Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program

FCC Form 461 Guide

How to submit a consortium FCC Form 461 (Request for Services).

Summary Tab

- **HCP or Consortium, Application Number, FCC Registration Number, HCP Address, and Funding Priority** are prepopulated fields based on information from the FCC Form 460. If any of this prepopulated inform is incorrect, an FCC Form 460 revision must be submitted to correct the site information.
- **Application Nickname** is a nickname for the form that should be entered to easily identify this form in the future.
- **Funding Year** is a required field. Select the funding year for which support is sought from the dropdown options. A funding year runs from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.
  - Note: If requesting a multi-year funding commitment, enter the first funding year for which funding will be requested. The applicant will use the FCC Form 462 to indicate whether it is requesting a multi-year funding commitment.
- Under the **Select Participating Sites** section, select the health care provider (HCP) numbers for all member sites that are part of this request for services from the drop-down menu. This includes all eligible HCP sites, and ineligible sites (including ineligible HCP sites, off-site data centers, and off-site administrative offices). The applicant will only be able to select sites that have been associated with the consortium through the consortium's FCC Form 460 and those sites which the consortium has obtained a Letter of Agency (LOA). The consortium may include all or a subset of the consortium member sites as part of a request for services.

Requested Services Tab

- **Add all services being requested.** To add a service, click the "Add Requested Services" hyperlink, and then select the service in the dropdown menu or select "Other" and type in the description of the service.
  - Enter a bandwidth range for each service where bandwidth is required. For services where the bandwidth fields are enabled, enter in the number of Mbps for **minimum download speed, maximum download speed, minimum upload speed,** and **maximum upload speed**.
  - Answer yes or no in the column on the right to indicate if **the applicant is seeking bids for similar services**.
- Answer the questions about off-site data centers and off-site administrative offices.
  - If "Yes" is selected, a drop-down menu will appear. Select the off-site data center or off-site administrative office from the drop-down menu or select "Other" and provide details.

Dates and Timing Tab

- Enter the desired service contract length. "Up to" or "equal to" may be selected from the drop-down menu if multiple contract lengths will be considered.
- Answer yes or no to the following questions:
  - Will the HCP consider bids with contract extension language?
  - Will the HCP consider bids for month-to-month contracts?
- Enter the amount of time the request for services should be posted. A minimum of 28 days is required per program rules (47 CFR 54.622 (g)).
- Enter the number of days the applicant expects to evaluate the bids received after the end of the posting period.
  - Note: The expected bid evaluation period is not part of the allowable contract selection date (ACSD) calculation.

- **Posting Start Date** is the requested date for FCC Form 461 and associated documents to be posted on the USAC website. This date may be revised during review to the actual date the documents are posted.
- **Posting End Date** is a prepopulated field. The posting end date defaults to the minimum requirement of 28 days. This field is updated based on the number entered in "Number of days" USAC should post.

Bid Evaluation Tab

- A **bid evaluation** matrix, or a list of weighted evaluation criteria that will be used to evaluate bids, is required (47 CFR 54.622 (d)). Select the criterion or criteria (or select "Other" and add a description if the criteria aren't listed) that will be used to select the most "cost-effective" bid received as a result of this request for services. The applicant must then assign weights (with total weight equaling 100%).
  - **IMPORTANT:** Cost (price) must be a primary factor but need not be the only primary factor. However, no single factor may receive a weight greater than cost.
  - Some examples of other evaluation criteria include bandwidth, quality of transmission, reliability, previous experience with the service provider, and technical support.
- The applicant must enter the **minimum requirement** for each criteria listed, except for cost.
- If the applicant has any factors that they will use to remove bids or bidders from consideration, answer "Yes" to the question and list them in the space provided. If there are no disqualification factors, answer "No".

Main Contact Tab

- Select the appropriate point of contact for potential vendors from the dropdown options. The request for services contact is the person that will answer all questions regarding the FCC Form 461 posting. This contact should be able to provide additional technical details or answer specific questions from potential vendors about the requested services. The contact may be (1) the Project Coordinator; (2) an Assistant Project Coordinator, or (3) a Tertiary Account Holder.
  - All contact information will be pre-populated with the contact information provided on the FCC Form 460.

RFP and Summary Tab

- Answer "Yes" or "No" to the following questions:
  - Is the HCP likely to request more than $100,000 in program support for this request for services?
  - Do state, Tribal, or local procurement rules require the HCP to include an RFP with this request for services application?
  - Will the HCP be including a [Request for Proposal (RFP)](#) with this application?
    - If "Yes," upload the RFP.
- Provide a summary of the request for services. If an RFP is attached, summarize the document.
- For more information about what to include in an RFP, download the [RFP Checklist](#).
- Applicants **must** submit an RFP with the FCC Form 461 if one or more of the following apply:
  - The applicant is required to issue an RFP under applicable state, Tribal, or local procurement rules or regulations.
  - The consortium is seeking support for infrastructure (i.e., HCP-owned facilities) as well as services. Note that applicants seeking support for long-term capital investments, such as HCP-constructed infrastructure or fiber IRUs, must also seek bids in the same RFP from vendors who propose to meet those needs via services provided over vendor-owned facilities for a time period comparable to the life of the proposed capital investment.
  - The applicant elects to use an RFP in the competitive bidding process even though none of the above three criteria apply.
  - **Note:** Applicants that include a particular vendor's name, brand, product, or service in the RFP must also use the words "or equivalent" in the description in order to avoid any potential competitive bidding violations, and ensure the process remains fair and open to all bidders.

Additional Documentation tab

- **Additional Documentation** is optional. Upload any additional documentation by clicking "Add Document," selecting Document Type from the dropdown, and uploading documentation for the FCC Form 461.
  - Consortium applicants must upload at minimum a Network Plan.
  - If the applicant has an aggregate purchasing arrangement, the applicant must provide full details of any arrangement involving the purchasing of a service or services and/or equipment as part of an aggregated purchase with other entities or individuals. Upload this information as a supporting document. (47 CFR 54.622 (e) (2))

Declaration of Assistance Tab

- Answer the question "Have any consultants, service providers, or any other outside experts, whether paid or unpaid, aided in the preparation of the FCC Forms 460 or 461, RFP, bid evaluation, or network plan?" Indicate whether any assistance was received with the application. If "No" is selected, continue to the next tab.
- If "Yes" is selected, list the contact information for all consultants, service providers, and outside experts that assisted in preparing any part of the FCC Forms 460, 461, RFP, bid evaluation, or network plan is required. If the FCC Form 461 is submitted by a Tertiary Account Holder, their information will be prepopulated in this section.
- Click "**Add Contact**" to enter each person's **Name, Title, Employer, Nature of the Relationship, State, Email and Telephone Number.**

Certifications tab

- Certifications are required fields. All certifications must be checked before the form can be submitted.

Signature tab

- The information on the signature block is prepopulated based on login credentials.
- Sign the form using the submitter's full name as it appears in RHC Connect.
- A third-party (e.g., consultant) is prohibited from certifying, signing, or submitting the FCC Form 461, unless USAC receives, prior to the submission of the form, a written, dated, and signed third party authorization (TPA) from the relevant officer, director, or other authorized employee stating that the individual HCP accepts all potential liability from any errors, omissions, or misrepresentations on the forms and/or documents being submitted by the third party.