



RHC Program News for September 2020

September 3, 2020

Latest News

FY2019 Consortia Annual Report Due September 30, 2020

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 the provided [Excel template](#) to supplement information collected in RHC Program application forms. The reports for FY2019 (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020) are due September 30, 2020.

Who Needs to Submit the Annual Report? HCF Program consortium leaders must submit an annual report for each funding year in which they received HCF Program support and for the life of a supported facility or service for which the consortium received large upfront payments.

For instructions on how to complete and submit the FY2019 Annual Report, please visit our [website](#).

FCC Introduced \$100 Million Connected Care Pilot Program

In its [Report and Order FCC 20-44](#) released on April 2, 2020, the FCC adopted final rules for a new three-year Connected Care Pilot Program which will provide up to \$100 million of support from the Universal Service Fund (USF) to help defray eligible health care providers' costs of providing connected care services and to help assess whether and how USF funds could be used to support connected care services. The Pilot Program will provide funding for selected pilot projects to cover 85% of the costs of eligible items which include broadband connectivity, network equipment necessary to make a supported broadband service function, and information services necessary to provide connected care services to the intended patient population.

Commission staff is taking steps to implement the Connected Care Pilot Program. The Wireline Competition Bureau will release a Public Notice announcing the specific application timing and processes. Interested applicants may sign up for the [Connected Care Pilot Program email listserv](#) to receive updates and announcements. Questions concerning the Connected Care Pilot Program can be emailed to ConnCarePitProg@fcc.gov.

Begin to Submit Your FY2021 Request for Services Today!

New for FY2021 and forward, the competitive bidding period will begin on July 1 of the prior calendar year. This allows RHC Program applicants more time to complete and submit their FCC [Forms 461](#) and [Forms 465](#) for the purposes of competitive bidding. Learn about the changes to the FY2021 competitive bidding process and corresponding My Portal updates by watching the [Request for Services Webinars](#) and view the [Request for Services Summary](#).

Important Reminders

Information Requests - Deadline Extended

On March 26, 2020 the FCC released [Order DA 20-345](#), granting relief measures to RHC Program participants to help health care providers effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of this relief, the FCC waived the 14-

day deadline for applicants to respond to Information Requests from USAC issued on or before September 30, 2020. Applicants have an additional 28 days, allowing a response time of 42 days. This waiver includes Information Requests related to funding requests, appeals and waivers, invoices, audits, and other documentation submitted by the applicant. Read a [summary](#) of the relief brought on by the Order.

Tip: Rurality Tier Search Tool

When using the [Rurality Tier Search Tool](#), it is important to put in your site's exact address for best results. If the site's exact address does not yield results, you may also use the latitude and longitude coordinates for your site. To find your site's latitude and longitude coordinates:

1. Go to [Google Maps](#)
2. Type in your site's address
3. Right click on the marker pin pointing your site on the map and select "What's Here?"
4. The coordinates (a pair of numbers, each with a decimal point) will appear on the screen

Use these coordinates to "Search with geographic coordinates" in the Rurality Tier Search Tool. Be sure to include the negative sign when entering the negative longitude coordinate.

View the Funding Year (FY) 2021 Calendar

Remember to mark your calendar with upcoming important dates for FY2021, including the FY2021 funding request filing window period which will take place from January 4, 2021 through April 1, 2021. Download the FY2021 calendar and take a look at the [Funding Year Overview](#) page for more information.

FCC Form 460 Best Practice

During the submission of an FCC Form 460 (HCF Eligibility and Registration Form), we recommend that applicants upload any supporting documentation necessary to validate form data to the "Supporting Documentation" section. This includes documentation that is relevant to the required fields of the FCC Form 460. Submitting supporting documentation helps to verify health care provider (HCP) eligibility thereby expediting the review process. A few examples include:

- Hospital licenses, with the address clearly posted, to verify a non-profit hospital
- A recent bill or lease, with the address clearly posted, to verify the HCP address provided on the FCC Form 460
- Public tax documents to verify the Non-Profit Tax ID (EIN)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) accreditation to verify a community health center.

You can submit your FCC Form 460 at any time during the funding year. First time applying? We suggest you review this [step-by-step guide](#) or watch a [short video](#) to check if your HCP site has previously registered with the RHC Program.

FCC Form 467 Revisions

Please remember to carefully review your Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) and Healthcare Support Schedule (HSS) prior to beginning the invoicing process. If there is an error or you have any questions about the information on the FCL or HSS, email RHC-Assist@usac.org with the FRN in the subject line. As a reminder, if services were delayed or not turned on, it is the responsibility of the HCP to submit a request for an FCC Form 467 revision.

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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