



May 2026 RHC Monthly Newsletter

May 7, 2026

Latest News

NEW! FY2027 Filing Window Dates Announced

The funding year (FY) 2027 filing window will open on December 1, 2026, and close on April 1, 2027. As a reminder, applicants may start submitting their FCC Forms 461 and 465 to request services and begin the competitive bidding process on July 1, 2026. View the [FY2027 Program Calendar](#).

Rural Health Care Program: **Funding Year 2027**



Upcoming Office Hours and Trainings

To assist you with filing your FY2025 post-commitment change requests for the Telecom Program, the Rural Health Care (RHC) outreach team will be hosting the following webinars:

- Post Commitment Change Requests Webinar (Telecom) – May 22, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET – [Register](#)

Submit RHC Program Post-Commitment Change Requests in RHC Connect Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program

There are several actions that may be required outside of the regular application process. The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the **service delivery deadline**, June 30 of a given funding year:

- Site and service substitutions
- Service delivery deadline extensions

The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the **invoice filing deadline**, October 28 of a given funding year:

- Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes (corrective and operational)
- Invoice filing deadline extensions

For more information, please visit the [HCF Program 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-Commitment Change Request](#) user guide is available to help you submit these requests correctly.

Telecommunications (Telecom) Program

The following post-commitment change requests are now available in RHC Connect for Telecom Program applicants. The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the **service delivery deadline**, June 30 of a given funding year:

- Service Substitutions

The following post-commitment change requests must be submitted by the **invoice filing deadline**, October 28 of a given funding year:

- Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes (corrective and operational)
- 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 [Service Substitutions](#). A step-by-step [Post-Commitment Change Request](#) user guide is available to help you submit these requests correctly.

New! RHC Connect System Enhancements

RHC is committed to continually improving the stakeholder experience in RHC Connect. The following system enhancements were deployed in the system on April 17, 2026:

FCC Form 462/466 Duplicate Check on Intake

The FCC Forms 462 and 466 now display a duplicate check on submission.

- Applicant's view of duplicate table on the Rates page
 - This table will display on the Rates tab of an FCC Form 466
 - This table will display on the Expense Items tab of an FCC Form 462
- Applicant comments on potential duplicates
 - Applicants can add comments when the system flags their FCC Form 426 or FCC Form 466 as a potential duplicate.
 - These comments are preserved and can be seen by reviewers.
- Duplicate validation on the signature page
 - The FCC Forms 462 and 466 signature pages now validate against duplicate criteria and display a clear error message when a potential duplicate exists.
 - Applicants are prevented from completing the FCC Forms 462 and 466 until they review and address duplicate warnings.

FCC Form 462 General Operational Effectiveness Enhancements

- Clearer request reasons for applicants and reviewers
 - Added a "Request Reason(s)" field to the Information Request table on the Information Request tab, visible to both applicants and reviewers, so it is clear why additional information is being requested.

- Easier navigation from the Information Requests views back to the application
 - Added a “Back to Application” button on the Information Request view so users can quickly return to the underlying application after reviewing or responding to a request.

Telecom SPIN Change Information Requests

We’ve added Information Requests to the Telecom SPIN change application review process.

- Applicants can see all open and past Information Requests related to their Telecom SPIN change post-commitment change requests in one place, submit responses and upload documentation through RHC Connect.
- Applicants will receive email notifications when there is an Information Request created and when an Information Request deadline is approaching.

General Enhancement and Bug Fixes

- Recall for FCC Form 462 fixed
 - In the March 20, 2026 release, we disabled the option that allowed applicants to recall an FCC Form 462 because a bug was discovered with this process.
 - With this release, we have corrected the bug and re-enabled the recall option for the FCC Form 462.
- Account holder telephone number formatting
 - We’ve corrected the inconsistent formatting of account holder telephone numbers on the Information Requests tab for both internal and external users.
- Organization creation and group rename race condition
 - We fixed a strange bug that sometimes caused the creation of new HCPs to fail because the system would record the new HCP before it checked to see if the HCP already existed.
- Duplicate line items in bulk upload template
 - Fixed a vulnerability in the FCC Form 463 bulk invoice upload template that allowed duplicate line items to be submitted.
- FCC Form 469 submission after the invoice filing deadline
 - Fixed an issue where the HCP was able to submit the invoice to USAC after the invoice filing deadline had passed if the service provider had submitted it before the invoice filing deadline.
- Removed the TPA refresh notice
 - We removed the message about TPA refresh and the report download that had been visible since the TPA refresh project.

View all RHC Connect user experience related system enhancements and any upcoming RHC systems maintenance dates on the [RHC Connect Updates](#) page.

New! RHC Wants to Hear from YOU!

The RHC outreach team strives to provide useful and timely online resources. Your feedback is crucial to ensure our systems are user-friendly, and that applicants and service providers have appropriate resources available. Would you take a moment to share your thoughts in response to the following question:

- When submitting post commitment changes, do you have any suggestions on how the process can be more beneficial and take less of your time as a submitter?

Please send your feedback, questions, and/or insights to RHC-Outreach@usac.org. We appreciate your commitment to the RHC program's continued success.

Online Tools

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 access and utilize the raw data submitted by Universal Service participants. Please note, data sets are

regularly updated to include 10 years of information to avoid lowering the performance of USAC systems. The following data sets are available on the Open Data platform:

- [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 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.

Need Help? [Contact Us!](#)

Note: Some users have reported issues with downloading or opening some documents in Open Data. We have improved the situation, but if you have a problem, please try to copy and paste the URL into a new tab in your browser. If the new browser window does not resolve the problem, please reach out to the [RHC Customer Service Center](#).

