Connected Care Pilot Program Funding Request Best Practices
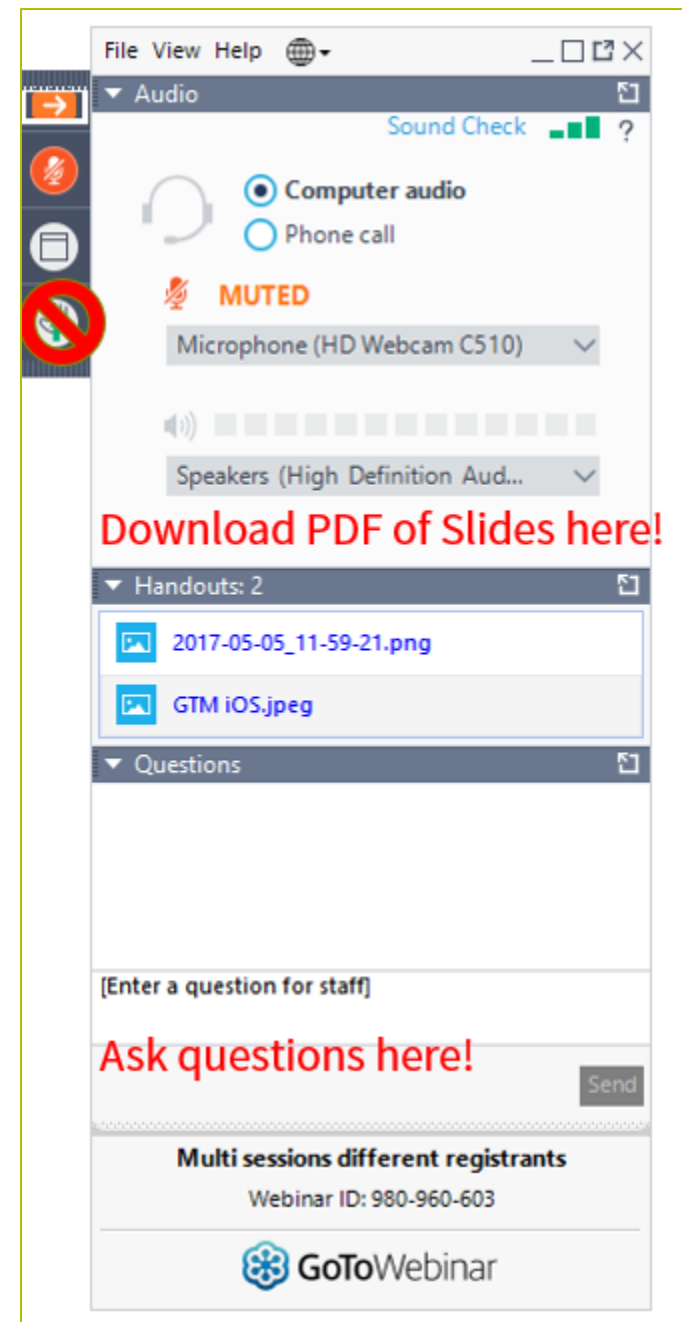
Submitting the FCC Form 462

July 26, 2023

Universal Service Administrative Co.

DISCLAIMER

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. This is a new feature we are testing out to improve webinar accessibility for all. We understand it is a significant change and appreciate your patience. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

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 CCPP Learn

Meet Our Team

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Senior Communications
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Agenda

- Funding Request Overview

- Introduction to Best Practices

- Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- Submitting the FCC Form 462

