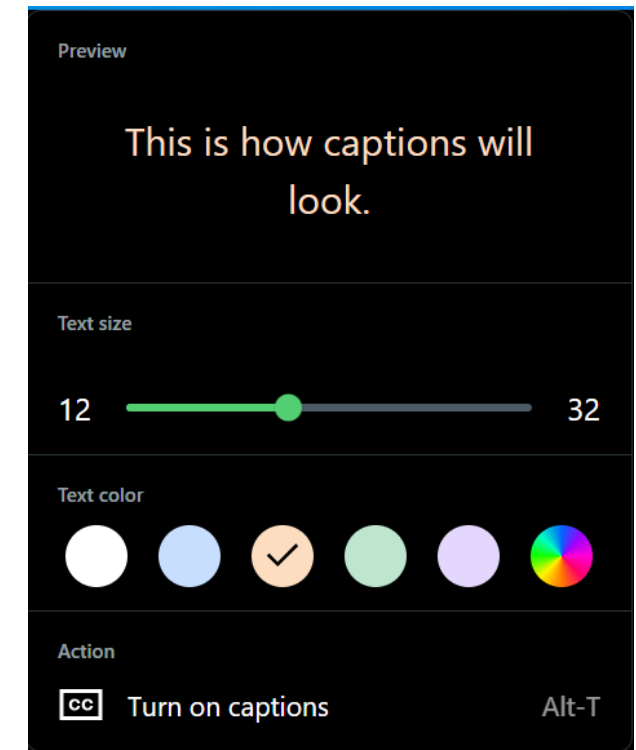
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Captions ON



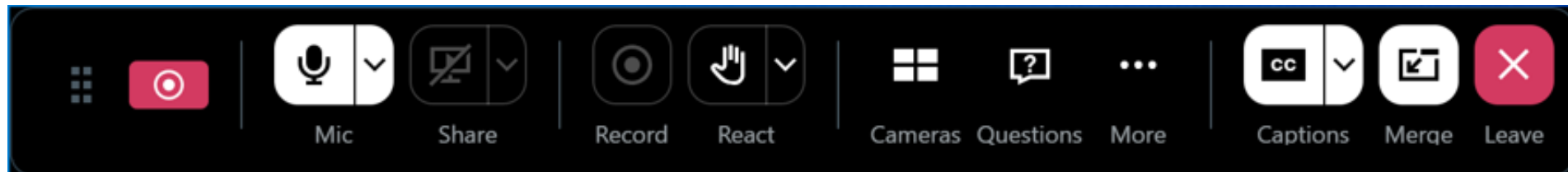
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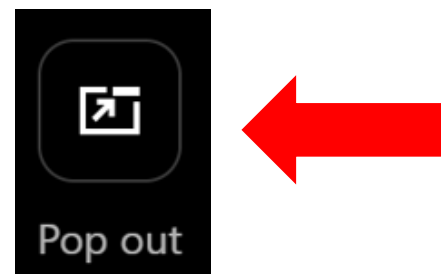
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  1. Multiple windows open, can **merge** into one



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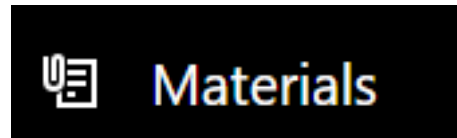
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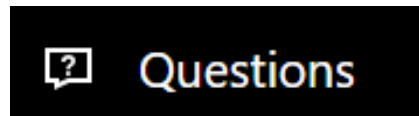