Invoice Filing Deadlines

The [RHC Invoice Filing Deadline Tool](#) allows service providers and health care providers (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.

FCC News

FCC Waives Certain RHC Program Rules in Response to Typhoon Sinlaku

On April 23, 2026, the FCC released order [DA 26-396](#) waiving the following Rural Health Care Program (RHC) rules for participants and service providers located in areas affected by Typhoon Sinlaku:

- Deadline for Appeals and Requests for Waiver – The FCC waives the 60-day deadlines for requests for review or waiver of decisions by USAC or the FCC and provides an additional 60 days to file appeals and waivers. This waiver is in effect for all deadlines of appeals and waiver requests from April 12, 2026, through September 21, 2026.
- Information Requests – The FCC waives the 14-day deadline for applicants in the affected areas to respond to Information Requests from USAC related to funding requests, appeals and waivers, invoices, audits, and other documentation submitted by program participants. This waiver will apply to all Information Requests issued on or after April 12, 2026, regardless of the related funding year. The new deadline for responding to Information requests is September 21, 2026.
- Documentation Retention and Production – Due to possible lost records, the FCC waives the rule that applicants and service providers must retain all documents for at least five years after the last day of the supported services in a given funding year. If lost records are later requested by USAC or the FCC, program participants will not be penalized, but applicants and service providers will be held responsible for obtaining such records, where available, from a third party. Program participants that are affected also must certify that the records were destroyed in the typhoon. Current rules apply to all records that were not destroyed.
- Invoice Filing Deadline – The FCC waives the invoicing deadline for FY2025 funding requests and grants the automatic 120-day extension. Thus, for single-year funding commitments that previously had a deadline of October 28, 2026, the new deadline will be February 25, 2027.

FY2026 Telecom Program Rural Rates

On November 18, 2025, the FCC released order [DA 25-954](#). This order applies specifically to Method 3. The order waives the FCC's rules to permit the use of previously approved rural rates from FY2023 – FY2025 for funding year 2026 that would otherwise require approval of a cost-based justification for FY2026 under Method 3. Rural rates for the Telecom Program should be calculated using Method 1, or, if you cannot satisfy the requirements, then Method 2. If neither of these methods is feasible, then you must use Method 3.

For more information, read FCC Order [DA 25-954](#). Please use the [FY2026 Rural and Urban rates tip sheet](#) as a resource.

RHC Connect Updates

My Portal Decommissioning

The decommissioning of My Portal has been pushed back to the middle of calendar year (CY) 2026. The RHC outreach team previously informed applicants that third-party authorizations (TPAs) will not be migrated to RHC Connect. Letters of Agency (LOA) and Letters of Exemption (LOE) must also be moved to RHC Connect. **Applicants were required to move all their TPAs and LOA/LOEs into RHC Connect by November 30, 2025.**

NOTE: Third-party account holders will not have access to HCPs that do not have an active TPA submitted in RHC Connect. In addition, consortium account holders will not have access to member sites if they do not have an active LOA/LOE stored in RHC Connect.

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 Programs. 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](#)

Submit LOAs and LOEs in RHC Connect

As a reminder for consortia applicants, LOAs and 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](#)

The RHC outreach team will continue to provide information about important deadlines and the decommissioning of My Portal.

RHC Connect Updates – FCC Form 469

The FCC Form 469 is the Telecom Program invoicing form. Per [FCC Order 23-6](#), the Telecom Program invoicing process is similar to the invoicing process in the HCF Program. One key difference is that the service provider submits the FCC Form 469 in RHC Connect, the applicant receives an email alerting them of the submission, and the applicant officially submits the form to USAC by certifying and signing the form.

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.

An [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 5: Invoice USAC](#) webpage in the RHC service provider section of the USAC website.

Service Provider Webpage Updates

USAC's RHC and E-Rate programs have updated the [RHC Service Provider Process](#) and [E-Rate Service Provider Process](#) webpages to better support your participation in the Universal Service Fund (USF) programs. These updates:

- Ensure titles and descriptions of the service provider enrollment process reflect the key activities within each process step.
- Simplify page content where process requirements are similar.
- Continue the tradition of incorporating link-accessible resources to reduce page scroll.

Additionally, a new resource for Tribal service providers is now available:

- [Registering for a Service Provider Identification Number \(SPIN\) Checklist for New Tribal Service Providers](#)

These updates aim to improve ease of participation by aligning the steps that service providers must take to participate in the RHC and E-Rate programs – especially for small and rural service providers that are new to USAC.

SAM.gov UEI Requirement

Beginning August 2026, USAC will begin using SAM.gov banking information to remit payment for all USF invoices. All service providers must have an active SAM.gov UEI on their FCC Form 498 and must have a valid bank account associated with their UEI. For more information, see the [SAM.gov UEI Requirement webpage](#).

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 invoice filing deadline(s). Please be sure to respond to any invoicing Information Requests by the 14-calendar-day deadline listed in the email.

As a reminder, when a service provider does not certify an invoice, USAC sends an Information Request to remind it to do so. USAC has no role or involvement in disputes between health care providers and service providers. Healthcare providers should work with their service providers to resolve any issues.

Important Reminders

Information Request Tips for the RHC Program

- For FY2026 FCC Forms 462 and 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.

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.

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).

Reminder: 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](#).

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 subpages: [COVID-19 Broadband Programs](#), [Audits](#), and [FAQs](#).

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 help you.

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