



RHC Program News for March 2020

March 5, 2020

Latest News

New! Request for Services Open Data Set Available Now!

We are very excited to announce the posting of the second RHC Program dataset to the USAC Open Data Portal. The dataset contains information from the [Request for Services FCC Forms 461 and 465](#), and you are now able to filter, sort, and visualize the data in many different ways. Watch a [quick demonstration](#) of how to use USAC Open Data.

Urban and Rural Rate Database Feedback Opportunity

RHC is currently accepting feedback on urban and rural rates. RHC will consider this feedback as it develops the urban and rural databases that will be used beginning with competitive bidding for FY2021. As per FCC Report and Order 19-78, RHC will determine the median urban and rural rates for eligible services and publish these rates in publicly available databases. To assist in this process, service providers “are encouraged to bring their available urban and rural rate data to [RHC’s] attention.”

Interested in providing your feedback on urban and rural rates database? Feel free to email RHC-Assist@usac.org with the subject line “Urban and Rural Rate Database Feedback.” Future feedback opportunities may be made available and publicized via the RHC newsletter.

FY2020 Filing Window Open Now!

The FY2020 filing window opened on February 1 and will close at 11:59 p.m. ET on April 30. This means that you must submit your funding requests (FCC [Forms 462](#) or [466](#)) before 11:59 p.m. ET April 30, 2020, for the filing window period. We highly encourage you to submit your application forms as early as possible in the filing window. See below for helpful resources:

- Funding Request Webinars: [HCF Program](#), [Telecom Program](#)
- [Funding Request Summary](#)
- [FY2020 Recommended Submission Dates](#)
- [Information for FY2019 Applicants Applying in FY2020](#)
- [Urban and Rural Rate Information](#) (Telecom Program only)
- [Forming a Consortium Tip Sheet](#) (HCF Program only)

New for FY2020

Starting on February 1, for FY2020, RHC began enforcing several new rules as a result of [FCC Report and Order 19-78](#), including: consortia majority rural rule, gift rule, elimination of limitation on support for satellite services, and revised and harmonized funding request certifications. [Read more](#) and download the [Report and Order 19-78 Tip Sheet](#).

Update on FY2019

RHC is currently issuing decisions on FY2019 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 the high demand for RHC Program funds, there will not be a second filing window period for FY2019. The RHC Program will

not accept additional funding requests (FCC Forms 462 or 466) for FY2019.

FCC Releases Supply Chain Order and Mandatory Service Provider Survey

On January 3, 2020, the FCC's [Supply Chain Order](#), became effective. The Order adopts a new rule that no universal service support may be used to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, or otherwise support any equipment or services produced or provided by companies that pose a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. While not yet finalized, the FCC has initially designated Huawei Technologies Company and ZTE Corporation as companies covered by this Order. USAC will communicate all future changes, including any final designations of the above-mentioned companies.

Recipients of USF program funds cannot use universal service funds to pay for equipment and services from companies designated as covered companies.

The Order requires all USF program service providers that are designated Eligible Telecommunication Carriers (ETCs) to complete a survey identifying whether their networks contain equipment or services from Huawei and/or ZTE. All service providers that are ETCs must [complete the survey](#) by April 22, 2020. Other USF program participants can complete the survey on a voluntary basis. USAC will share additional information about this Order as it is available.

Latest News

Telecom Information Requests

If you receive a Telecom Program Information Request, you must respond to it within 14 calendar days of the date of the Information Request. Please make sure you are logging into My Portal and checking your emails on a regular basis.

How to respond to an Information Request received in My Portal:

- You will receive an automatic email notifying you that you have an Information Request in My Portal, do not reply all to this notification
- To view and respond to the Information Request, you must log into My Portal using Chrome or Firefox
- When uploading a document as a response, the document should be limited to 10MB and its file name should not contain any special characters, only letters and numbers

Please note that in some cases, Telecom Program Applicants may also receive Information Requests outside of My Portal via email. In this case, the applicant should "Reply All" to respond to the Information Request.

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. 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 listed above within the required 60-day period may result in denial of your appeal. Parties seeking a waiver of FCC rules (e.g., waiver of deadlines) should file the waiver request directly with the FCC because USAC cannot waive FCC rules.

For more information on filing appeals with USAC or the FCC, please visit the [Appeals Page](#) of the USAC website.

Need Help? Contact Us!

For questions about the Rural Health Care Program, call the RHC Help Desk Call at 800-453-1546 or email RHC-Assist@usac.org.

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