# Housekeeping – Materials & Questions

- A copy of the slide deck is in the **Materials** section of the webinar panel




- Enter questions at any time using the **Questions** box



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Questions ×



**No questions yet**

Questions you send and answers from the staff will appear here

Enter your question

Your question will be sent to staff Send

# Housekeeping – Technical Issues

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# MEET THE TEAM



**Cedric Watkins**

Program Analyst | E-Rate



**Shawn Jensen**

Program Manager | E-Rate



**Lisette LaForge**

Program Manager | E-Rate

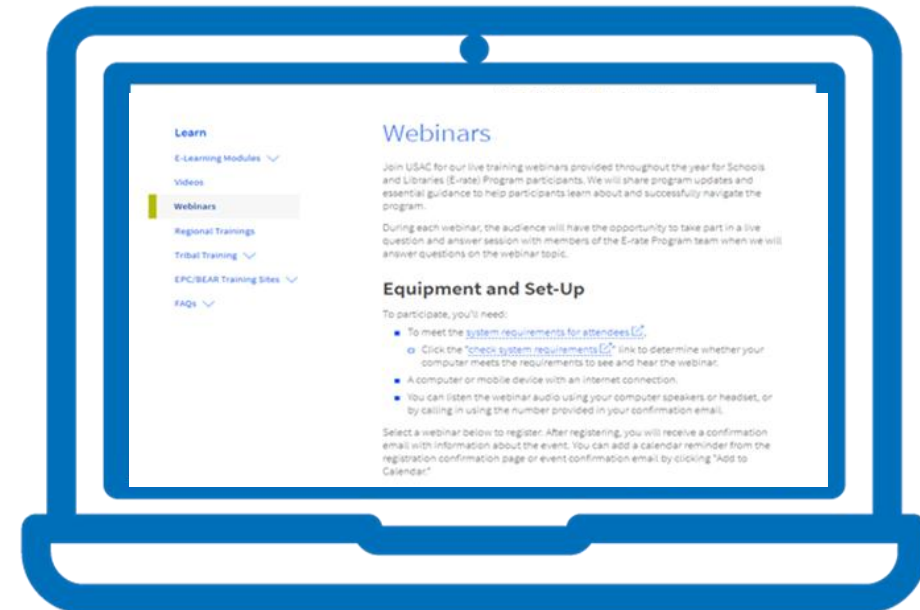
# Agenda

- Q&A Session Overview and Purpose
- FY2026 Updates & Reminders
- FCC Form 470 Reminders
- Q&A Prerequisites
- Resources
- Q & A

# Q&A Session Overview and Purpose

# Q&A Session Webinar 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



# Q&A Session 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.

# Q&A Session: Prerequisites

- [E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Webinar](#)
- [Filing the FCC Form 470 and the Competitive Bidding Process Webinar](#)



# Funding Year 2026 Program Updates & Reminders

# Key Dates

- [EPC Administrative Window](#) **closed on January 16, 2026**, and applicants' profiles are now locked.
- If you have not completed your competitive bidding process yet, start now.
  - **Wednesday, March 4, 2026**, the last date that applicants can file and certify the FCC Form 470 and still wait the required minimum 28-day period.
- The Funding Year (FY) 2026 FCC Form 471 application filing window opened on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at noon E.T. and **will close on Wednesday, April 1, 2026**, at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

# FY2026 Eligible Services List (ESL)

- The FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) released the FY2026 eligible services list (ESL) Order ([DA 25-1069](#)) on December 17, 2025.
  - Amended the entries for “**Eligible Broadband Internal Connections**” to include software-based services including bug fixes, security patches, software-based technical assistance, and configuration changes.
  - Amended the bullets listed under “**Basic Maintenance of Eligible Broadband Internal Connections**” to limit configuration changes to those performed in person and deleted “Basic technical support including online and telephone-based technical support” and “Software upgrades and patches including bug fixes and security patches.”
  - Amended the language in “**eligibility limitations for basic maintenance**” to delete language related to bug fixes, security patches, and technical support.
  - Software-based services like vital bug-fixes and security updates and remote-based services like configuration changes will **no longer need to be amortized across multiple funding years** despite being entirely paid for by applicants in the first year of the multi-year license agreement. These can now be requested and paid upfront for multiple years similar to other C2 Internal Connections expenses.
  - Permit applicants to seek support for all software- and other remote-based services associated with equipment on their FCC Form 471 applications if they either sought bids for both equipment and software, or they sought bids only for equipment on the FCC Form 470, but the bid response includes both the equipment and software- or remote-based services.
    - Applicants seeking support for software- or remote-based services as internal connections in FY 2026 for services that were competitively bid as BMIC services are not violating the competitive bidding rules for this funding year.
    - USAC is directed to apply this decision to new FY 2026 funding requests and pending appeals after the effective date of this Order.
- For more information, please review the FY2026 ESL on the [Eligible Services List webpage](#).

