HCF Program Funding Request Best Practices for FY2020

Submitting the FCC Form 462

Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Housekeeping

- Use the "Audio" section of your control panel to select an audio source and connect to sound
  - Turn on your computer's speakers, or
  - Use the call-in instructions in your confirmation email
- All participants are on mute
- Submit questions at any time using the "Questions" box
- Slides attached to GoToWebinar Panel and posted to RHC Learn
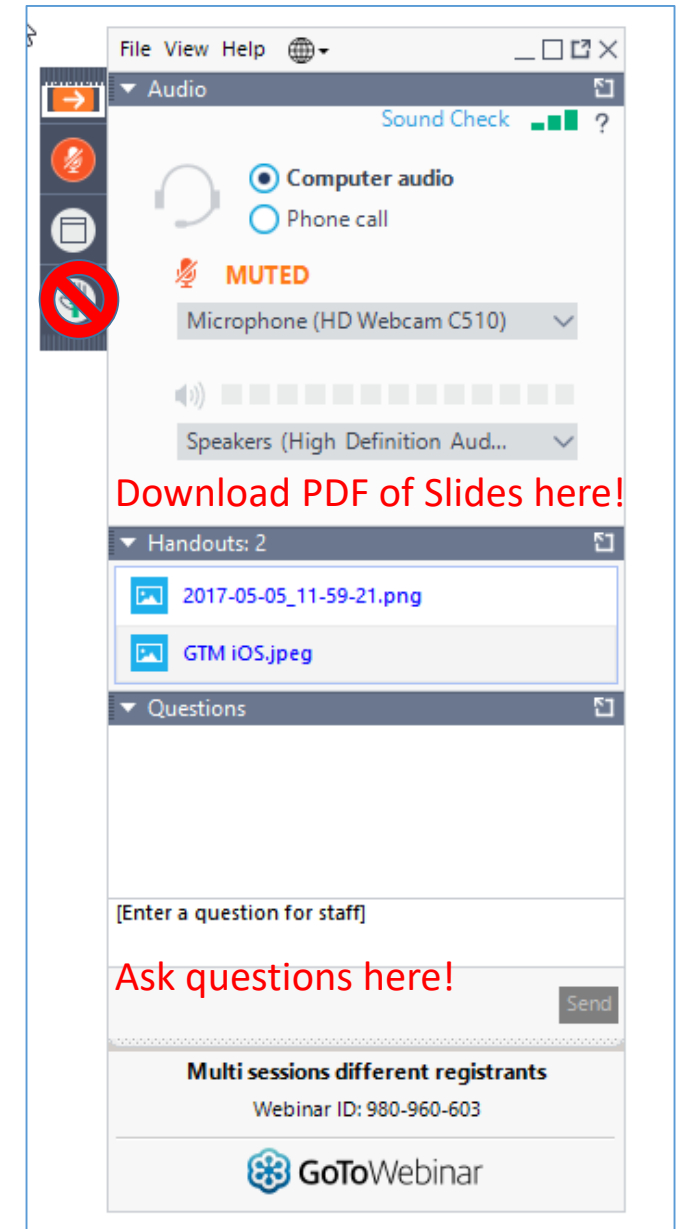
Meet the Presenters

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By the end of this webinar you will be able to…

- Understand what a Funding Request is, who must submit, and when

- Complete and submit an FCC Form 462 in My Portal
  - Avoid common errors
  - Upload a contract for Evergreen designation
  - Apply best practices about equipment and networks to your funding request form
  - Submit your funding request before the deadline

- Respond to Information Requests

- Locate important resources on the USAC website

  - Telecom Funding Request Webinar on Thursday, January 16 – Register here!

Agenda

1. Overview

2. FCC Report and Order 19-78
   - FCC Public Notice DA 19-1253

3. Submitting the FCC Form 462
   - Individual vs. Consortia Applications
   - Exemptions
   - Submitting With and Without a Contract
   - Funding Caps and Limitations
   - Best Practices for Equipment, Networks, and Off-Site Data Centers and Admin Offices

4. Best Practices and Resources

5. Q&A

Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HCF	Healthcare Connect Fund
FY	Funding Year
HCP	Health Care Provider (your site)
HCP Number	Number associated with your site
PAH	Primary Account Holder
FRN	Funding Request Number
ACSD	Allowable Contract Selection Date
RFP	Request for Proposal
NCW	Network Cost Worksheet

Differences Between RHC Programs

- Different services funded: Telecom Program funds telecommunications services and HCF Program funds advanced telecommunications and information services for broadband connectivity.

- Different method of calculating discount: Telecom Program funds the difference between the urban and rural rates; HCF Program funds a flat 65%.

Funding Request Forms Overview

Best Practices for FY2020

Application Process

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Determine Eligibility	Develop Evaluation Criteria and Request Services	Evaluate Bids and Select a Service Provider	Submit Funding Request	Certify Connection	Invoice
	Must meet the three initial program criteria and make sure requested services are eligible	Develop scoring criteria to evaluate bids and describe service needs (posted on USAC website)	Choose the most "cost-effective" service provider	Provide information about services and selected service provider	Confirm service start and end dates	Initiate invoicing process and submit to service provider for review (HCF Program) Service provider submits invoice (Telecom Program)
TELECOM (orange)	Form 465			Form 466	Form 467	Invoice
HCF (green)	Form 460	Form 461		Form 462	Form 463	

TELECOMMUNICATIONS (TELECOM) PROGRAM FORMS

HEALTHCARE CONNECT FUND (HCF) PROGRAM FORMS

What is a Funding Request?

- Once a service provider is selected, the next step is to submit a funding request to USAC to provide information about the services selected and certify that those services are the most cost-effective option of the offers received.

- Specifies the type of service(s) ordered, cost, name of service provider(s), and terms of the service agreement(s).

