

**From:** Rural Health Care Program  
**To:**  
**Subject:** [External Sender] RHC Program News for April 2019  
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## RHC Program News for April 2019

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### Latest News

#### **FY2019 Funding Cap is \$593.7M**

On Friday, March 8, 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced the FY2019 funding cap for the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program is \$593,782,000. This new cap represents a 2.2% inflation-adjusted increase in the \$581,000,000 cap from FY2018. Read Public Notice DA 17-190 [here](#).

## **My Portal Update Impacting Internet Explorer 10**

Starting April 30, 2019, My Portal will no longer be supported in Internet Explorer 10 (IE10), and you will be unable to access My Portal with this browser. Please upgrade your browser to one of these supported browsers:

- Microsoft Internet Explorer 11
- Microsoft Edge 14 and later
- Firefox 46 and later
- Chrome 51 and later
- Safari 10 and later

If you are having trouble upgrading your browser, please check with your company's IT/Help Desk team or IT support group for assistance. Your company's information security policies may require the upgrade to be performed by your company's IT/Help Desk team.

## **Coming Soon! RHC Website Updates**

Over the next few months, RHC will be refreshing the content on our public website, [usac.org/rhc](http://usac.org/rhc). Our goal is to make information easier to find and understand for all of our applicants, and changes will include consolidating information and simplifying the content. Don't worry! We will share more information about any changes before they happen.

## **FY2019 Information**

### **FY2019 Filing Window Closes May 31, 2019!**

The initial filing window period for FY2019 is February 1 – May 31, 2019. This means that you must submit your funding requests (FCC Forms 462 or 466) before 11:59 p.m. ET May 31, 2019 for consideration. Any funding requests submitted after this time will not be considered. We highly encourage you to submit your funding requests as soon as possible.

Prepare to submit your FY2019 Funding Request with these resources:

- January 2019 Funding Request Best Practices [Webinar and slides](#)
- [Funding Request Summary](#)
- [FY2019 Recommended Submission Dates](#)
- [Information for FY2018 and FY2019 Applicants](#)
- [Urban and Rural Rate Guide](#)

### **Submit FY2019 Request for Services Forms Now!**

Applicants applying for funding for FY2019 who are going through the competitive bidding process can submit their FCC Form 461 (HCF Program) and FCC Form 465 (Telecom Program) now!

Prepare to submit your forms with these resources:

- Webinar [Recording and Slides](#)
- Request for Services [Summary](#)
- Search Posted Service Requests: [HCF Program](#), [Telecom Program](#)
- [Request for Proposal \(RFP\) Checklist](#) (HCF Program Only)
- [Network Plan Checklist](#) (HCF Program Only)

## **FCC Form 461 Rollover for FY2019**

This year's rollover functionality is a courtesy extended to HCF applicants who completed the Request for Services or FCC Form 461 process in FY2018 and would like to use the FY2018 approved FCC Form 461 in FY2019. Those requesting the FY2018 FCC Form 461 rollover functionality must meet the following requirements:

- The FCC Form 461 must have been submitted for FY2018, and previously reviewed and approved by RHC in FY2018.
- The FY2018 FCC Form 461 and/or competitive bidding process must have complied with the FCC's competitive bidding rules.

Applicants requesting the FCC Form 461 rollover understand that their FY2019 FCC Form 462 may be denied if the FY2018 FCC Form 461 and/or competitive bidding process is found to have been in violation of the competitive bidding rules.

The rollover process will only be applied to the FCC Form 461, not the FCC Form 462. Applicants must still submit a FY2019 FCC Form 462 if they wish to apply for HCF Program funding in FY2019.

How to submit your FCC Form 461 rollover request:

- Send email to: [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org)
- Subject line of email: FCC Form 461 Rollover Request App #
- Include within the email body: HCP #, FCC Form 461 application #
- Once emailed, the rollover request may take 5-8 business days to review and process.
- If approved, your request will be confirmed via email from an RHC staff member.

## **Request for Proposal (RFP) Review**

When an RFP accompanies an FCC Form 461 submission, USAC will review the RFP to identify discrepancies and areas of potential non-compliance with competitive bidding requirements and provide applicants with recommendations on how to address areas of concern. The review conducted by USAC does not guarantee that the RFP is fully compliant. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that its request for services and any accompanying documentation comply with all RHC Program rules.

Applicants may bypass this review by emailing [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) at the time of FCC Form 461 submission, including the HCP and application number in the subject line and body of the email.

## **FY2018 Information**

### **Update on FY2018**

RHC has begun issuing decisions on FY2018 funding requests, and will continue to do so on a rolling basis. RHC will communicate any updates via the email addresses the applicant has submitted in My Portal. Due to demand for RHC Program funds, there will not be a second filing window period for FY2018. The RHC Program will not accept additional funding requests (FCC Forms 462 or 466) for FY2018. All qualifying single year funding

requests with no upfront costs will be fully funded for FY2018 with no proration.

## Important Reminders

### Filing an Appeal

Any party that wishes to appeal a USAC decision must file an appeal with USAC within 60 days of the date when USAC issued the decision. All appeals must be sent to [RHC-Appeals@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Appeals@usac.org). The following information must be included in the appeal:

- Applicant or service provider who is filing the appeal (i.e. HCP number, service provider's 498 ID (SPIN))
- Contact information of the person who can discuss the appeal with USAC in detail (include name, address, telephone number, and email address)
- Documentation of USAC's decision (e.g., copy of USAC's decision letter being appealed)
- Supporting documentation such as forms and previous correspondence with USAC
- A precise explanation of the relief sought through the appeal

USAC may reach out for additional information while reviewing your appeal, but failure to provide all of the information above within the 60 days may result in denial of your appeal. For more information on filing appeals with USAC or the FCC, please visit the [appeals page](#) of the USAC website.

### Consortia Resources

HCF Program applicants who may be interested in forming a consortia can download three new resources to help them get started:

- [Consortia Getting Started Tip Sheet](#)
- [Forming a Consortium Tip Sheet](#)
- [FCC Form 461 and 462 Tip Sheet for Consortia](#)

### Account Holder Guidance

USAC recommends having at least one secondary account holder per HCP. We've created guides for primary account holders with instructions for adding additional account holders in My Portal:

- [Telecom Account Holder Guide](#)
- [Healthcare Connect Fund Account Holder Guide](#)

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

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 FY2019, [Letters of Agency \(LOA\)](#) and [Third Party Authorizations \(TPA\)](#) must be up to date through FY2019, at a minimum. 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](#)

### Need Help? Contact Us!

For questions about these topics or the Rural Health Care Program, please contact RHC-Assist@usac.org or (800) 453-1546.

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