# Select How to Invoice on FCC Form 471

- Beginning in FY2026, applicants will select the invoice method (FCC Form 472 (BEAR) or 474 (SPI)) for each FRN when submitting their FCC Form 471. The [FCC Form 471 eLearningModule \(eLM\) & User Guide](#) has been updated to reflect these changes to the FCC Form 471.
- Applicants are encouraged to discuss their selection(s) with their service provider(s) before the application is submitted, but it is the applicant's choice prior to submission of the FCC Form 471. See 47 CFR § 54.514(c) (permitting that applicant to select the invoicing method prior to the submission of the FCC Form 471).
  - Applicants can change the mode, with documentation of agreement from their service provider, through the RAL process after submitting their FCC Form 471 and before the FCDL is issued. Future EPC changes will be rolled out to allow applicants to change the invoicing mode through the FCC Form 500.

# FCC Form 470 Reminders

## File an FCC Form 470

- The applicant must file and certify an [FCC Form 470](#) to initiate the competitive bidding process.
  - Describe your desired services and requirements with sufficient specificity for service providers to be able to submit responsive bids.
  - No generic descriptions (e.g., all Digital Transmission Services).
  - You may also include additional bidding documentation such as a [Request for Proposal](#) (RFP) with your FCC Form 470.
    - RFP generically refers to any bidding document that describes the applicant's project and requested equipment and services in more detail.
  - Services requested on the FCC Form 470 and RFP **must** match.

# When to File the FCC Form 470

- The FCC Form 470 must be filed every year for services provided under tariff, on a month-to-month basis, or for those seeking new services under contract.
- It must be filed **at least** 28 days before Wednesday, March 4, 2026, before filing FCC Form 471.
  - Multi-year contracts: You **do not** need to file a new FCC Form 470 if the contract is still in effect and the costs/services are still within the terms of the establishing FCC Form 470 (but you do still need to file a new FCC Form 471 requesting E-Rate support each funding year).
  - After the contract's initial term is over, you will need to recompete the contract.
- Competitive Bidding Exemptions:
  - Category One: [Low-Cost High-Speed Internet Access](#)
  - Category Two: [Low Cost Internal Connections \(Libraries only\)](#)

# Your FCC Form 470 and FCC Form 471 Must Match

- Your FCC Form 471 must only request equipment and services cited from the FCC Form 470.
- Applicants should ensure that all equipment/services being requested on the FCC Form 471 were competitively bid via the FCC Form 470.
- If you bid for two Category Two (C2) service types on your FCC Form 470 and invoice USAC for three C2 service types, this implies that additional information, other than what was competitively bid for, may have influenced the selection of service provider.
  - This discrepancy **cannot** be corrected after competitive bidding ends.
  - You are allowed to select all three service types on your FCC Form 470 if you are unsure of what service types will be provided.
  - To avoid a competitive bidding violation, if there is time before the FCC Form 471 deadline, you would need to recertify a new FCC Form 470 with the additional service type, wait an additional 28 days, and select a service provider **after** the updated 28th day.

# FCC Form 471 eLearning Module (eLM) & EPC User Guide

- Link to FCC Form eLM.
- Module 1 on the eLM guides users on how to file their FCC Form 471.
- The system guided instructions show applicants how to submit their form in EPC and includes sample forms for each category of service.

The image displays two overlapping screenshots from the Universal Service Administrative Co. (USAC) system. The left screenshot shows the 'Interactive User Guide and eLearning Module (eLM)' interface. A sidebar menu on the left lists various modules, with 'Module 1: Beginning the FCC Form 471' highlighted in a red box. The main content area features a video player with the title 'How to File the FCC Form 471' and the USAC logo. The right screenshot shows the EPC (Electronic Procurement Center) user interface. The top navigation bar includes 'News', 'Tasks (9)', 'Records', 'Reports', and 'Actions'. The main content area is titled 'FCC Form 471' and shows the 'Narrative' section for 'Little Red House'. Below the narrative section, the 'Invoicing Method' section is highlighted with a red box. It contains two radio button options: 'Applicant - FCC Form 472 (BEAR Form)' and 'Service Provider - FCC Form 474 (SPI Form)'. At the bottom of the form, there are buttons for 'BACK', 'CANCEL', 'SAVE & VIEW FRN(S)', and 'SAVE & ADD/MANAGE FRN LINE ITEMS'.