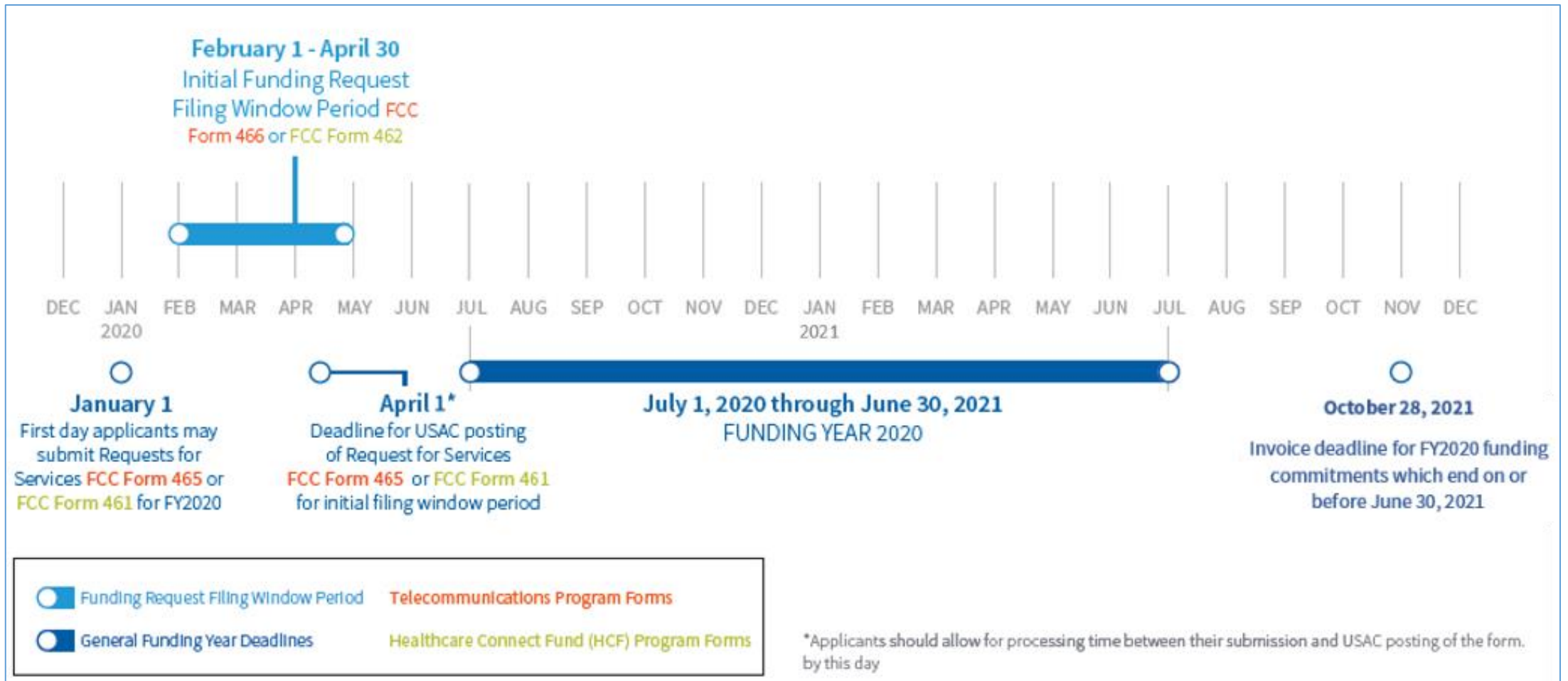- Applicants submit their HCF funding request using an **FCC Form 462** (Funding Request Form).

Who Must Submit a Funding Request

- All applicants requesting HCF Program funding must file a separate FCC Form 462 for each service provider for which funding is requested.
  - Multiple circuits can be included on one FCC Form 462 if is it for the same service provider.

When to Submit

- Applicants are unable to submit funding request forms outside of a filing window period.
  - **The FCC Form 462 must be submitted by the close of a filing window period to be considered for funding.**

- Funding Year (FY) 2020 Filing Window Period Opens February 1, 2020
  - **February 1, 2020 – April 30, 2020 11:59 p.m. EST**

- USAC suggests that applicants submit the funding requests as early as possible during the filing window.

- No changes can be made to your funding request after the filing window closes.

FY2020 Calendar

February 1 - April 30
Initial Funding Request Filing Window Period FCC Form 466 or FCC Form 462

DEC JAN 2020 FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC JAN 2021 FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

January 1
First day applicants may submit Requests for Services FCC Form 465 or FCC Form 461 for FY2020

April 1*
Deadline for USAC posting of Request for Services FCC Form 465 or FCC Form 461 for initial filing window period

July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021
FUNDING YEAR 2020

October 28, 2021
Invoice deadline for FY2020 funding commitments which end on or before June 30, 2021

Funding Request Filing Window Period   Telecommunications Program Forms

General Funding Year Deadlines   Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program Forms

*Applicants should allow for processing time between their submission and USAC posting of the form. by this day

Information Requests

- Forms with missing or incomplete information or documentation cannot be processed.

- Where USAC requires information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation will result in an **Information Request**.

  - FCC Form 462 Information Requests will be sent from an @usac.org email address.

- All account holders will receive all Information Requests.

- Applicants are given 14 calendar days to provide a response to the Information Request.

  - 11:59 p.m. EST on the 14th day would be the last time to respond to the Information Request.

- Information Requests not responded to within 14 calendar days **will result in a denial** of that form**.**

Submission Checklist

❑ Access to My Portal.

❑ Document(s) confirming the monthly cost for your services (e.g. a copy of your bill dated within the requested funding period) or the most currently available bill as the filing window closes before the funding year opens.

❑ A scanned copy of all bids that were received for your request for service including the winning bid, all bids that were rejected and any bids that were disqualified and why.

❑ A scanned copy of the bidding evaluation matrix.

❑ A scanned copy of any new contract signed for your services.

❑ Award letter to winning vendor.

❑ Contact information for:
   ❑ Service provider
   ❑ All responsible Account Holders

❑ The start and end location of your services.

❑ Viable source letter for consortia applicants (35% contribution)

* Any information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation will result in an Information Request.

Evergreen Contracts

- An Evergreen Contract is a multi-year contract between an HCP and a service provider that has been reviewed by USAC and endorsed as Evergreen, which allows an applicant to bypass competitive bidding for the life of the contract for the same terms.

- For the HCF Program, HCPs with Evergreen contracts may submit the FCC Form 462 for up to three funding years at a time for the length of the Evergreen contract designation.

Evergreen Contracts (continued)

- Applicants will be notified of an Evergreen determination on their Funding Commitment Letter (FCL). To be considered Evergreen, the multi-year contract must meet the following criteria:
  - Both parties are identified,
  - Contract is signed and dated by the HCP,
  - Contract specifies the bandwidth, type, quantity, and terms of service,
  - Contract has a specific duration,
  - Contract specifies the cost of services to be provided,
  - Contract includes the physical addresses or other identifying information of the HCPs purchasing from the contract, and
  - Contract must be entered into as a result of competitive bidding.

