Universal Service Administrative Co.

RHC Connect User Guide – Letter of Agency (LOA) and Letter of Exemption (LOE)

Updated as of November 2026

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General Information

Letter of Agency

A Letter of Agency (LOA) is required for health care providers (HCP) that are not owned or controlled by the consortium leader. The LOA authorizes the consortium leader to file forms and act on behalf of the participating site(s) in matters related to the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program. The LOA is written by the participating HCP and is addressed to the consortium leader (also called "lead entity").

Requirements

The LOA must include the following:

- Name of the entity filing the application (i.e., lead entity or consortium leader).
- Name of HCP/consortium member authorizing the lead entity to file the application on its behalf.
- Physical location or address of the HCP/consortium member site(s).
- Specific timeframe the LOA covers (i.e., the start date and end date).
- Signature, title, and contact information (including mailing address, phone number, and email address) of an official authorized to act on behalf of the HCP/consortium member.
    - **For HCPs on Tribal lands:** If the health care facility is a contract facility run solely by a Tribal nation, the appropriate Tribal leader, such as a Tribal chairperson, president, governor, or chief, must also sign the LOA, unless health care responsibilities have been delegated to another Tribal government representative.
- Date of signature.
- Type of services covered by the LOA; and
- Relationship of each HCP seeking support to the lead entity filing the application on their behalf.

Recommendations

USAC recommends that the LOA:

- Is submitted on the letterhead of the participating health system or consortium member.
- Include a statement authorizing the consortium leader to submit the FCC Form 460 (Eligibility and Registration Form), submit the FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form), prepare and post the request for proposal (RFP), submit the FCC Form 462

(Funding Request Form), and manage invoicing and payments on behalf of the consortium member.
- Include the HCP number(s) with the physical location or address of the HCP/consortium member site(s).

Tips for Including a Third-Party Authorization (TPA)

An LOA can also serve as a third-party authorization (TPA) between consortium members and third parties by including the following language:

- "[HCP Name] hereby authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to act on its behalf…"
- "[HCP Name] authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to: [HCP Name] authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to submit the FCC Form 461…"
- "By this Letter of Agency, [HCP Name] authorizes [Consortium Leader Name] and its agents to make the certifications included in the FCC Form 461…"

Letter of Exemption (LOE)

For health care providers (HCP) that are owned or controlled by the consortium leader, a current (i.e., through the funding year for which funding is requested) Letter of Exemption (LOE) must be filed. The LOE authorizes the consortium leader to file forms and act on behalf of the participating site(s) in matters related to the HCF Program. The LOE is written by the participating HCP and should be addressed to "USAC review staff" or "to whom it may concern."

Requirements

The LOE should include:

- Name of the entity authorized to submit forms on behalf of the HCP/consortium member.
- Physical location or address of the HCP/consortium member site(s).
- Signature, title, and contact information (including mailing address, phone number, and email address) of the officer, director, or other employee of the consortium member submitting the LOE.
- Date of signature.
- A statement from the consortium leader verifying that the consortium leader owns and operates the member HCPs listed on the LOE document and/or that the member HCPs listed on the LOE document are ineligible sites.

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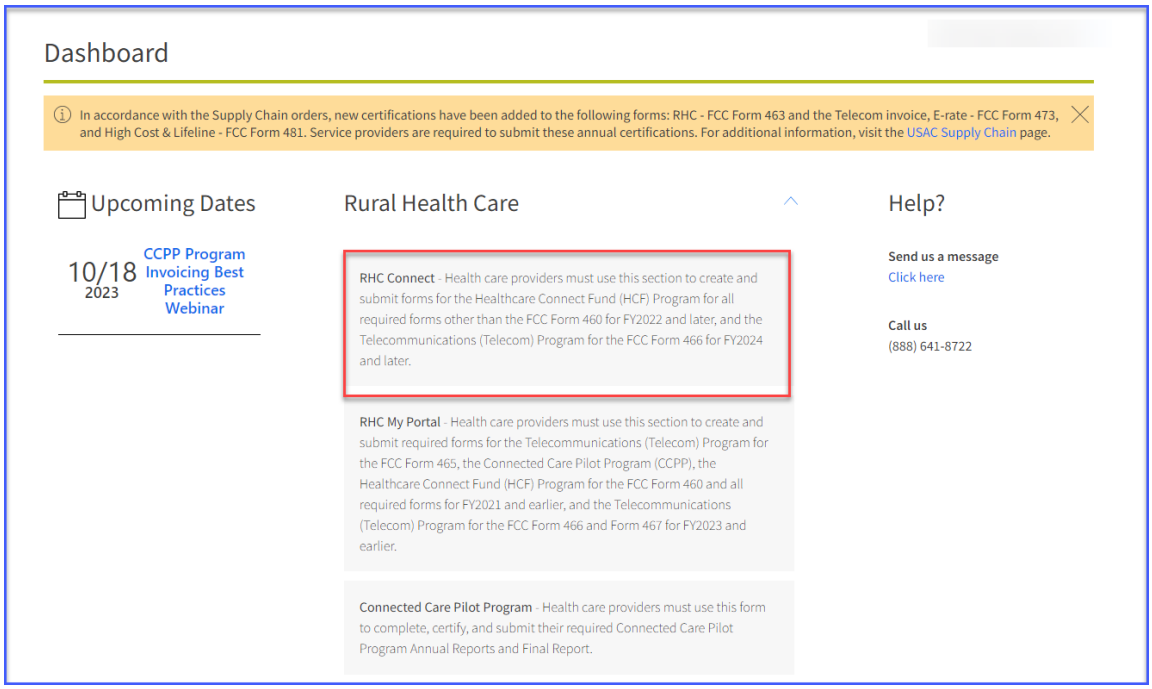
RHC Connect Walkthrough