# Resources

- [Eligible Services Overview Webpage](#)
- [Eligible Services List](#)
- [Fiber – Summary Overview](#)
- [Competitive Bidding Page](#)
- [Competitive Bidding Infographic](#)
- [Competitive Bidding FAQs](#)
- [28-Day Waiting Period Page](#)
- [How to File an FCC Form 470 eLM](#)
- [Applicant Process Page](#)
- [Service Provider Process Page](#)
- [Document Retention](#)
- [FCC Form 471 Filing page](#)
- [FCC Form 471 eLM](#)
- [FCC Form 471 Download Tool](#)
- [FCC Form 471 Submission Checklist](#)
- [E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process Webinar](#)
- [FCC Form 470 Services Guiding Statements Table \(FY2025-2026\)](#)



# Additional Resources

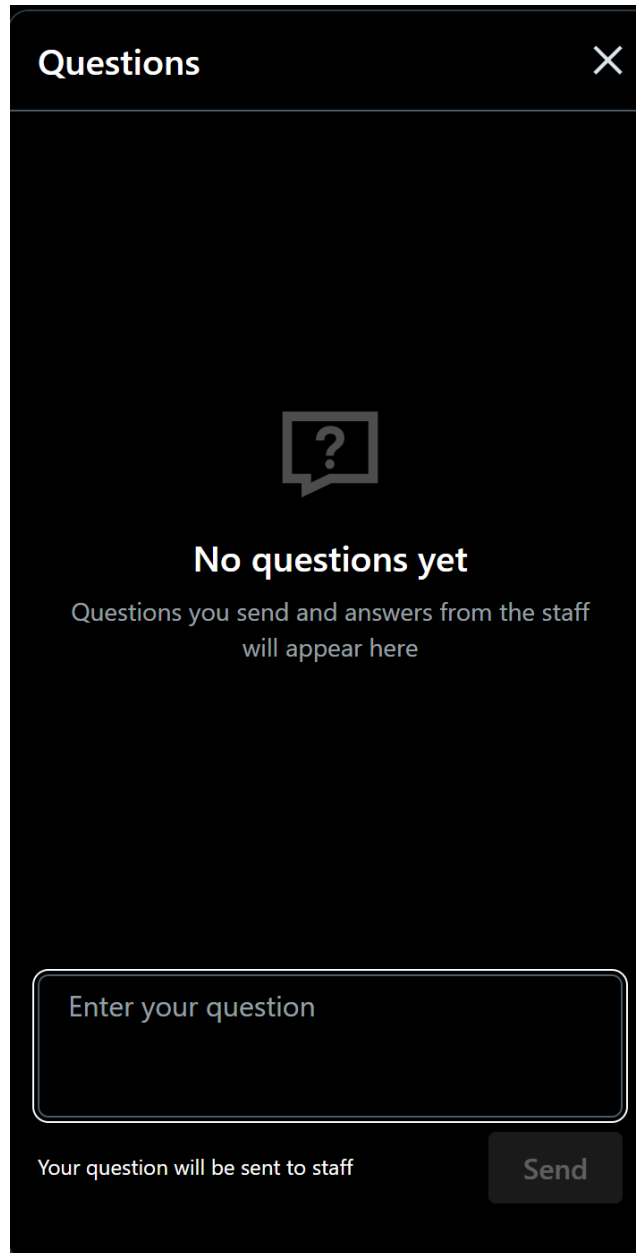
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  - Program announcements
- [Webinars](#)
  - Watch past webinars and register for upcoming trainings
- [eLearning Modules \(eLMs\)](#)
  - Learn how to navigate various aspects of the E-Rate program
- [Review Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

# Live Q&A

Submit your questions  
**about today's topics:**

- Competitive Bidding
- Requesting Bids
- File and Certify an FCC Form 470
- Open and Fair Process
- 28-Day Waiting Period
- Select a Service Provider
- File and Certify an FCC Form 471



Questions

?

**No questions yet**

Questions you send and answers from the staff will appear here

Enter your question

Your question will be sent to staff

Send

## Q&A Tips

- ✓ Type your queries into the “Questions” box in your webinar control panel.
- ✓ Write in full sentences.
- ✓ Ask one question at a time.
- ✓ Click the box to expand it and see all the written answers.

**Questions?**

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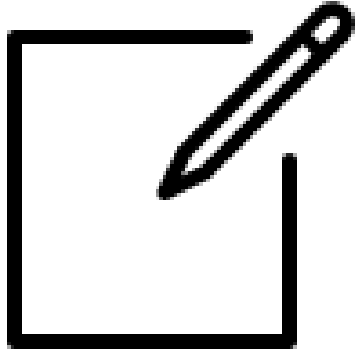
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# Take Our Survey



- 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 one to two business days.
- We appreciate your feedback!

**Thank You!**





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Administrative Co.