- Best Practices & Resources

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*

    - *Submit as an individual HCP and as a consortium*

    - *Submit using a competitive bidding exemption*

- *Respond to Information Requests*

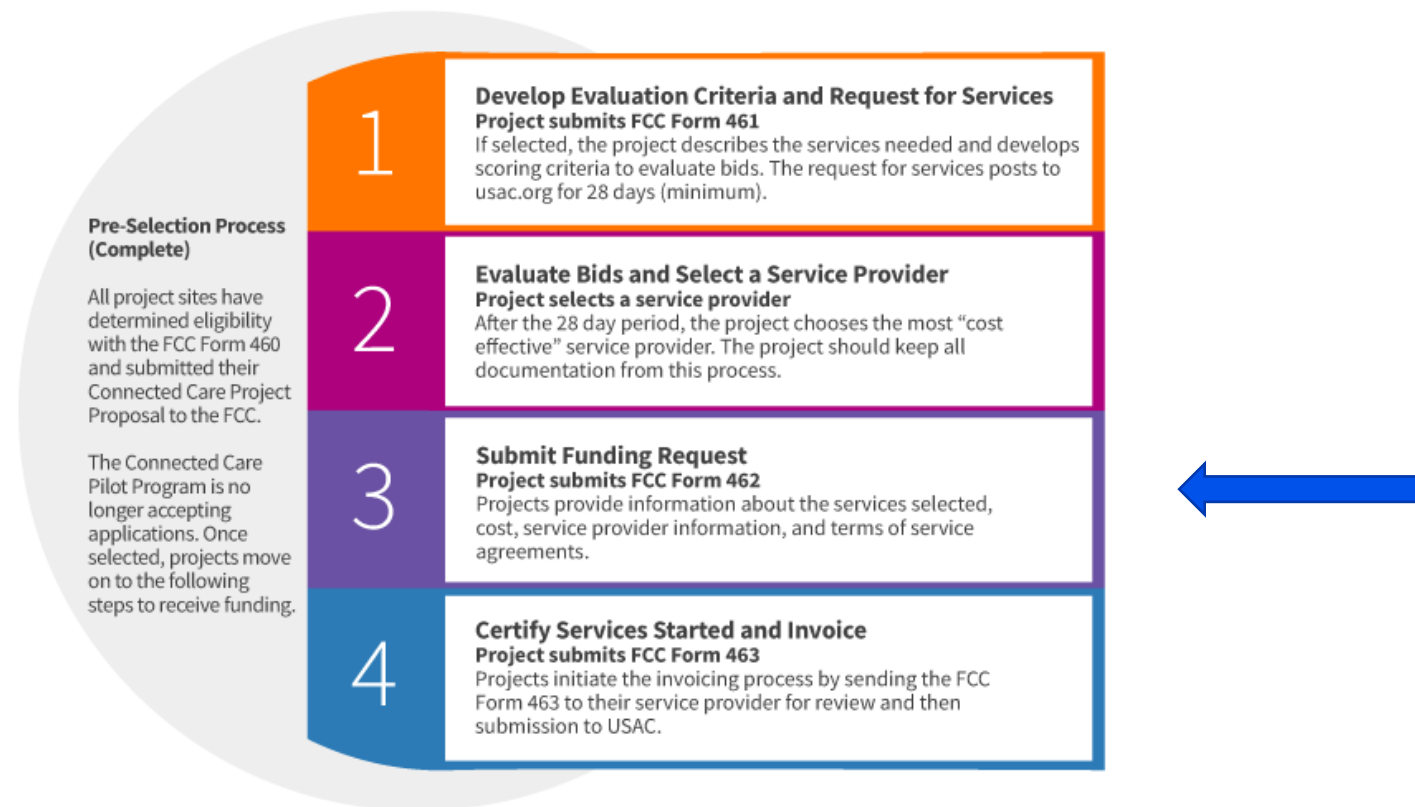- *Locate important resources on the USAC website*

Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HCP	Health Care Provider (your site)
HCP Number	Number associated with your site
PAH	Primary Account Holder
LOA	Letter of Agency (Consortium Only)
ACSD	Allowable Contract Selection Date
FRN	Funding Request Number
NCW	Network Cost Worksheet
FCL	Funding Commitment Letter

Funding Request Overview

CCPP Funding Request Webinar

Connected Care Pilot Program Application Process

Pre-Selection Process (Complete)

All project sites have determined eligibility with the FCC Form 460 and submitted their Connected Care Project Proposal to the FCC.

The Connected Care Pilot Program is no longer accepting applications. Once selected, projects move on to the following steps to receive funding.