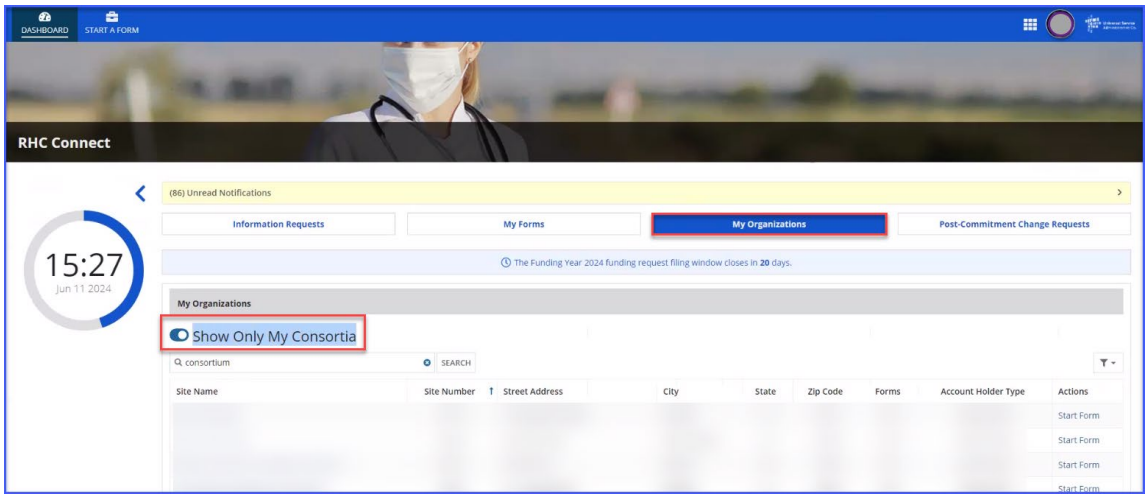
Step 1:

Log into My Portal and click on **RHC Connect**.



Step 2:

Navigate to the **My Organizations** tab on the **RHC Connect Dashboard**. All active consortia will display if the toggle beside **Show Only My Consortia** is in the closed position. To view your consortia, click on the toggle to open it.



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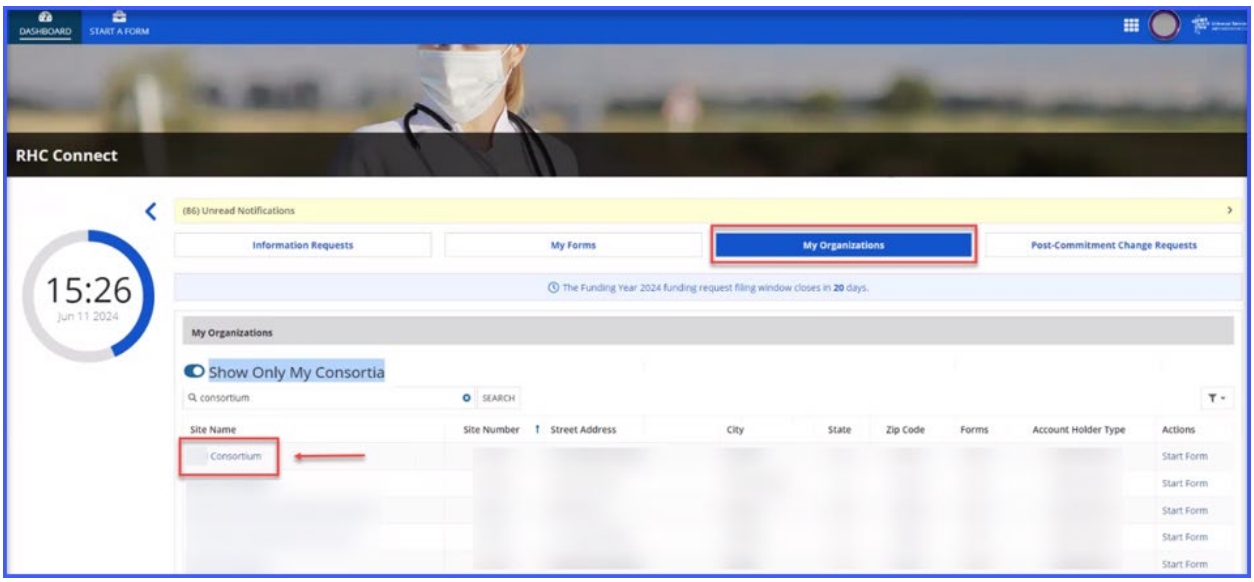
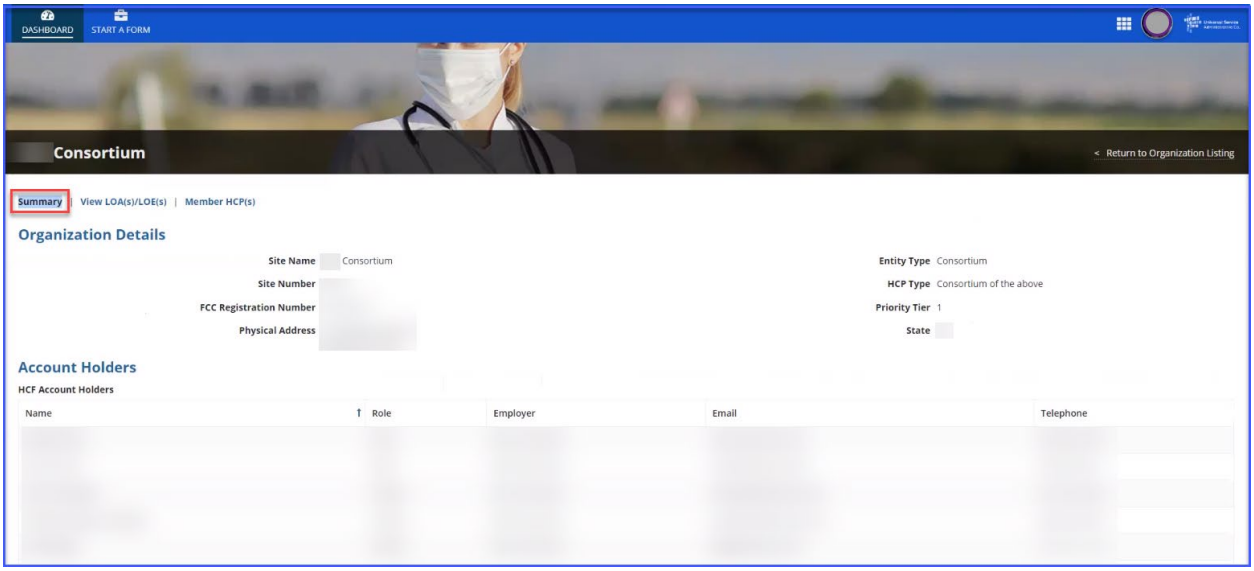
Step 3:
Select the consortium you're submitting the LOA for by clicking the hyperlink on the **Site Name**.



