Schools and Libraries Cybersecurity Pilot Program Newsletter

July 25, 2024

This fall, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will open the window to apply for the Schools and Libraries Cybersecurity Pilot Program (Pilot Program). The three-year Pilot Program allocates up to $200 million in Universal Service Fund support to offset the cost of cybersecurity services and equipment to protect the broadband networks and data of eligible schools, libraries, and consortia of eligible schools and libraries.

Prepare for the Application

Although the FCC has not yet announced the date for the opening of the Pilot Program application window, interested schools and libraries can take the following steps now to start preparing to submit their applications:

1. Evaluate your school's, library's, or consortia's cybersecurity needs:
    o   Set goals and objectives for participation;
    o   Identify risks the Pilot Program can help address;
    o   Evaluate your cybersecurity experience and expertise;
    o   Identify a designated cybersecurity officer or senior staff member; and
    o   Develop a list of services and equipment to be purchased.
2. Obtain necessary registrations or confirm that the necessary registrations are up to date, including:
    1. FCC Registration Number (FRN);
    2. USAC Billed Entity Number (BEN);
    3. E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) User Registration; and
    4. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI);

Applicants on Red Light Not Eligible for Pilot Program

Applicants will not be considered for the Pilot Program if they are on Red Light or share a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) with an entity on Red Light on the date that the FCC

Form 484 application filing window opens. To confirm that your entity is eligible to apply to participate in the Pilot Program, visit the FCC Red Light Status webpage. If your entity is on Red Light, you must pay the amount(s) owed and resolve the Red Light status prior to the date the Pilot Program application window opens.

Consultant Limit on EPC Accounts

Due to the sensitive nature of the data being collected in the Pilot Program, USAC will limit the number of consultants that can access the Pilot Program portal. For Pilot Program applicants and participants that already participate in the universal service programs, the consultants listed in their Administrative Account profiles will be transferred to the Pilot Program portal prior to opening of the FCC Form 484 application window. However, applicants and participants must select the specific consultant(s) they wish to work with during the Pilot Program and must grant them access to their EPC accounts and the Pilot Program portal. Schools, libraries, and consortia that choose to work with consultants will be limited to three designated consultants per applicant account.

These consultant requirements are unique to the Pilot Program and will not impact the E-Rate user experience or account management for E-Rate in EPC.

Upcoming Trainings

USAC will host a Pilot Program overview webinar on Tuesday, August 6 at 3 p.m. ET. This webinar will share additional information about the program, including answers to frequently asked questions following the Get Ready webinars.

Register here for the August 6 webinar.

Potential applicants who are new to E-Rate and the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) can join USAC on Tuesday, August 13 at 3 p.m. ET for an E-Rate and EPC for Beginners webinar.

Register here for the August 13 webinar.

On Tuesday, August 20 at 3 p.m. ET, USAC will host a webinar to review the information required to complete the FCC Form 484 Part One. This webinar will walk through the Form 484 Part One questions and answer questions related to the information being gathered.

Register here for the August 20 webinar.

Resources

To learn more about the cybersecurity issues facing schools and libraries, as well as free or low cost resources that can help, visit the Department of Homeland

Security's [Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency](#) website and the Education Department's [Cybersecurity Preparedness](#) website.

To learn more about the Pilot Program, including its timeline and trainings, visit [USAC's Cybersecurity Pilot Program webpage](#) and sign up for [Pilot Program emails](#). Interested applicants can also visit the FCC's [Cybersecurity webpage](#).

Need Help? Contact Us!
Visit our [Contact USAC](#) webpage for contact information.