1 **Develop Evaluation Criteria and Request for Services**
Project submits FCC Form 461
If selected, the project describes the services needed and develops scoring criteria to evaluate bids. The request for services posts to usac.org for 28 days (minimum).

2 **Evaluate Bids and Select a Service Provider**
Project selects a service provider
After the 28 day period, the project chooses the most "cost effective" service provider. The project should keep all documentation from this process.

3 **Submit Funding Request**
Project submits FCC Form 462
Projects provide information about the services selected, cost, service provider information, and terms of service agreements.

4 **Certify Services Started and Invoice**
Project submits FCC Form 463
Projects initiate the invoicing process by sending the FCC Form 463 to their service provider for review and then submission to USAC.

*Note: Each physical site/location must submit its individual FCC Form 460, even if part of a hospital system. A hospital system is not considered one entity; it must form a consortium to apply.

What is a Funding Request?

- Once a service provider is selected, following the posting of an FCC Form 461 and waiting at least 28 days, 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, and terms of the service agreement(s).

- Projects submit their funding request using an **FCC Form 462** (Funding Request Form) in My Portal.

- USAC reviews the funding request and issues a Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) for eligible items.

Who Must Submit a Funding Request?

- All Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP) projects requesting funding for expenses that were part of their CCPP application must file a separate FCC Form 462 for each service provider for which funding is requested.

  - Multiple circuits or services can be included on one FCC Form 462 if it is for the same service provider.

  - If submitting as a consortium, multiple HCPs can be included on one FCC Form 462 if using the same service provider.

  - USAC will review the FCC Form 462 and make final determinations regarding the eligibility of the network equipment and services requested before committing funding to each pilot project.

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 HCPs listed under one FCC Form 462 so long as they are requesting funding from the same service provider.

- In an individual application you would submit a funding request for each approved HCP location.

  - The HCP location that's receiving the service, listed on the supporting documentation, should match the HCP location entered on the FCC Form 462.

When to Submit

- On March 16, 2022, the FCC issued a [News Release](#), announcing the selection of 16 additional projects for the Connected Care Pilot Program.

- The FCC has awarded a total of $98 million in funding for pilot projects that serve patients in 40 states plus Washington, DC.

- The deadline for all Connected Care Pilot Program participants to file their initial funding request was September 16, 2022.

- Applicants may submit as many funding requests as needed to use the entire award as long as they comply with all program rules.

Eligible Services

Category	Eligible Services	Examples
Patient Broadband Internet Access Services/Health Care Provider Broadband Data Connections	New or upgraded broadband connections (whether for health care provider or participating patients) necessary for connected care services for the Pilot Program	Broadband Connections o Digital Subscriber Line o Cable Modem o Other Copper Wireline o Optical Carrier/Fiber to the End-User o Terrestrial Fixed Wireless o Mobile Wireless (e.g., 3G, LTE, 4G, 5G) o Satellite o Broadband over Powerline • Firewall Service
Other Connected Care Information Services	Services for connected care that capture, transmit (including video visits), and store health care data for connected care. This includes information services with "store-and-forward" technology, patient reported outcome platforms, and remote patient monitoring capabilities to monitor patients.	• HIPAA compliant (or requirement waived) video services • HIPAA compliant (or requirement waived) telehealth solutions/packages/platforms, suites of services. • One-time, annual, recurring monthly costs for information service • Licenses, subscriptions, or recurring charges necessary for providers to access or use eligible information service.

Note: This eligible services chart is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

Eligible Services (continued)

Category	Eligible Services	Examples
Network Equipment	Certain network equipment necessary to make Internet service or connected care services for the HCP/Patient for the Pilot Program functional (e.g., routers) or necessary to manage, control, or operate a supported broadband service.	• Equipment that terminates a carrier's or other provider's transmission facility and any router/switch that is directly connected to either the facility or the terminating equipment. • Network equipment that helps manage, control, or operate a supported broadband service (consortia applicants only) • Servers used exclusively for eligible broadband services • Routers (including at patient's home) • Switches

