

From: USAC Rural Health Care Program
To:
Subject: RHC Program News for February 2018
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Latest news from the RHC Program

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RHC Program News for February

Here are all the latest news, timely resources, and helpful reminders for the month of February! Included below are updates on FY2017, helpful guidance for completing your funding request, and important tips for FY2018.

Update on FY2017 Commitments

FY2017 funding commitment decisions and letters have not yet been released; funding requests are still in review. [This page](#) will be updated when more information is available. Note: Any applicants

seeking funding in FY2018 must submit funding requests. Be sure to submit during the FY2018 filing window (February 1 - May 31, 2018).

FY2018 Filing Window Open Now!

The FY2018 filing window opens today, February 1, 2018. To be considered eligible for funding, you must submit your funding requests (FCC Forms 462 for the HCF Program and FCC Forms 466 in the Telecom Program) by the close of the window on May 31, 2018 at 11:59 p.m. ET. Funding requests submitted after May 31, 2018 will be automatically denied. View our latest how-to guides and tip sheets to assist you during the submission process:

- [Funding request summary](#)
- Funding Request Best Practices webinar [recording](#), [slides](#), and [FAQs](#)
- [Guide for FY2017 applicants](#)
- [Urban and rural rate guidance](#) (Telecom Program only)

Were these resources helpful? Let us know what you think by completing [this short survey](#).

Read more about funding requests:

- [Individual HCPs applying in the HCF Program](#)
- [Consortia applying in the HCF Program](#)
- [HCPs applying in the Telecom Program](#)

Important Reminders for FY2018

Rural Rate Documentation in the Telecom Program

We have received some questions surrounding who can provide documentation to USAC regarding the rural rate calculation. Please keep in mind, HCPs are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all required information in support of their applications is included in the funding request submission. USAC strongly advises that all required documentation, including information in support of the rural rate calculation, accompany an application when filed to USAC. However, if the service provider deems such information proprietary or confidential, and therefore cannot provide this required documentation to the HCP for filing with USAC, the service provider can submit those documents directly to USAC. Please see further down for instructions.

If the HCP does not submit the rural rate documentation to USAC, USAC will issue an Information Request to the HCP. More details on Information Requests are below in the next section. The HCP then has the responsibility to forward that Information Request to their service provider, at which point the service provider can then reply to the Information Request directly to USAC with the relevant documents, making sure to include the funding request number (FRN) for which they are submitting.

When submitting Information Request responses to USAC, the service provider **must**:

- Inform the HCP and USAC that they are submitting on behalf of the applicant,
- Clearly communicate which FRN the submitted documentation corresponds to, and
- Ensure the submitted documentation addresses all portions of the rural rate question.

Information Requests

As we move into FY2018, the RHC Program staff wants to provide you with the resources and information necessary to submit complete and accurate forms successfully. An important reminder as you submit your FCC Form 462 or 466, please upload all required documentation with your forms. Forms submitted with incomplete or missing documentation cannot be reviewed, and RHC reviewers will reach out to account holders with a request for additional information (an "Information Request"). RHC will also reach out with Information Requests to clarify specific items related to an application.

If you receive an Information Request, you must respond to it within 14 calendar days. An

acceptable response is either (1) the information requested or (2) a request for an extension. If the information requested is submitted to USAC by the service provider please follow the previously stated guidance above. Once you respond, the reviewers will be happy to work with you to ensure that they have all the necessary documentation to complete their review. Failure to respond in some fashion within the 14 calendar day timeframe results in an automatic denial, so be sure to respond in a timely manner! Note: If the service provider submits the information requested to USAC, please follow the previously stated guidance above.)

LOA/TPAs Must Be Up to Date

In order to be considered eligible for funding in FY2018, [Letters of Agency](#) (LOA) and [Third Party Authorizations](#) (TPA) **must** be up to date through a minimum of Funding Year 2018. Be especially mindful if you are an HCP using a consultant, a consortium leader, or a consultant filing on behalf of a consortium leader. Before submitting a form, please check to ensure your authorization documents are up to date.

FCC Forms 462 and 466 submitted with expired LOAs or TPAs will result in applicants receiving Information Requests.

- Download a [Sample TPA](#) or [Sample LOA](#)
- For more information about submitting LOAs, please see the [submission guide](#).

Have an expired TPA and have questions on what to do?

- Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org
- Subject line: Updated TPA for [Name of legal entity of HCP]

Have an expired LOA and have questions on what to do?

- Please upload the updated LOA within My Portal. Please see this [submission guide](#) for instructions.

FY2018 Contracts

For either the HCF or Telecom programs--as you go through the competitive bidding process and select your service provider, make sure that you are meeting the appropriate contract requirements for the type of funding you are seeking (i.e., single year, multi-year, evergreen contract), and that the contract is signed by both the HCP/consortium and service provider.

FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making Comment Period Ends February 2

The FCC published their proposed rule in the Federal Register on January 3, 2018. Anyone can submit a comment to the FCC on this proposed rule. The comment period ends February 2, 2018, with reply comments due March 5, 2018. Please see [this link](#) for more information.

Contract & Consortia Resources Coming Soon!

The RHC Program team is working to create helpful guides regarding the contract submission process and how-to sheets for HCF Program consortia. Do you have a particular topic you'd like more information on? [Let us know!](#)

Questions or Suggestions? Contact Us!

Suggestions for newsletter topic suggestions? Submit them to RHC-Assist@usac.org.
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RHC Program questions? Contact us [via email](#) or call (800) 453-1546.

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