RHC Program News for July 2021

July 1, 2021

Latest News

FY2022 Competitive Bidding Starts Today! Begin to Submit Your FY2022 Requests for Services
RHC program applicants can submit their FCC Forms 461 and 465 to initiate competitive bidding for funding year (FY) 2022 starting today, July 1, 2021, five months before the opening of the FY2022 filing window. The FY2022 funding request filing window will open on December 1, 2021 and close on April 1, 2022. View the FY2022 Program Calendar.

New to the RHC program? Prepare for the upcoming funding year by registering for our FY2022 Kickoff. This webinar will help new and returning applicants prepare for FY2022 and cover important dates, resources, and best practices for a successful application process.

- FY2022 Kickoff Webinar- July 14, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET – Register now!

Learn about the FY2022 competitive bidding process and walk through the FCC Forms 461 and 465 at the upcoming Request for Services Webinars:

- Telecom Program FCC Form 465 Best Practices – August 12, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET – Register now!
- HCF Program FCC Form 461 Best Practices – August 19, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET – Register now!

New! FCC Announces Increase in Rural Health Care Program Funds for FY2021
On June 23, 2021, the FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau directed USAC to carry forward up to $379.97 million in unused funds from prior funding years to the extent necessary to satisfy FY2021 demand for the Rural Health Care program. Read Public Notice DA 21-742.

New! FCC Announces Second Set of Projects Selected for Connected Care Pilot Program
On June 17, 2021, the FCC released Public Notice FCC 21-71, announcing the selection of 36 additional projects for the Connected Care Pilot Program. The newly selected Pilot projects join an initial set of 23 projects approved earlier this year, bringing the total to over $57 million in funding for 59 Pilot projects serving patients in 30 states plus Washington, DC. More information about next steps for the selected projects is coming soon.

New! FCC Releases Second Connected Care Pilot Program Report and Order
On June 21, 2021 the FCC released a Report and Order offering further guidance on the administration of the Connected Care Pilot Program. The Report and Order provides guidance on eligible services, competitive bidding, invoicing, and data reporting for selected participants. Selected projects will receive direct outreach about next steps, training, and deadlines. For more information check out the Connected Care Pilot Program web page.

Important Reminders

What to do if You Receive an Information Request
FCC Forms submitted with incomplete or missing documentation cannot be processed, 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.

Due to FCC Order DA 21-394, applicants who receive Information Requests between April 8, 2021 and December 31, 2021 may request a 28-day extension of this deadline, but must do so before the 14-day deadline in the Information Request. An applicant with a 28-day extension will have a total of 42 calendar days to respond to its Information Request. If you receive an Information Request, you must respond to it or request an extension within 14 calendar days. **Failure to respond or request an extension within the 14 calendar days will result in a denial of funding, so be sure to meet that deadline. If you need to request an extension, please do so as soon as possible.**

Information Request Tips for the Telecom Program

- Applicants can receive Telecom Program Information Requests through My Portal OR by email
  - For Information Requests received through My Portal, applicants should respond through My Portal only
  - For Information Requests received by email, applicants should "Reply All" to respond to the Information Request by email
- Use Chrome/Firefox only when using My Portal
- 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

Information Request Tips for the HCF Program

- Applicants that receive HCF Program Information Requests through email should "Reply All" to respond to an Information Request by email

Certifications Requirements for National Supply Chain
As a reminder, when service providers log in to My Portal they will see two new Supply Chain certifications included in the FCC Form 463 and Telecom Program invoice.

The first certification affirms compliance with the Section 54.9 prohibition on USF support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by the covered companies deemed to pose a national security threat to the integrity of the communications network or communications supply chain. Huawei Technologies Company and ZTE Corporation, and their parents, affiliates, and subsidiaries, are the two companies that have been officially designated as such threats by the FCC. The second certification affirms compliance with Section 54.10, which prohibits the use of any Federal subsidies on any communications equipment and services on the Covered List.

- **FY2020 Applicants**: If you requested services or equipment provided or that contain components of products produced by Huawei Technologies or ZTE, or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries in FY2020, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a service substitution prior to invoicing in order to ensure complete program compliance.
- **FY2021 Applicants**: If you identify the use of covered equipment/services on your submitted funding request form please email RHC-Assist@usac.org with your FRN number. We will work with you to take corrective action to ensure compliance.
- **FY2022 Applicants**: As you proceed with competitive bidding beginning in July, please ensure you are not requesting funding for services or equipment from Huawei Technologies or ZTE, or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries.

Upcoming Audits: In addition, beginning this summer, USAC will conduct audits of compliance with the supply chain rules. To help you prepare, USAC will host a series of webinars so that you can learn more about what to expect if you are selected for an audit.

Service providers who participate in multiple USF programs must also complete these annual certifications for each other program (i.e., E-rate, High Cost, and Lifeline) in which they participate. For additional information and FCC form due dates, visit USAC's Supply Chain webpage.

Effective Now: FCC DA 20-1420 Implements Rule Changes for FY2020
FCC Order DA 20-1420 implemented certain rule changes mid-funding year (FY) 2020 that were previously slated for FY2021. The FCC recognizes that making these rules effective mid-FY2020 will provide helpful flexibility to health

care providers during the current funding year. Please note, this Order became effective on March 15, 2021, read more in the [Federal Register](#). The Order accelerates the effective dates of the following rule changes:

- Extending site and service substitutions to Telecom Program applicants
- Amending the SPIN change process to allow for corrective and operational changes across both the HCF and Telecom Programs
- Establishing a service delivery deadline of June 30 while permitting a one-year extension of the service delivery deadline for non-recurring services
- Permitting a one-time 120-day invoice filing extension

To request any of the above actions on your approved FY2020 funding commitment, please email RHC-Assist@usac.org with your Funding Request Number (FRN) and the desired request in the subject line of your email.

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, but are not limited to:

- 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) or public documents if the health care provider is owned by a local or state government
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) accreditation to verify a community health center.

Please note that submission of this supporting documentation does not guarantee form approval. 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](#) to check if your HCP site has previously registered with the RHC Program.

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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