Evergreen Contracts – Voluntary Extensions

- Applicants who will be exercising voluntary extensions for an approved Evergreen contract should list the remaining expense periods as one expense and the length of the extension as another expense
  - Voluntary extensions must be memorialize in the contract and must have been included in the original Evergreen endorsement.
  - The decision to extend the contract must have been made before a funding request is filed.
  - Voluntary extensions cannot exceed five years.

Submission Tips

- Use the information on the original documentation (bill, contract, or service order) to enter the data into the FCC Form 462 and upload that document into My Portal with your submission.

- Remember you must also submit:
  - **Copies of all bids received** including winning, losing and disqualified.
  - **List of the people who evaluated the bids** with their names and titles.
  - **Evaluation documents** including the scores received by bidders based on the weighted criteria posted in the FCC Form 461.
  - **Award letter** to the winning vendor.

- Per the rules, you must have all supporting documents on hand at the time of submission and they must be uploaded when you submit your forms.

Submission Tips

- It is helpful to also submit a cover letter that includes a summary of your submission.

- Recommended things to include in your cover letter:
  - Where to find information about your circuit in the supporting documentation (i.e. Ethernet 20M - $XX.XX – Page 5 of Invoice)
  - Highlight/label any documentation that is submitted.

- Information that isn't clearly identified via supporting documentation will need to be confirmed from the service provider.
  - It is the HCPs responsibility to reach out to the service provider to get any missing information. USAC cannot reach out to the service provider on an HCP's behalf.

Identifying Applicable Charges on a Bill/Invoice - Example

For All Billing Inquiries, call 1-308-423-2000				
Account Number:				Page 4
Account Name:				
Due Date:	UPON RECEIPT			000001 W0053
Visit our website at www.bwtelcom.net				

VOICE MAIL - BUSINESS	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	25	0.00	0.00
CALL CONFERENCING	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	1	2.97	2.97
CALLER NAME AND NUMBER	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	2	3.47	6.94
LOOP	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	2	10.00	20.00
* ROTATION	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	5	1.50	7.50
POSITION ON THE KEY	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	2	5.00	10.00
INTERNET-ADD. MAILBOX	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	49	2.75	134.75
* MULTI LINE CHARGE	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	11	9.20	101.20
* TELECOMM RELAY SURCHARGE	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	11	0.02	0.22
* ACCESS RECOVERY CHARGE-MULTI	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	11	3.00	33.00
DUNDY COUNTY E911	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	11	1.00	11.00
BROADBAND ACCESS ADSL-UP TO 7M/7M *expense 1*	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	1	59.95	59.95
STATIC IP ADDRESS *expense 2*	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	3	12.50	37.50
BROADBAND ACCESS ADSL-UP TO 20M/10M	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	2	119.95	239.90
BROADBAND ACCESS-ADSL-UP TO 50M/10M *expense 3*	02/01/17-02/28/17	1 MONTH	2	134.95	269.90

Questions?
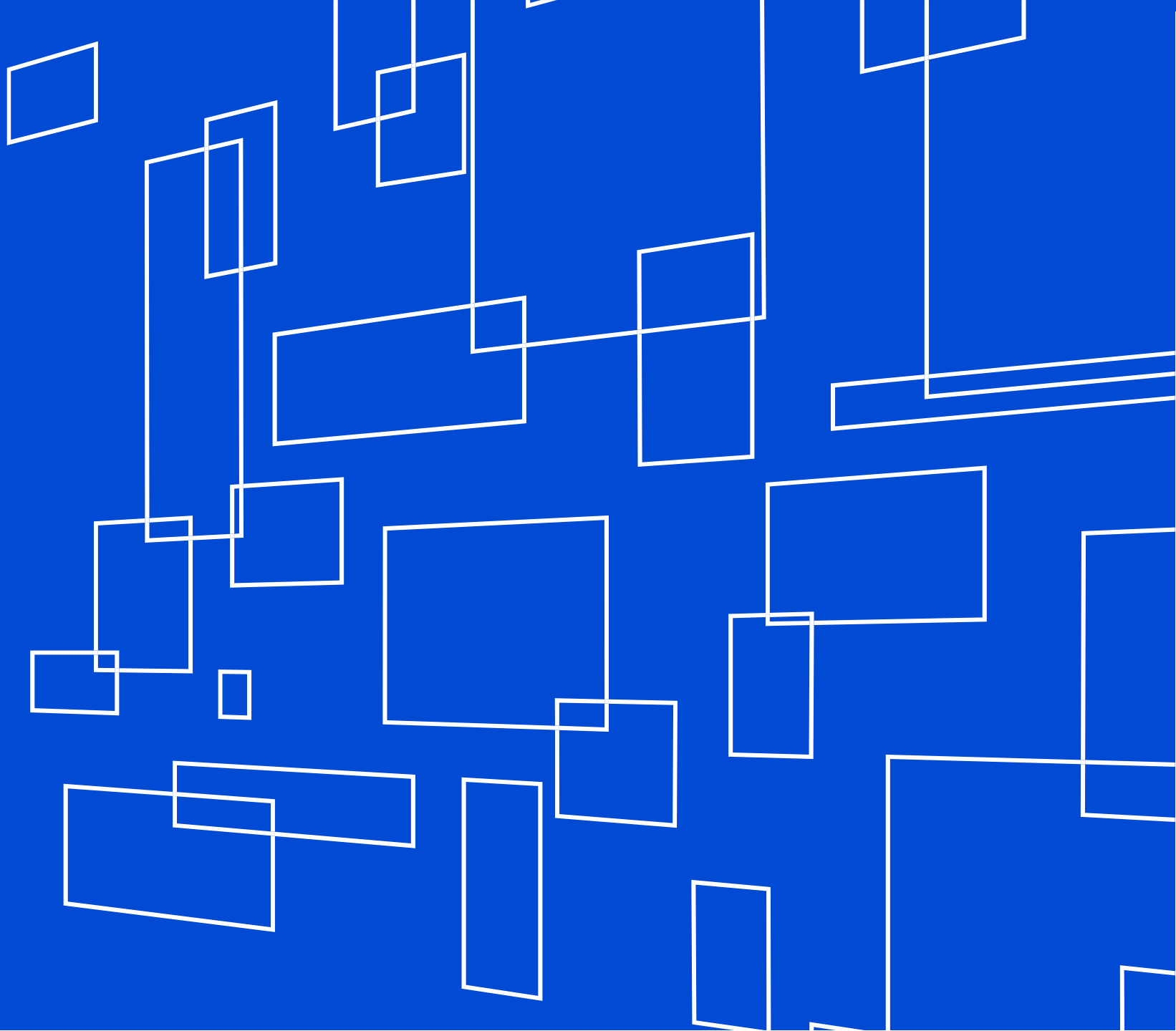
FCC Report and Order 19-78

Funding Request Best Practices

FCC Report and Order 19-78

- Final version adopted on August 1, 2019 and released on August 20, 2019.

