July 2025 RHC Monthly Newsletter

July 3, 2025

Latest News
Submit your FY2026 Request for Services Forms!
Beginning on July 1, 2025, applicants can start the competitive bidding process for Funding Year (FY) 2026. The Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program's FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form) and the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program's FCC Form 465 (Request for Services Form) may be submitted in RHC Connect along with any other competitive bidding documents, such as a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Please use the following resources to submit these forms:

HCF Program:

- [Prepare for Competitive Bidding & Request Services](#) webpage

- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 461](#) webpage

- [Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#) webpage

- [RHC Connect FCC Form 461 User Guide](#)

- [How to File the FCC Form 461](#) self-guided training video

Telecom Program:

- [Prepare for Competitive Bidding & Request Services](#) – webpage

- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 465](#) webpage

- [Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#) webpage

- [RHC Connect FCC Form 465 User Guide](#)

- [Telecom Program Request for Services (FCC Form 465](#)) self-guided training video

Upcoming Trainings
The RHC outreach team will be hosting the following upcoming webinars:

- FY2026 Kick-Off Webinar – July 16, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register](#)

- Consortium Best Practices Webinar – July 23, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET –Register

FY2024 HCF Annual Report Due September 30, 2025
Per FCC Order 19-78, to supplement the information collected from forms filed by the healthcare provider (HCP), the FCC requires HCF participants who received funding in FY2024 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) to submit information to USAC about the telehealth applications used during the funding year.

Who is Required to Submit the Annual Report? All HCF Program participants, both individual and consortia, 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 program participant received large upfront payments.

Beginning in FY2024, annual reports will be submitted in RHC Connect. Please use the RHC Connect Annual Report User Guide to assist you with your submission. Please visit the Submit Annual Report page for additional information.

Note: Failure to submit the required annual report(s) by the deadline may result in the denial of RHC program funding.

FY2026 Filing Window Dates Announced
The FY 2026 filing window will open on December 1, 2025, and close on April 1, 2026. 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, 2025. View the FY2026 Program Calendar.

Search Posted Services Tool HCF and Telecom Program
The Search Posted Services tool is available on the USAC website. This tool is a streamlined version of the Rural Health Care Posted Services (FCC Forms 461 and 465) dataset, making it easier to search for posted services and download documents. The dataset contains data from the FCC Forms 461 and 465 (i.e., services requested for current and past funding years).
The Open Data portal allows you to filter, sort, and visualize the data in many ways. There are hyperlinks in columns where you can download the PDF version of the FCC Form 461, RFP, and any other additional documentation submitted with the FCC Forms 461 and 465.

Letter(s) of Agency (LOAs) and Third-Party Authorizations (TPAs)
Please be sure that all authorizations, including LOAs and TPAs, are current and up to date through the end of FY2025 and forward. For more information about LOAs, visit the Letter of Agency webpage. For more information about TPA requirements, visit the Third Party Authorization (TPA) webpage.

Submit Third Party Authorizations in RHC Connect!
If you are an HCP participating in the HCF or Telecom Program, and a consultant or other third party (i.e., anyone who is not employed by the HCP) will file forms on behalf of your site, you must file a TPA with USAC. A TPA provides written authorization to USAC, allowing the third party to

complete and submit forms on behalf of the HCP or consortium in the HCF or Telecom Program. RHC program participants may now submit third party authorizations in RHC Connect. Please use the following resources to submit your TPAs:

- Third Party Authorization webpage

- RHC Connect - Third Party Authorization User Guide

- Sample TPAs

As a reminder for consortia applicants, Letters of Agency (LOAs) and Letters of Exemption (LOEs) are also submitted in RHC Connect. Please use the following resources to submit LOAs and LOEs:

- Letter of Agency webpage

- Letter of Exemption webpage

- RHC Connect LOA/LOE User Guide

- Sample LOA

Note: All existing TPAs located in My Portal should be uploaded by the HCP or consultant to RHC Connect no later than October 31, 2025. After October 31, 2025, consultants will lose access to HCPs that do not have a valid TPA in RHC Connect.

Reminders for Account Holders
Per RHC program rules, a primary and secondary account holder for an individual HCP must be an officer, director, or authorized employee of the HCP. For consortium applicants in the HCF Program, the Project Coordinator must be an officer, director, or other authorized employee of the Consortium Leader. If you are an HCP participating in the HCF or Telecom Program and a consultant or other third party will file forms on your behalf, you must file a TPA.