Miscellaneous	Various miscellaneous costs associated with eligible services listed above may be eligible for support. Applicants should request eligible miscellaneous services in the same category as the associated service being obtained or installed.	• Installation, Activation, and Initial Configuration (including implementation and integration costs necessary to integrate eligible information services with existing systems).
		• Fees and charges that are a necessary component of an eligible service:
		    • Shipping charges
		    • Taxes, surcharges, and other reasonable charges incurred in obtaining an eligible product or service

Note: This eligible services chart is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

Ineligible Services

- End-user devices

- Medical supplies

- Provider (Doctor's) Fees

- Administrative and Personnel costs

- Live Translation Services

- Internal Connections between Provider Sites

- Storage Devices

- IT support

- Maintenance costs

- DocuSign

- VPN Solutions

- Special Construction/Network Builds

- Applications not purchased as part of connected care information service

- Standalone Voice, including VoIP

- Standalone messaging services

- Network Equipment not necessary to make broadband or connected care services functional or manage, control or operate a supported broadband service

Note: This ineligible services chart is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

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Questions?

Introduction to Best Practices

CCPP Funding Request Webinar

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.

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

  - 11:59 p.m. ET on the 14th day would be deadline to respond to the Information Request.

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

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Submission Checklist

❏ Document(s) confirming the monthly cost for your services (e.g. a copy of your bill or price quote for the requested funding period)

❏ A 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 copy of the bidding evaluation matrix

❏ A list of people who evaluated bids including title, role, and their relationship to the HCPs participating in the Project

❏ Internal documents related to the selection of the service provider (if applicable)

❏ Copies of any correspondence with service providers prior to and during the competitive bidding process (if applicable)

❏ A copy of any new contract signed for your services

❏ Award letter to winning vendor

❏ Contact information for the service provider and all responsible account holders

❏ The start and end location of your services

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

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 CCPP 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, Continued

- 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 service in the supporting documentation (i.e. Internet 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 by the service provider.

  - It is the account holder's responsibility to reach out to the service provider to get any missing information. USAC cannot reach out to the service provider on an account holder's behalf.

Supporting Documentation - Example

- Marked up invoice that clearly reflects HCP, Billing Account Number (BAN) Circuit Location(s), Bandwidth, Service Type, and Monthly Recurring Charge (MRC) for each expense item.

Competitive Bidding Exemptions

CCPP Funding Request Webinar

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

- On the Form 461 tab, click the **Create 462** button.
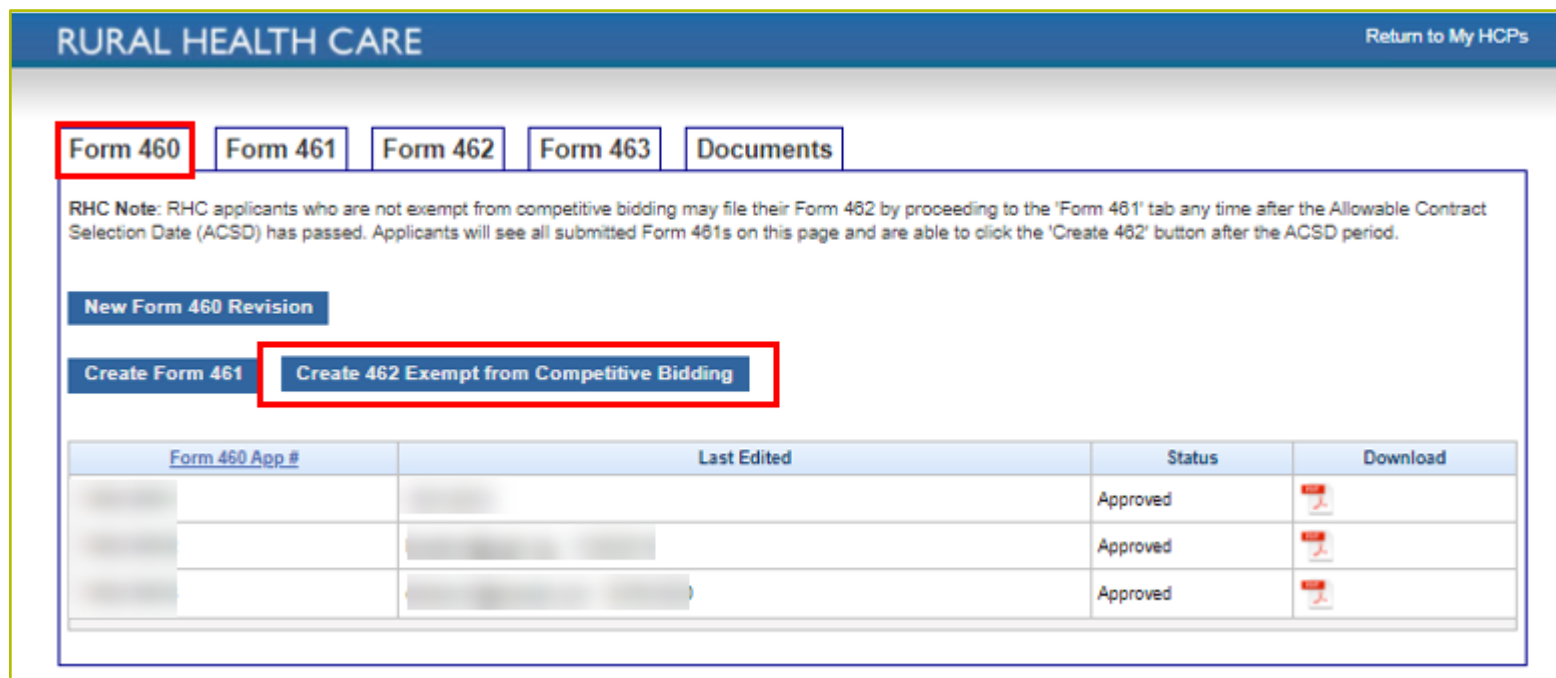
If USING a Competitive Bidding Exemption "Create 462 Exempt from Competitive Bidding" from "Form 460" Tab

