

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

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## **RHC Program News for September**

Below is the latest news, timely resources, and helpful reminders for the month of September. It includes important information about funding year (FY) 2017 consortia annual reports and information about new resources and trainings.

### **[FY2017 Consortia Annual Reports Due September 30, 2018](#)**

Per Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program rules, all consortia receiving Rural Health Care (RHC)

Program funding are required to submit an annual report to USAC using an Excel template (available for download on the [USAC website](#)) to supplement information collected in RHC Program application forms. The reports for FY2017 (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018) are due September 30, 2018.

**Who Needs to Submit the Annual Report?** HCF Program consortia must submit an annual report for each funding year in which the consortium received HCF support and for the life of a supported facility for which the consortium received large upfront payments. RHC Pilot Program consortia must submit an annual report for each year in which the consortium receives Pilot support.

For instructions on how to complete and submit the FY2017 Annual Report, please visit our [website](#).

### RHC Program Funding Cap Order

On June 25, 2018, the FCC issued an [Order](#) that adopted rules to: (1) increase the annual RHC Program funding cap to \$571 million and apply it to FY2017; (2) annually adjust the RHC Program funding cap for inflation, beginning with FY2018; and (3) establish a process to carry-forward unused funds from past funding years for use in future funding years. The rules became effective upon publication of the Order in the Federal Register on June 29, 2018.

Watch the [2018 RHC Program Funding Cap Order Information Webinar](#) and download the [FAQ Sheet](#).

**What this means for FY2017:** Due to the increase in the RHC Program funding cap for FY2017, all previously approved FY2017 funding requests will receive 100% of their approved funding amount. The proration that was previously applied to FY2017 funding commitments has been removed, and revised Funding Commitment Letters (FCLs) have been issued via email. If you have not received your revised FY2017 FCL or have questions about it, please contact [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org).

Please log in to My Portal and make sure you are up to date with your FY2017 invoices. If you have questions about the invoicing process, please look at our program invoicing pages for additional information: [HCF Invoicing Page](#) and [Telecom Invoicing Page](#).

**What this means for FY2018:** As noted in the FCC's 2018 RHC Program Funding Cap Order, the RHC Program funding cap for FY2018 will be \$581 million, adjusted for inflation. As a reminder, the FY2018 filing window closed on Friday, June 29, 2018. Applicants are currently unable to submit funding requests for FY2018.

**Access Your Revised FCL in My Portal:** The Revised FY2017 FCLs you received via email are now also available in My Portal. Download the [How to Find Your FCL in My Portal Tip Sheet](#) for more information on accessing your FCL.

### Important Reminders for FY2018

#### Register for RHC 101 - An Introduction to the RHC Program

Are you or a colleague interested in learning more about the RHC Program? On September 26, 2018, we will be hosting an RHC Program 101: An Introduction to the RHC Program webinar for beginners. This webinar covers the basics of the program including eligibility requirements and how to get started. [Register today!](#)

#### Appeal Decisions

USAC is no longer sending appeal decisions via postal mail. If you have appealed a decision made by USAC, you will receive your appeal decision via email. Applicants seeking Commission review of a decision issued by USAC must follow the Commission's regular [appeal procedures](#).

#### New Extended RHC Help Desk Hours!

As of August 1<sup>st</sup>, the RHC Help Desk hours were extended from 8:00 a.m. ET – 5:00 p.m. ET to 8:00 a.m. ET – 8:00 p.m. ET. We hope these longer operational hours will help meet the needs of our

stakeholders on both coasts, and, in an effort to provide more one-on-one guidance, we are increasing the number of dedicated staff responding to phone calls and emails. Our goal with this expansion is to deliver thorough, helpful answers and guidance to you, faster.

### **What to Do if You Receive an Information Request**

As you submit your FCC Form 462 or 466, please upload all required documentation with your forms. FCC Forms submitted with incomplete or missing documentation will not be reviewed, and RHC reviewers will reach out to all account holders (the primary and all secondary and tertiary account holders associated with that HCP) with a request for additional information ("Information Request"). Information Requests are sent to collect any missing documentation, address deficiencies, or to ask clarifying questions about the FCC Form. If you receive an Information Request, you must respond to it within 14 calendar days. Once you respond, the RHC reviewers will work with you, to the extent they can, to ensure that they have all the necessary documentation to complete their review. Failure to respond within the 14 calendar day timeframe will result in an automatic denial, so be sure to meet that deadline!

### **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 FY2018. 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](#)

### **Questions or Suggestions? Contact Us!**

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

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