Step 4:
Once the hyperlink for the consortium is clicked, the **Summary** screen is displayed with all of the information about the selected consortium.



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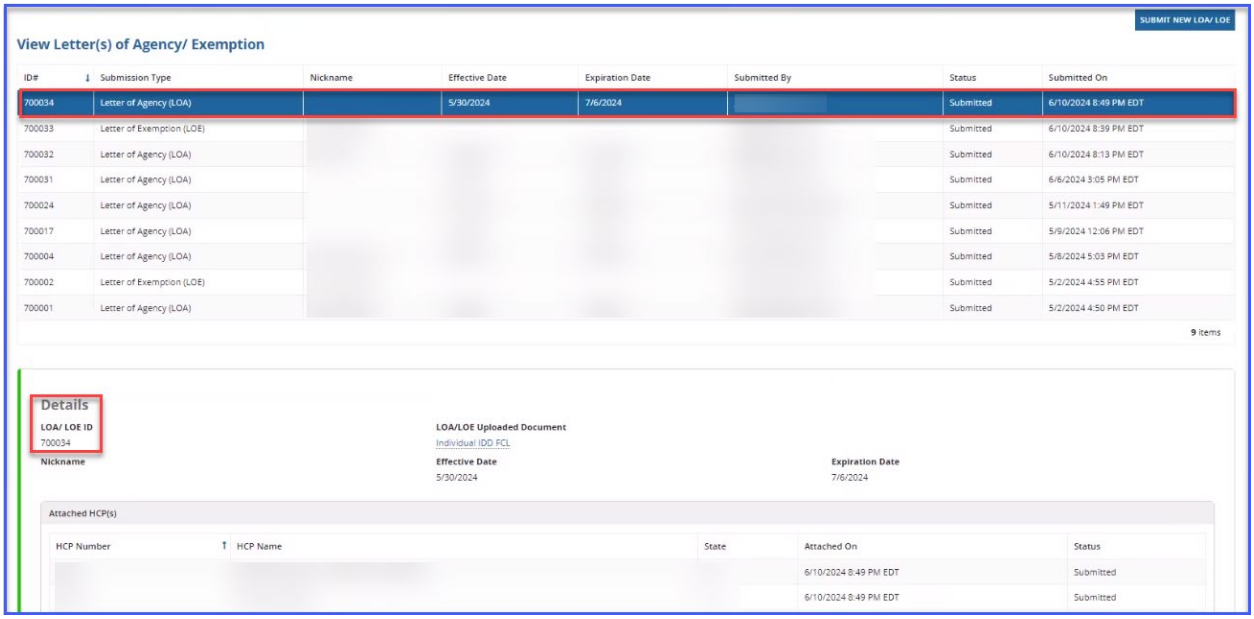
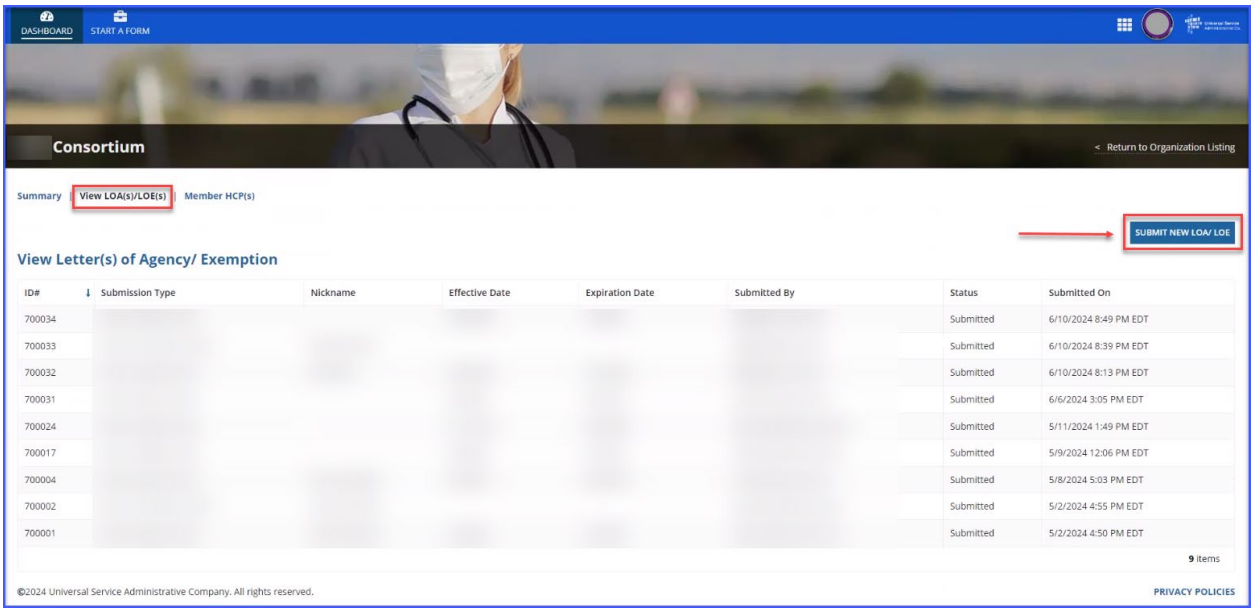
Step 5:

On the **View LOAs/LOEs** section, click on the existing LOA to view information about the LOA in the **Details** section.



Step 6:

To submit a new LOA or LOE, click the **Submit New LOA/LOE** button.



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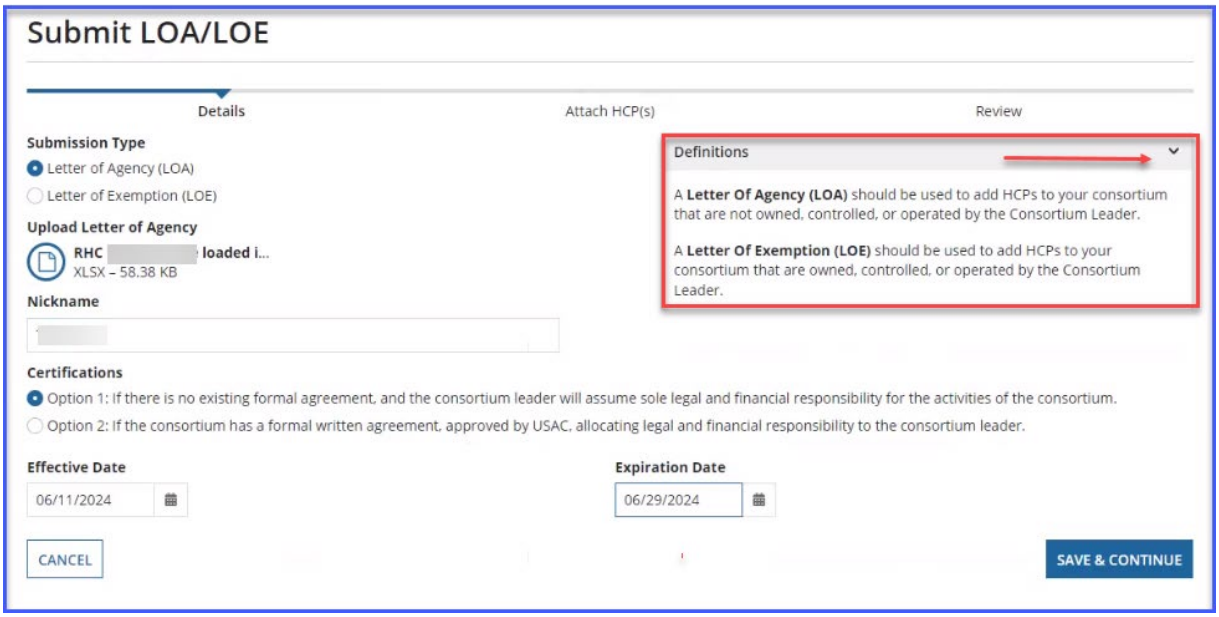
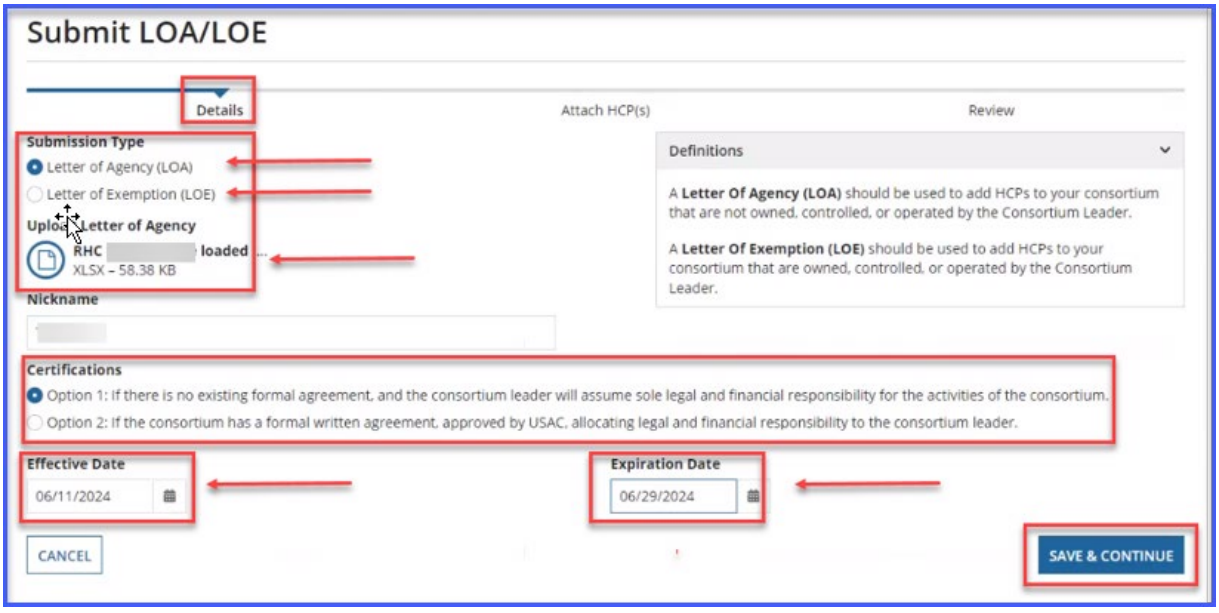
Step 7:

When the **Submit New LOA/LOE** button is clicked, this pop-up screen will appear. Read the definitions of the LOA and LOE by clicking the dropdown arrow beside **Definitions** on the **Details** screen.



Step 8:

On the **Details** screen, click the correct radio button under **Submission Type** and upload the document. Enter a nickname and select **Option 1** or **Option 2** under **Certifications**. Select the **Effective Date** and the **Expiration Date** from the dropdown calendar, then click **Save & Continue**.



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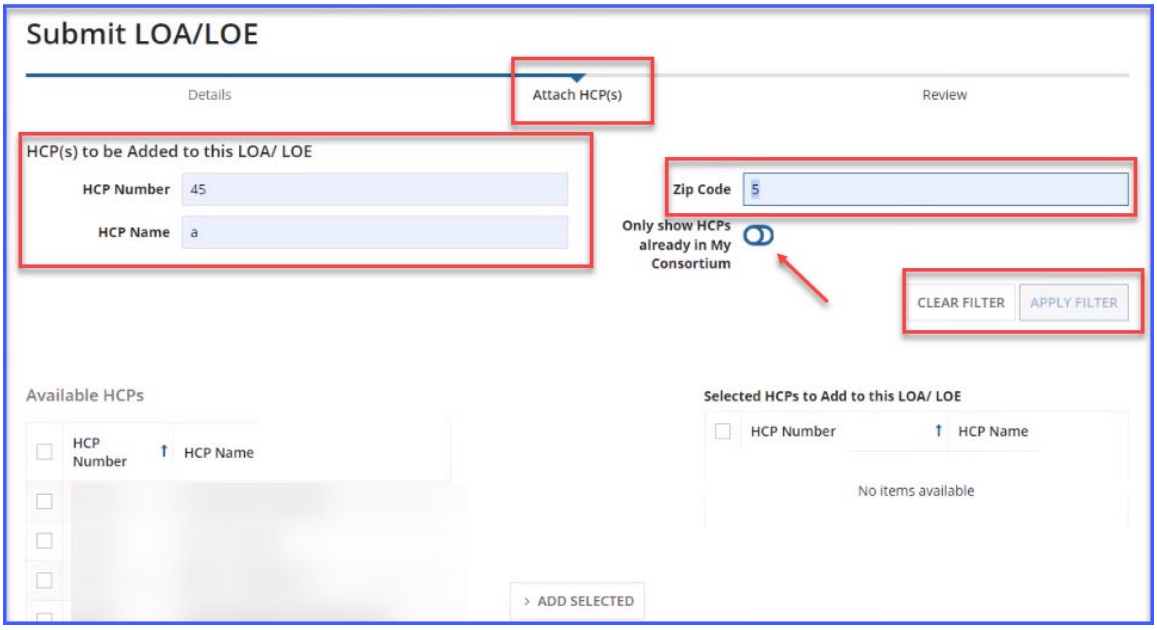
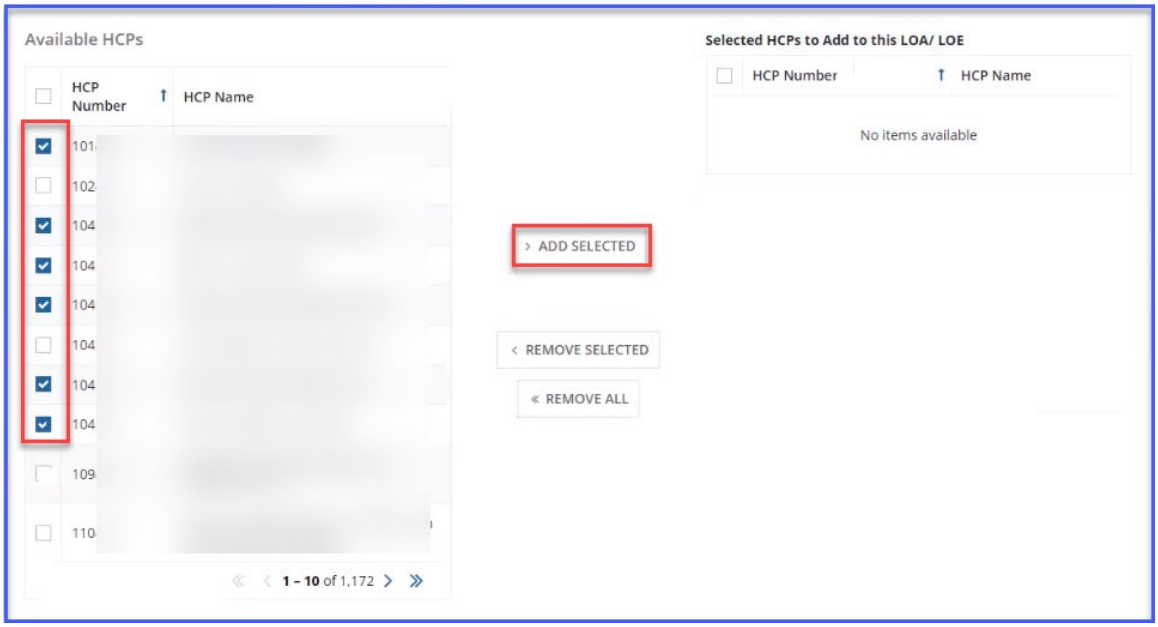
Step 9:
On the **Attach HCP(s)** screen, search for the HCPs to be added to the LOA/LOE by using the HCP number, the HCP name, or the zip code of the HCP site. Then click **Apply Filter**. A partial search may be entered. To view HCPs that are already members of the consortium, open the toggle button shown below.