Per FCC Order 19-78, if you are a consultant, you must obtain a consultant group registration number when logging into RHC Connect. In My Portal, the system automatically assigned a number however, in RHC Connect, the registration number is only assigned once the simple registration process is complete. Please follow the steps shown in RHC Connect – Third Party Authorization User Guide, starting on page 9, to complete your consultant group registration and obtain the registration number.

Note: The primary account holder is responsible for all activities associated with submitting and certifying forms and for all activities in the RHC program for their HCP site.

Submit RHC Program Post-Commitment Change Requests in RHC Connect
Service substitutions are now available in RHC Connect for Telecom Program applicants. Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes (corrective and operational) and invoice filing deadline extensions will move to RHC Connect ahead of the October 28, 2025, invoice filing deadline.

The following post-commitment change requests are available in RHC Connect for HCF Program applicants:

- SPIN changes (corrective and operational)

- Site and service substitutions

- Service delivery deadline extensions for non-recurring charges

- Invoice filing deadline extensions

For more information, visit the Post-Commitment Actions webpage on the USAC website as well as specific webpages for SPIN Changes and Site and Service Substitutions. A step-by-step Post-Commitments Change Request user guide is available to help you submit these requests correctly.

Duplicate Funding Prohibited
Please remember: FCC rules prohibit duplicate funding for the same service, for the same location, during the same period, from more than one FCC program. This includes the RHC programs (HCF and Telecom) and the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP).

What To Do When You Receive an Information Request
As part of their review of any eligibility, requests for services, funding requests, and invoicing forms, RHC reviewers may need further information or explanation. If so, RHC staff will contact all account holders (the primary and all secondary and tertiary account holders associated with the HCP) with a request for additional information ("Information Request"). This request will assist with the collection of any missing documentation, address deficiencies, or general information required to address questions of FCC form reviewers.

FCC News
RHC Program Inflation-Based Cap Announced for FY2025
The RHC program funding cap for FY2025 is $723,892,841. The internal cap for upfront payments and multi-year commitments under the HCF Program is $182,780,877. The caps will apply only if RHC program demand exceeds available funding. These new caps represent a 2.4 percent inflation-adjusted increase to the $706,926,603 RHC program funding cap and the $178,496,951 internal cap on multi-year commitments and upfront payments from FY2024. Read the announcement.

FCC Released Order FCC 23-110: Continuing Improvements to RHC Program Procedures
On December 14, 2023, the FCC released Third Report and Order, FCC 23-110. This order improves RHC program administration and facilitates participation in the program by allowing HCPs that expect to become eligible during a funding year to complete the processes required to request funding, align program deadlines, simplify rules for calculating urban rates, streamline administrative processes, and free up unused funding for other purposes.

Rule Changes

This Third Report and Order:

- Permits HCPs to be granted conditional eligibility, thus allowing them to initiate competitive bidding and request funding before they meet all eligibility requirements. An HCP must meet all eligibility requirements before it receives a funding commitment.

- Provides HCPs more time to complete SPIN changes by moving the SPIN change deadline to align with the invoice filing deadline.

- Simplifies urban rate calculations by eliminating the seldom-used "standard urban distance" component of the RHC program rule for determining urban rates in the Telecom Program.

- Allows HCPs to request changes to the dates covered by an evergreen contract.

- Adopts the FCC Form 460 for eligibility determinations in the Telecom Program, which will eliminate the need for Telecom Program participants to seek an eligibility determination every time they engage in competitive bidding.

For more information, read Order FCC 23-110.

RHC Connect Updates

RHC Connect for Service Providers

As you submit the FCC Form 463 and FCC Form 469, please keep in mind that the General Contact on the FCC Form 498 is the only user for the company who can create additional logins for other users in that company. This is done within RHC Connect.

If you have trouble accessing RHC Connect, it may be a result of outdated information on the FCC Form 498 (Service Provider and Billed Entity Identification Number and General Contact Information Form). To correct the issue, please update your FCC Form 498 as soon as possible and, if applicable, your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) on the SAM.gov webpage. For more information, please visit the Manage Your 498 ID webpage on the USAC website.

A FCC Form 463 user guide as well as a FCC Form 469 user guide, both specifically for service providers, are now available on the Step 6: Invoice USAC webpage in the RHC service provider section of the USAC website.