- Published in the Federal Register on October 11, 2019 and effective on November 12, 2019. Some of the adopted rule changes will not take effect until FY2021.

- Takes action to promote transparency and predictability, and to further the efficient allocation of limited program resources while guarding against waste, fraud, and abuse.

- Does not affect FY2019 funding requests and applications.

- Read the Report and Order.

FCC Report and Order 19-78

- Adopts changes to every part of the application process.

- There are still two subprograms:
  - Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program
  - Telecommunications (Telecom) Program

- Applicants will still be required to seek HCP eligibility determinations, submit requests for services (i.e., seek competitive bids), submit requests for funding, and submit invoicing forms.

FCC Report and Order 19-78 Resources

- FCC Report and Order 19-78 [webpage](#) summarizes the Report and Order's major changes and includes the following resources:
  - FCC Report and Order 19-78 [Tip Sheet](#)
  - Webinar [recording and slides](#)

FCC Report and Order 19-78 Changes to Consider Now

- **Consortia Majority Rural Rule (HCF Only)** – Every consortium in the HCF Program must consist of more than 50% eligible rural sites starting in FY2020. Three-year grace period eliminated.
  - Rurality Compliance Tip Sheet

- **Consultant Registration** – USAC will issue a unique registration number to the consultant or outside expert and that number will be linked to the HCP's organization.

- **Telecom Competitive Bidding** – Telecom Program applicants can use every competitive bidding exemption applicable to the HCF Program, except 10k exemption.

What about rurality tiers and prioritization of support?

- Based on the FCC Report and Order, all eligible HCPs will be assigned a rurality tier for the purposes of prioritization.

- The RHC Program will continue to use the same definition of "rural area" under the FCC's rules.
  - In the case where demand exceeds available funding, USAC will prioritize funding based on the assigned rurality tiers and those areas in a Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P).

- Since the rural definition has not changed, health care providers (HCPs) currently approved as "rural" will retain their rural status.

- **The RHC Program will assign your rurality tier** – you do not have to do anything!

Public Notice DA 19-1253

- On December 10, 2019, the FCC released [Public Notice DA 19-1253](#), providing guidance on the implementation schedule for reforms set forth by FCC Report and Order 19-78.

- As a result, certain reforms originally slated for FY2020 will now be implemented for FY2021.

Implementation Moved to FY2021

- **Bid Evaluation**: HCPs must include details about minimum service needs and disqualification factors with their request for services.

- **Declaration of Assistance**: Service providers must include a declaration of assistance when approving invoices and describe the nature of the relationship they have with a consultant, vendor, or outside expert who aids them in the preparation of their application.

- **Site and Service Substitutions**: Telecom applicants will be allowed to submit site and service substitutions.