Step 10:
Select the HCPs to attach, then click **Add Selected**.



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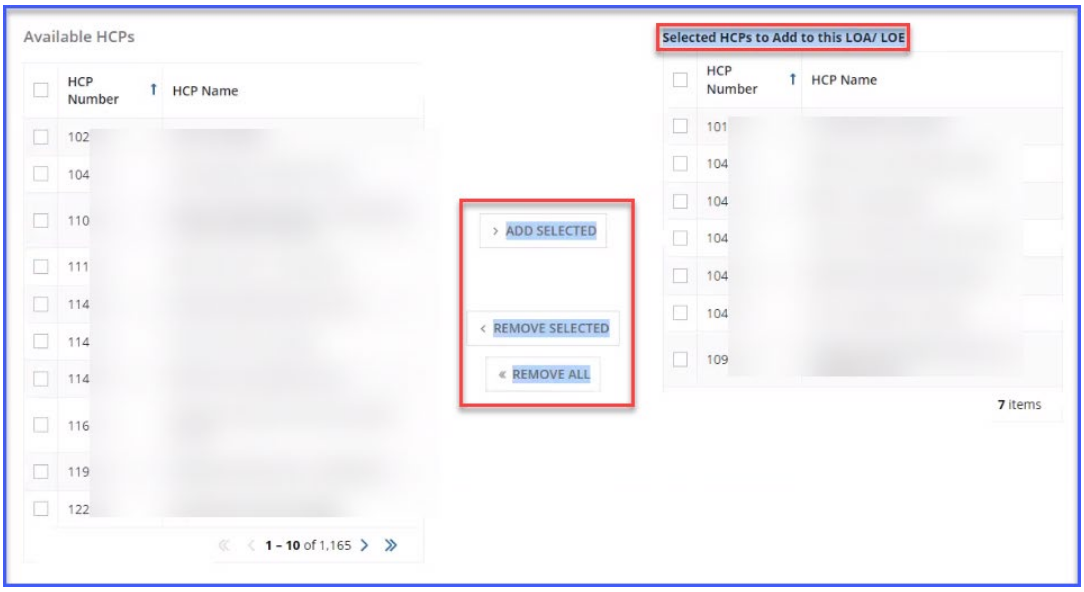
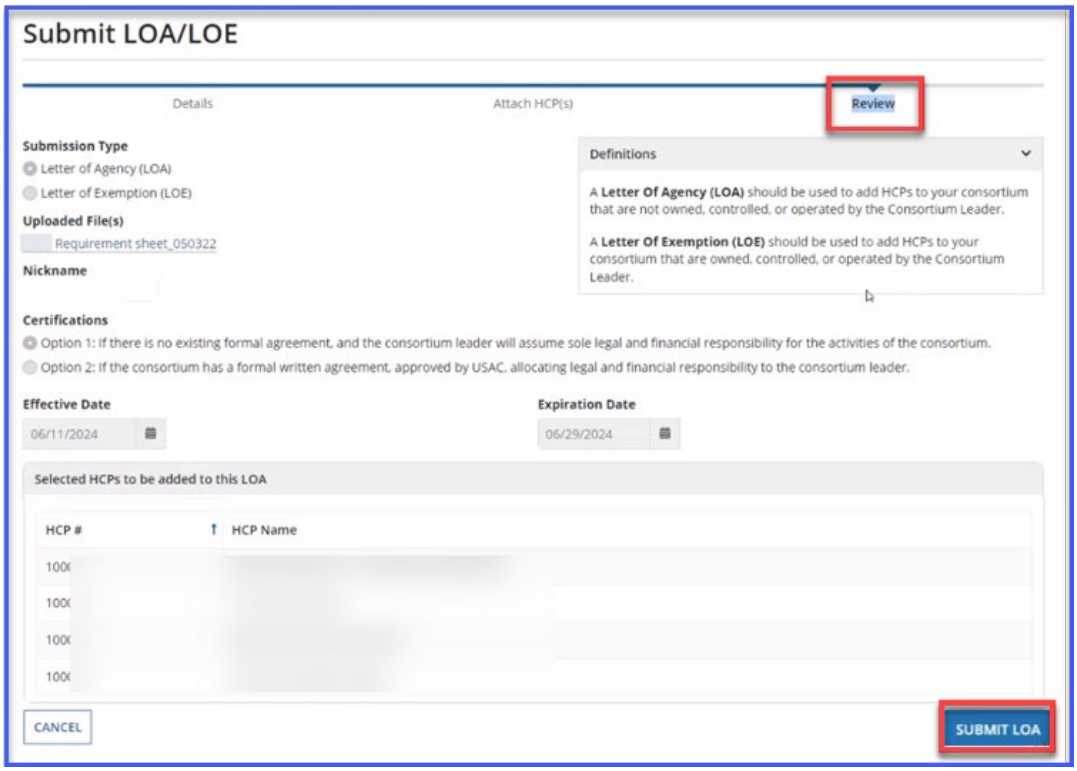
Step 11:
Selected HCPs will move to the column on the right. Click **Remove Selected** or **Remove All** if the HCP(s) was selected incorrectly. Once all HCPs are added, click **Save & Continue**.