RHC Connect Updates – FCC Forms 460, 465, and 469

The FCC Forms 460, 465, and 469 are now available in RHC Connect. The changes to these forms are as follows:

- Per FCC Order 23-110, the FCC Form 460 will now be used to determine eligibility of HCP sites in the HCF Program and the Telecom Program. In addition, applicants may be granted conditional eligibility, thus allowing them to initiate competitive bidding and request

funding before their full eligibility has been established. An HCP must be fully eligible before a funding commitment will be released.

- The FCC Form 465 will be used to request services for the Telecom Program, the same way the FCC Form 461 is used in the HCF Program. It is now available for use in RHC Connect.

- The FCC Form 469 is the new Telecom Program invoice. Per FCC Order 23-6, the new Telecom Program invoicing process is similar to the invoicing process in the HCF Program. One key difference is that the service provider will submit the FCC Form 469 in RHC Connect, the applicant will receive an email alerting them of the submission, and the applicant will officially submit the form to USAC by certifying and signing the form.

For FY2024, the FCC Form 467, the Healthcare Provider Support Schedule (HSS), and the previous Telecom Program Invoice will be eliminated in the Telecom Program.

Important Reminders
Information Request Tips for the Telecom Program

- For FY2025 FCC Forms 466, an auto-generated email will be sent directing HCPs to RHC Connect to respond. HCPs should respond through RHC Connect only. Please use the Information Request Tip Sheet to help you navigate Information Requests sent through RHC Connect.

- Use only Chrome, Firefox, or Microsoft Edge Internet browsers when using RHC Connect.

- When uploading a document as a response, the file must 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

- For FY2025 FCC Forms 462, an auto-generated email will be sent directing HCPs to RHC Connect to respond. HCPs should respond through RHC Connect only. Please use the Information Request Tip Sheet to help you navigate Information Requests sent through RHC Connect.

  o HCPs that receive HCF Program Information Requests through email should "Reply All" to the email message.

- When uploading a document as a response, the file must be limited to 10MB, and its file name should not contain any special characters – only letters and numbers.

Online Tools
Invoice Filing Deadlines
The Invoicing Deadline Tool allows service providers and HCPs to look up the deadline to submit invoices for funding commitments. The tool allows users to avoid having to set up specific Excel configurations to find their deadlines.

Open Data Platform

As part of USAC's Open Data initiative, RHC program data is open and accessible to the public. Anyone is free to use, re-use, and redistribute the data in our data sets to access all the raw data submitted by Universal Service participants. The following data sets are available on the Open Data platform for the RHC program:

- Rural Health Care Commitments and Disbursements (FCC Form 462/466/466A) – This dataset contains data about funding decisions, total committed amounts, and total disbursement amounts for the RHC program.

- RHC Posted Services Tool – This tool allows service providers to view service request information by individual HCPs and consortia applying for funding through the RHC program.

- Rural Health Care Posted Services (FCC Form 461/465) – This dataset allows service providers to view service request information provided by the RHC program. The data is collected from the FCC Forms 461 and 465, which includes the service request information.

- SPIN Lookup Tool – This tool can be used to view and export service provider profile data found in RHC Connect. This data includes important information regarding the service provider, such as contact information and details regarding the FCC Forms 498 and 499.

News You Can Use

Certifications Requirements for National Supply Chain

As a reminder, when service providers log in to RHC Connect, two Supply Chain certifications included in the FCC Form 463 and Telecom Program invoice will be displayed. The first certification affirms compliance with the Section 54.9 prohibition on specified transactions with companies deemed to pose a national security threat. 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.

Please note: If you requested services or equipment that provide or contain components of products produced by any company on the Covered List, or any of their parents, affiliates, and subsidiaries, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a service substitution prior to invoicing to ensure complete program compliance. In addition, as you proceed with competitive bidding, please ensure you are not requesting funding for services or equipment from listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates, and subsidiaries. USAC updated the Supply Chain webpages to include three new subpages: COVID-19 Broadband Programs, Audits, and FAQs.

Need Help? Contact Us!

For questions about the Rural Health Care Program, email RHC-Assist@usac.org or contact the RHC Customer Service Center (CSC) at (800) 453-1546 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET Monday through Friday for assistance. Use the RHC CSC Tip Sheet to learn about how the RHC CSC can and cannot help you.