Questions?
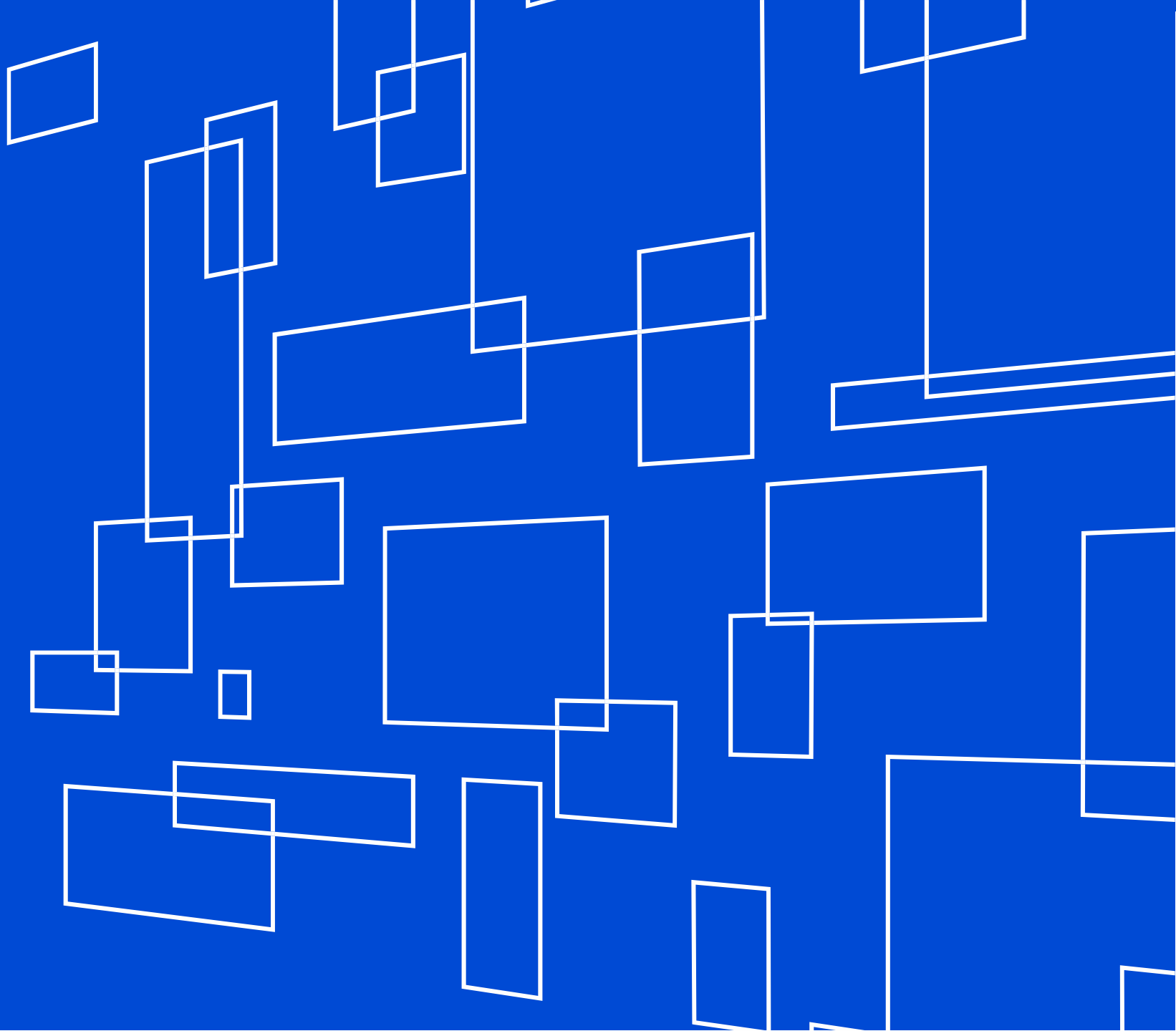
Submitting the FCC Form 462

Funding Request Best Practices for FY2020

Individual vs. Consortia Applications

- A consortium is two or more health care providers (HCPs) that choose to request support on a single application.

- In a consortium funding request you could have multiple HCP's listed under one FCC Form 462.

- In an individual application you would submit a funding request for each approved HCP circuit location.
  - The circuit location on the supporting documentation should match the approved location found on your FCC Form 460.

If NOT Using a Competitive Bidding Exemption: Select "Create 462" from "Form 461" Tab

If USING a Competitive Bidding Exemption "Create 462 Exempt from Competitive Bidding" from "Form 460" Tab

Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- Purchasing services from a master service agreement (MSA) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on its behalf of you and others, and which was awarded pursuant to applicable competitive bidding requirements;

- Requesting support using contracts previously endorsed by USAC (MSA under the Pilot Program or the HCF Program);

- Using an active multi-year contract designated as "Evergreen" for the RHC Program (exemption applies for the life of the contract); or is

- Using a contract negotiated and approved under the Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program.

Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- HCF applicants seeking support for $10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year do not have to complete an FCC Form 461
  - For consortia applicants, this exemption is $10,000 for all funding requests submitted for the consortium.
  - Applicants selecting this option cannot also request multi-year funding commitments.
  - Exemption does not apply to the Telecom Program.

Select Type of Expense

Single or Multiple Expenses:

Please note that funding requests can only be submitted during a filing window period. We recommend that you submit your funding request in the earliest filing window period possible to receive funding. For more information about filing window periods, click here

Select whether there are one or more eligible expenses:

○ Individual HCP, single eligible expense
○ Individual HCP, multiple eligible expenses

Create New Form 462

General Information

Vendor Information

Competitive Bidding Information

Competitive Bidding Exemption

Single Eligible Expense Request for Funding

Contract Information

Contract Information *

RHC Note: If you wish to request support on a month-to-month basis, select the 'Please process my form as month-to-month. I do not wish to submit a contract for review' box below. If the box is selected, only enter the service start date, contract information (Eg. Contract friendly name, term, extension, signed date, etc...) is not required.

- If you are requesting an Evergreen, MSA, E-rate contract competitive bidding exemption or have undergone a competitive bidding process without intention of receiving support on a month-to-month basis, a contract is required with this FCC Form 462 submission.

- Applicants must submit a contract or other documentation that clearly identifies (1) the vendor(s)/service provider(s) selected and the HCP(s) who will receive the services; (2) the service, bandwidth and costs for which support is being requested; (3) the term of the service agreement(s) if applicable.

- A contract is not required for applicants claiming a competitive bidding exemption for Annual Costs of $10,000 or less.

☐ Please process my form as month-to-month. I do not wish to submit a contract for review.

[Select a Contract]   [Download Contract.docx]   [Remove Selected Contract]

19 Contract ID   1750001

[Other Documentation]

19a Date contract signed * [_____]   Contract End Date [_____]

19b Expected service start date * [_____]

19c. Length of initial contract term * [_____]   Months ⦿   Years ○

If this is a multi-year contract, would you like this contract reviewed for evergreen endorsement? * [Select an option ▼]

RHC Note: If lines 19d and 19e are not applicable, enter N/A in the fields.

19d Number of contract extensions * [_____]

19e Length of optional extension(s) combined * [_____]   Months ⦿   Years ○

FCC Form 462 Submitted With a Contract

- To have a contract reviewed for Evergreen status, click the "Select a Contract" button on the Expense Items Tab. This will generate a contract ID that USAC uses for the Evergreen review process.

- Contracts uploaded using the "Other Documentation" button will not be reviewed for Evergreen status.

- Notification of Evergreen status is reflected in the Funding Commitment Letter (FCL).

FCC Form 462 Submitted Without a Contract

- As part of the FCC Form 462 supporting documentation, if a bill is uploaded without a contract, the reviewer will treat the form as a month-to-month funding request and confirm that the process is in compliance with the competitive bidding rules.

- Only forms submitted with contracts are eligible for multi-year funding.

- Forms submitted as month-to-month are only eligible for up to one funding year of support.

- Applicants will need to competitively bid services each year if they do not submit a contract with their FCC Form 462.

- When submitting a funding request as month-to-month (without a contract), check the "month-to-month" box.

Circuit Information

Financial Information

Financial Information

22 Is this a multi-year funding request? ☐

Multi-year commitments cannot exceed 3 funding years and may not extend beyond the expiration date of an Evergreen Contract

23 Expense frequency *

Choose a Frequency ▼
Choose a Frequency
Monthly
One-Time
Annual
Semi-Annual
Quarterly

24 Quantity of expense periods *

Undiscounted cost per expense period (excluding taxes & fees) *

Taxes & fees per expense period

25 Undiscounted cost per expense period

Upload documentation showing the cost of the services and any applicable taxes and/or surcharges *   **Click to Upload**

26 Source of HCP Contribution (Choose at least one source) *

Eligible HCP participant ☐

State grants, funding, or appropriations ☐

Federal funding, grants, loans, or appropriations ☐

Tribal government funding ☐

Other grant funding including private grants ☐

27 One-time installation charges *

28 This contract contains a Service Level Agreement.   Yes ○   No ◉

Save and Exit **Save and Go Back** **Save and Continue** **Exit**

Additional Documentation

Certifications

Certifications   📄 Preview PDF ❓ Form Guide

Request for Confidentiality

32 Is applicant requesting confidential treatment and non-disclosure of commercial and financial information? (See instructions for specific information covered by this request.)