Step 12:
On the **Review** screen, review all of the information entered, then click **Submit LOA**.

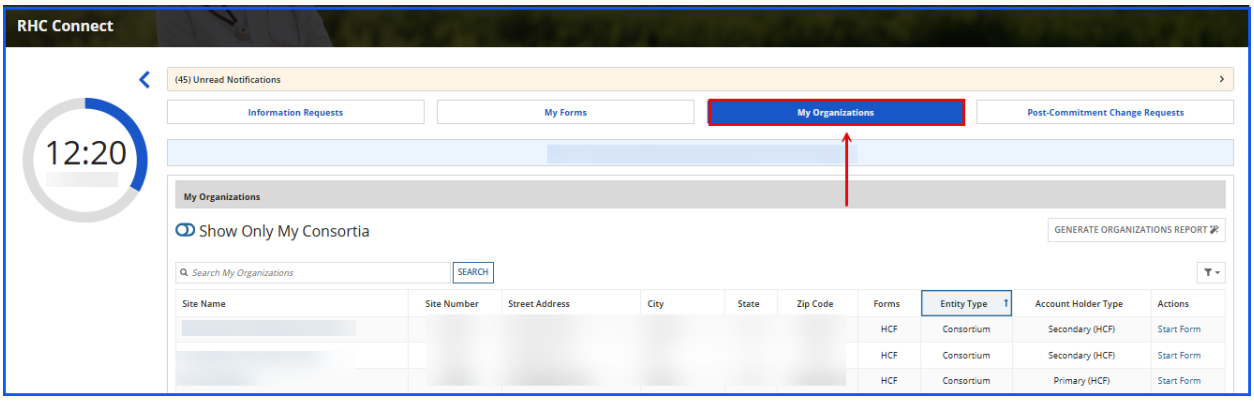


Step 13:
After submitting, you will be directed to the confirmation page. The message in the green banner confirms that the LOA/LOE was successfully submitted.



Revoking a Site from the Consortium

Step 1:
Log into RHC Connect and navigate to the **My Organizations** page.



Step 2:
Select the consortium, then navigate to the **Member HCP(s)** page.

