



RHC Program News for May 2021

May 6, 2021

Latest News

Deadline Soon! FY2021 Filing Window Closes on June 1

The FY2021 filing window opened on January 4 and will close at 11:59 p.m. ET on Tuesday, June 1. This means that you must submit your funding requests (FCC [Forms 462](#) or [466](#)) no later than 11:59 p.m. ET June 1, 2021. Learn more about [filing window periods](#).

The RHC outreach team will be hosting multiple Funding Request Office Hours as we near the close of the filing window:

- Friday, May 14, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. ET – [Register](#)
- Wednesday, May 26, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. ET – [Register](#)

Join any time between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. ET to ask your questions about completing and submitting your funding request form(s). Please note that each session is limited to 75 registrants.

RHC Help Desk Hours: The RHC Help Desk can be reached by phone from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday at (800) 453-1546 and anytime by email at RHC-Assist@usac.org. As a reminder, **Monday, May 31 is a federal holiday** and USAC offices will be closed that day.

Below are additional resources to help you submit your funding request by the June 1 deadline:

- [Funding Request Best Practices for FY2021 Webinars](#)
- [Funding Request Summary](#)
- [Information for FY2020 Applicants Applying in FY2021](#)
- [Rural and Urban Rate Information](#) (Telecom Program only)
- [HCF Program Examples of Common Products and Services](#) (New)
- [Telecom Program Examples of Common Services](#) (New)

New! FCC Releases Order DA 21-394

On April 8, 2021, the FCC released [Order DA 21-394](#), waiving the requirement that health care providers (HCPs) and service providers participating in the Telecom Program use the Rates Database to calculate urban and rural rates for funding years 2021 and 2022. The Order also waives administrative deadlines for certain RHC program requirements.

Instead of using the Rates Database, HCPs and their service providers should continue to use rates approved under [Method 1, 2, or 3](#) to calculate rural rates. HCPs and service providers must use the most recently-approved rural rate for FY2018, FY2019, or FY2020 for the same service to the same facility or, if there is no approved rate, an approved rural rate for the same or similar services to a facility with the same or similar geographic characteristics. For more information on how to submit an FY2021 FCC Form 466 please download this [step-by-step guide](#).

What to do if you previously submitted an FY2021 Funding Request using the Rates Database:

If you have previously submitted an FY2021 funding request using the rates database prior to the release of the Order, you must [recall your FCC Form 466](#) and resubmit in My Portal with the correct rate. **Note:** recalling a form completely removes the form from USAC's queue. You should only recall forms during a filing window, doing so after the close of the filing window removes your FCC Form 466 from funding consideration.

In addition, the Order waives the following administrative deadlines to provide all RHC program applicants with additional time to comply with requirements:

- Service delivery deadline for FY2020 – extended by one year to June 30, 2022.
- Invoice filing deadline for FY2020 – extended by 120 days.
- Response times to USAC's information requests – extended by an additional 28 days if an applicant requests the extension before the expiration of the initial 14-day deadline. This relief applies to information requests issued from April 8, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

New! FY2022 Filing Window Dates Announced

The FY2022 funding request filing window will open on December 1, 2021 and close on April 1, 2022. As a reminder, applicants can start submitting their FCC Forms 461 and 465 to request services and begin the competitive bidding process on July 1, 2021. View the [FY2022 Program Calendar](#).

Important Reminders

Invoicing Best Practices

Please keep in mind that once you receive an approved funding commitment you should follow the necessary steps to invoice prior to your invoicing deadline(s):

- **FY2019 applicants:** Last year, the FCC released two invoicing deadline waivers to HCF program applicants, resulting in many FY2019 FRNs having March or June invoicing deadlines (read [Order 20-345](#) and [Order 20-1092](#)). To see if your HCP has an upcoming FY2019 invoicing deadline, use the Invoice Deadline Lookup Tool or view your deadline in My Portal. As a reminder, the HCF invoicing process is a joint process between the HCP and its service provider. For information on how to file your FCC Form 463, watch the [FY2019 Invoicing Best Practices Webinar](#).
- **FY2020 applicants:** New invoicing guidelines adopted in FCC [Report and Order 19-78](#) became effective beginning with FY2020 applicants. The invoicing deadline will be four months (120 days) from the service delivery deadline in both the HCF and Telecom programs. Please be sure to respond to any invoicing Information Requests by the 14-calendar day deadline listed in the email. For more information please see the [HCF invoice page](#) and [Telecom invoice page](#).

New Certifications Requirements for National Supply Chain Now Live

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 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:** As you proceed with competitive bidding and submitting funding requests forms, 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 Certain Rule Changes Implemented 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.

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. Please note, this tool is for informational purposes only and is not an official determination of a site's rurality from USAC. For more information about rurality tiers and terms used in the search results, please visit the [Rurality Tier Search Tool homepage](#).

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 pinpointing to 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.

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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