Yes ○   No ◉

Certifications

☐ 33. I certify under penalty of perjury that I am authorized to submit this request on behalf of the applicant or consortium.

☐ 34. I certify under penalty of perjury that I have examined this request and all attachments and to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, all statements of fact contained therein are true.

☐ 35. I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium has considered all bids received and selected the most cost-effective method of providing the requested services. "Cost-effective" is defined as the "method that costs the least after consideration of the features, quality of transmission, reliability, and other factors that the applicant deems relevant to choosing a method of providing the required health care services." 47 CFR § 54.622(c).

☐ 36. I certify under penalty of perjury that all RHC Program support will be used only for eligible health care purposes.

☐ 37. I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium is not requesting support for the same service from both the Telecommunications Program and the Healthcare Connect Fund Program.

☐ 38. I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium satisfies all of the requirements under Section 254 of the Act and applicable Commission rules, and understand that any letter from the Administrator that erroneously commits funds for the benefit of the applicant may be subject to rescission.

☐ 39. I certify under penalty of perjury that I have reviewed all applicable rules and requirements for the RHC Program and complied with those rules and requirements.

☐ 40. I understand that all documentation associated with this application, including all bids, contracts, scoring matrices, and other information associated with the competitive bidding process, all billing records for services received and any other documentation demonstrating compliance with the rules must be retained for a period of at least five years after the last date of service delivered in a particular funding year pursuant to 47 CFR §§ 54.631 or as otherwise prescribed by the Commission's rules.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant or consortium and/or its consultant, if applicable, has not solicited or accepted a gift or any other thing of value from a service provider participating in or seeking to participate in the RHC Program.

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that any consultants or third parties associated with this request or RFP do not have an ownership interest, sales commission arrangement, or other financial stake in the vendor chosen to provide the requested services, and that they have otherwise complied with RHC Program rules, including the Commission's rules requiring fair and open competitive bidding.

[Save and Exit] [Save and Go Back] [Save and Continue] [Exit]

Signature

GENERAL INFORMATION   VENDOR INFORMATION   COMPETITIVE BIDDING INFORMATION
SINGLE ELIGIBLE EXPENSE REQUEST FOR FUNDING   ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION   CERTIFICATIONS   ● SIGNATURE

Signature   Preview PDF

46 Email

43 Printed Name of Authorized Person   First Name: Middle Initial: Last Name:

44 Title/Position of Authorized Person

45 Phone   Ext.

47 Employer

48 Employer's FCC RN

Signing on behalf of: Select An Account Holder   ▼

Save and Exit   Save and Go Back   Certify   Exit

After Submitting

- You will receive an email letting you know that your form has been received.

  - If you do not receive an email, please go back into My Portal and be sure that you actually signed and submitted the form.

- The reviewer will reach out if additional information is needed.

- No funding decisions will be issued until after the close of the filing window period.

- Once your funding request has been approved, you will receive a funding commitment letter (FCL) that will include all corresponding information to your funding request including Evergreen contract endorsement.

Reminder - Funding Caps & Funding Limitations

- **$10,000 Exemption** (§ 54.622(i)(5) Competitive bidding requirement and exemptions)

  - Applicants do not have to go through the competitive bidding process if they are requesting $10,000 or less in undiscounted costs in aggregate for one fund year.

  - For consortia applicants, this exemption is for requested funding for the entire consortium.

- **Submitting an FCC Form 461 without an RFP** (§54.622(e)(5)(i) Competitive bidding requirement and exemptions)

  - Consortia applicants who submit an FCC Form 461 without an RFP are limited to $100,000 per funding year in program support.

Reminder - Funding Caps & Funding Limitations (continued)

- **Large non-rural hospitals** (§ 54.607(c) Eligible recipients)
  - Eligible non-rural hospitals with 400 or more licensed patient beds may receive no more than $30,000 per year in HCF support for eligible recurring charges and no more than $70,000 in HCF support for eligible nonrecurring charges every 5 years.

- **Upfront Costs** (§ 54.616 Upfront payments)
  - Only consortia applicants are eligible for this expense type.
  - Upfront expenses include all non-recurring charges for services, equipment or facilities, other than reasonable and customary installation charges of up to $5,000.
  - If a consortium makes a request for support for upfront payments that exceeds, on average, $50,000 per eligible site in the consortium, support must be pro-rated over at least three years and the upfront cost must be part of a multi-year contract.
  - Supported services with associated with bandwidth speeds <1.5 mbps are ineligible for funding.

Best Practices – Equipment (§ 54.613 Eligible Equipment)

- "(a) Both individual and consortium applicants may receive support for **network equipment necessary to make functional an eligible service** that is supported under the Healthcare Connect Fund."

  - Equipment must be broken out into line items based on where the equipment will actually reside and must correspond to an FRN with a supported circuit.

  - A **network diagram** helps confirm where the equipment is located both at the HCP location and where the service is handed off from the service provider.

  - You must **provide the FRN with the corresponding broadband circuit**. If we cannot confirm that there is a corresponding circuit funded under HCF, we cannot approve funding for the equipment.

Best Practices – Equipment (continued)

Financial Information

AA. Quantity of Items Invoiced *   1

AB. Multi-Year Funding Request   ☐

AC. Expense Frequency *   One-Time ▾

Applicant Entered
AD. Quantity of Expense Periods *

- Components of a piece of equipment should be broken out by part on the invoice or contract so that we can determine if any ineligible components are part of the bundle; however, we would not provide funding for a power cord by itself if the router is ineligible.

- Clearly identify on the documentation what constitutes an "item" e.g. router, switch, etc. and list the quantity on Line AA of the FCC Form 462.

Best Practices – Equipment (continued)

- Use a separate line for a service contract or warranty such as "SmartNet" that accompanies a particular piece of equipment and clearly identify it on the corresponding documentation.

- Please use the drop-down menu selections to describe the equipment as accurately as possible e.g. warranty, router (HCP owned), switch (HCP owned), wireless equipment (HCP owned), etc.