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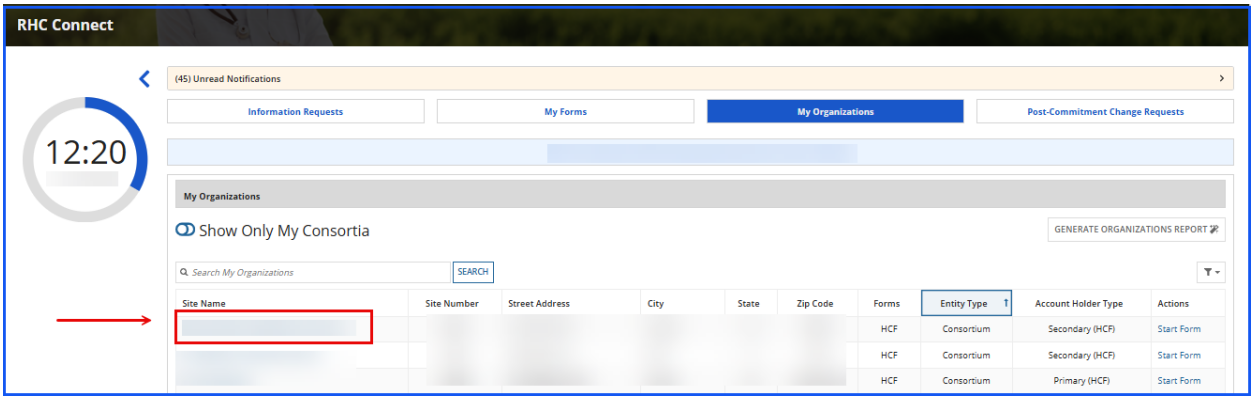
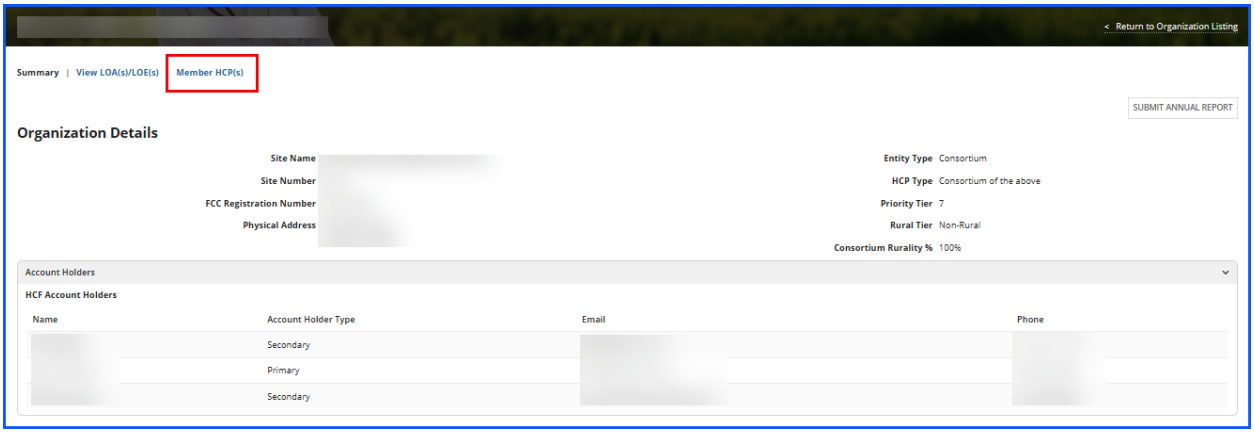
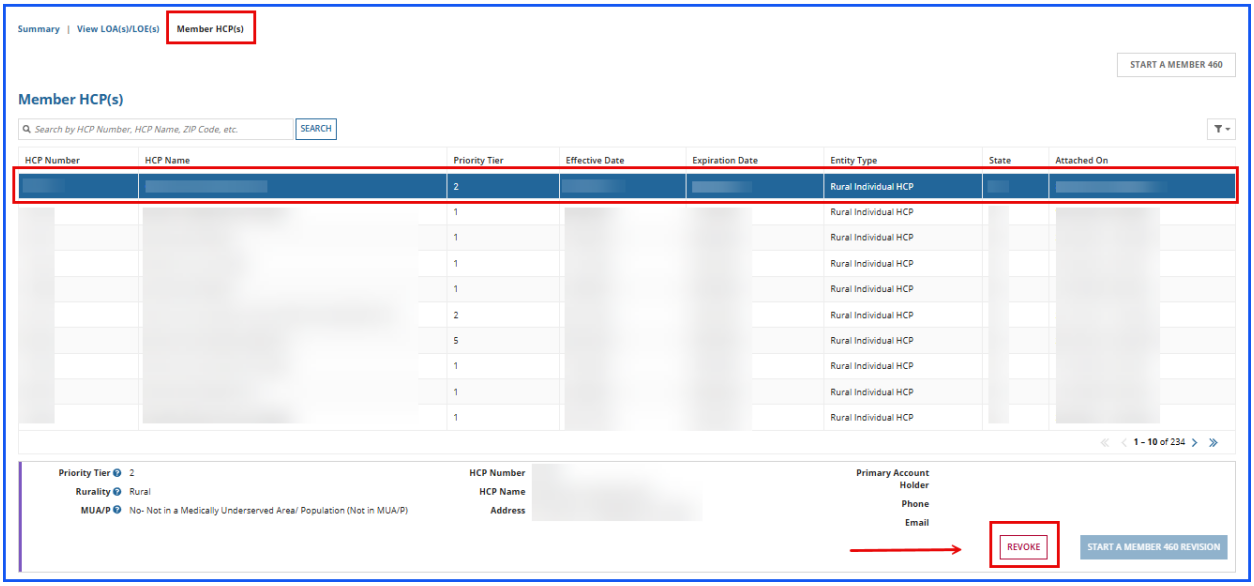




Step 3:

Select the member HCP site and click **Revoke** on the bottom left of the screen.



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Frequently Asked Questions

What changes were made from My Portal to the RHC Connect?
RHC Connect has a new look and feel that is more intuitive and user-friendly. It is easier to navigate the form for submission, and it is easier for RHC program reviewers to approve funding requests.

Did the requirements for Letters of Agency (LOA) or Letters of Exemption (LOE) change?
No, the requirements for Letters of Agency (LOA) or Letters of Exemption (LOE) did not change – only the platform changed.

Who is impacted by this change?
RHC Connect is used for FY2022 and future funding years for the HCF Program and FY2024 and forward for the Telecom Program. Connected Care Pilot Project (CCPP) projects are not impacted unless they also participate in the HCF or Telecom Program.

Resources

For more information, visit the following webpages on the USAC website:

- Letter of Agency
- Letter of Exemption
- What is a Consortium?

For questions about the Rural Health Care program, contact RHC-Assist@usac.org or the RHC Customer Service Center at (800) 453-1546 from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET Monday through Friday for assistance. Use the RHC Customer Service Center Tip Sheet to learn about what the RHC Customer Service Center can and cannot help you with.