Best Practices – Equipment for Consortia(§ 54.613 Eligible Equipment)

- "(b) Consortium applicants may also receive support for network equipment necessary to manage, control, or maintain an eligible service or a dedicated health care broadband network. Support for network equipment is not available for networks that are not dedicated to health care."

  - A network diagram helps confirm where the equipment is situated on the network.

  - Equipment must be broken out into line items based on where the equipment will actually reside.

  - Since this type of equipment is only eligible for consortium applicants, all of the members participating on the network should be registered with an FCC Form 460 and the circuits that this equipment manages should be filed as a consortium and not as an individual applicant.

  - Do not bundle multiple units on one line item; please clearly identify on the documentation what constitutes an "item" and list the quantity on Line AA of the FCC Form 462.

  - Please use the drop-down menu selections to describe the equipment as accurately as possible.

  - For these types of expenses, the applicant must clearly demonstrate that the requested equipment performs the function explicit in the rule, e.g. that it manages, controls or maintains a supported network.

Best Practices – Networks (Primarily Consortia Applicants)

- All sites participating on the network should be registered through an FCC Form 460.

- The documentation submitted must be associated with the HCP listed on the [Network Cost Worksheet (NCW)](#) of the FCC Form 462.

- You must clearly demonstrate through supporting documentation that the expense listed is for the benefit of the HCP on the line item.

- It is your responsibility to provide clear narratives, network diagrams, and documentation to adequately describe the network.

- Network diagrams are helpful in providing a snapshot of the network; documentation such as contracts, invoices, and/or service orders must confirm the diagram.

- All supporting documentation must come from the service provider.

Best Practices – Off-Site Data Centers and Administrative Offices (HCF rule §54.615)

- Provide the end location for all expense items associated with off-site data centers and administrative offices as these entity types are only eligible for funding based on the following eligible connections:

  - Eligible HCP and off-site data center or off-site administrative office

  - Two off-site data centers

  - Two off-site administrative offices

  - Off-site data center and off-site administrative office

  - Off-site data center or off-site administrative office and the public internet or another network

- Be sure to keep the FCC Form 460 for the data center or administrative offices updated with all sites that are using that data center or administrative office (Form 460 Block 1, Line 2 A & B).

- The address of both ends of the connection must be entered and both locations must belong to an eligible HCP, data center, or administrative office.

Questions?
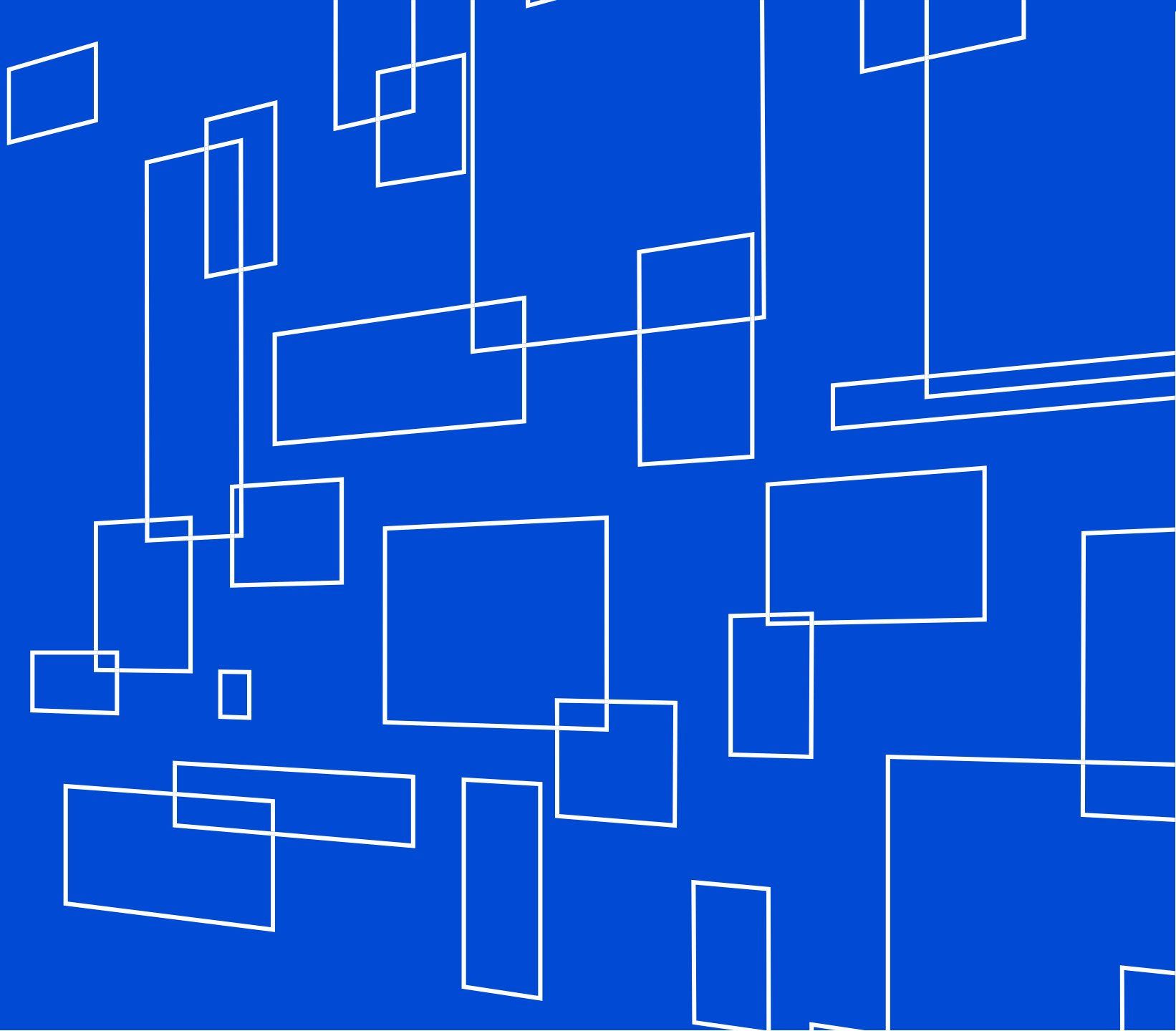
Resources

Funding Request Best Practices for FY2020

Best Practices: Communicating with Your Service Provider

- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.

- Include your service provider when you reply to Information Requests via email.

- HCPs are required to retain documentation for a period of five years.

Milestones to Apply for Funding for FY2020: HCF Program
Recommended Last Day to Submit for Individual HCPs NOT using a Request for Proposal (RFP)

HCF Program Form	Last Day to Submit for Individual HCPs NOT using a Request for Proposal (RFP)
FCC Form 460 – Eligibility	February 10, 2020 Recommended Date
FCC Form 461 – Request for Services	March 12, 2020 Recommended Date
FCC Form 462 – Funding Request	April 30, 2020 **Deadline to Submit***

Please note that these dates (with the exception of the FCC Form 462 filing window deadline of April 30) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.

Milestones to Apply for Funding for FY2020: HCF Program
Recommended Last Day to Submit for Individual HCPs USING a Request for Proposal (RFP)

HCF Program Form	Last Day to Submit for Individual HCPs USING a Request for Proposal (RFP)
FCC Form 460 – Eligibility	February 1, 2020 Recommended Date
FCC Form 461 – Request for Services	March 1, 2020 Recommended Date
FCC Form 462 – Funding Request	April 30, 2020 **Deadline to Submit***

Please note that these dates (with the exception of the FCC Form 462 filing window deadline of April 30) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.

RHC Program Help Desk

- Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org

  - Email at any time to request a one-on-one appointment to learn more about the application process or ask specific questions.

  - Include in your email

    ◇ HCP Number

    ◇ FRN Number

- Phone: **(800) 453-1546**

  - Hours are 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET
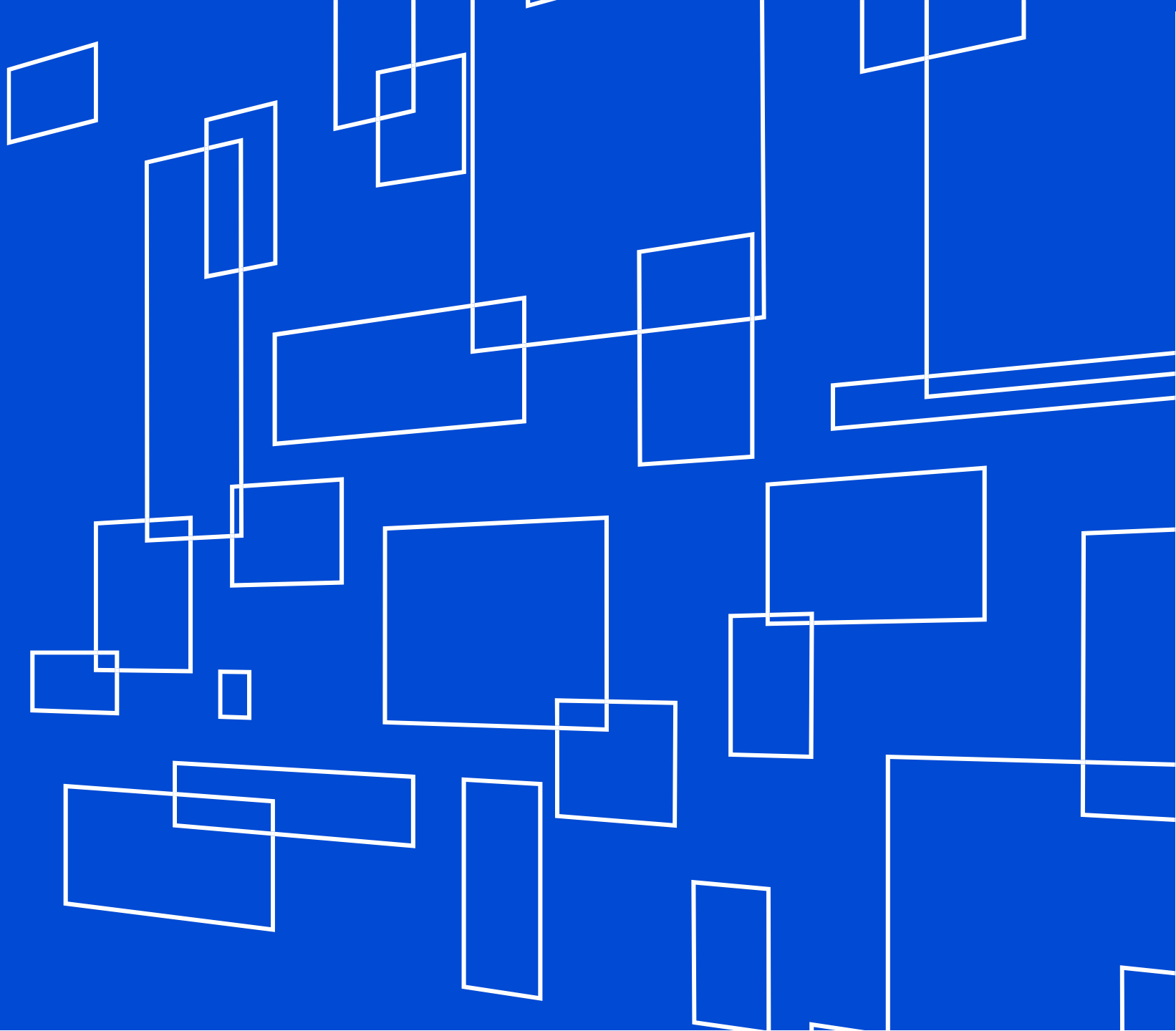
The Help Desk

The Help Desk CAN	The Help Desk CANNOT
• Answer general questions regarding both programs	• Determine the eligibility of a specific site or service before an official form submission
• Provide account holder information for an HCP	• Review a form or document for accuracy before an official form submission
• Provide clarity regarding FCC Report and Order 19-78	• Contact a services provider or other account holder on someone else's behalf
• Provide helpful resources and best practices for forms	• Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal
• Assist with My Portal	• Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

Online Resources

- [RHC Learn](#)

- Consortia Majority Rural Compliance [Tip Sheet](#)

- [Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#)

- [Request for Proposals (RFPs)](#)

- [Network Plans](#)

- Telecom Funding Request Webinar – Thursday, January 16 2:00 p.m. ET
  - [Register here](#)!

Questions?

Thank you for joining us today!

- RHC Help Desk:
  - RHC-Assist@usac.org

  - (800) 453-1546

  - Hours are 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET Monday - Friday