- On the Form 460 tab, click the **Create 462 Exempt from Competitive Bidding** button.

What is a Competitive Bidding Exemption?

- In some cases, the service needs or contract conditions allow you to be exempt from competitive bidding.

- With a competitive bidding exemption, you will not have to undergo the competitive bidding process, and do not need to create evaluation criteria or collect bids from service providers.

- A competitive bidding exemption will allow you to skip the FCC Form 461 (for the purposes of competitive bidding) entirely and proceed directly to submitting a funding request.

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 already designated as "Evergreen" for the RHC program (exemption applies for the life of the contract);

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

- Projects 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.

Connected Care Pilot Program-Specific Exemption

- **Pre-Existing Contract:** The eligible health care provider already has entered into a legally binding agreement with a service provider for services or equipment eligible for support in the Pilot Program and that legally binding agreement itself was the product of competitive bidding.

  - This exemption applies only when the contract was signed before the Project was selected to participate in CCPP and the contract was not entered into solely for purposes of the Pilot Program.

  - The prior competitive bidding process must have included public solicitation of bids or the Project must have evaluated multiple quotes or bids before signing the contract.

Questions?

Submitting the FCC Form 462

CCPP Funding Request Webinar

Select Type of Expense

- Choose the hyperlink to indicate whether you are filing for a single expense or multiple expenses.

General Information

- Click the radio button beside **Connected Care Pilot Program**.

Vendor Information

- Click the **Search for a SPIN/498 ID** button.

- To search for a SPIN, type in SPIN/498 ID or Vendor name.

- Confirm the correct SPIN with your service provider before proceeding.

Competitive Bidding Information

- Enter number of bids received and service provider selection date in fields.

- Answer the questions by clicking **Yes** or **No** radio buttons.

Competitive Bidding Exemption

- Click **Add Contract** beside the claimed exemption to upload the contract.

Single Eligible Expense Request for Funding

- Enter information in fields.

- Red asterisk (*) indicates required field.

Contract Information

- Click **Select a Contract** to choose an uploaded contract or upload a new contract.

- Enter information about the contract in fields indicated.

- Contracts are not endorsed as evergreen in CCPP

    - Select **No** for question under 19 c.

FCC Form 462 Submitted With a Contract

- If you are submitting the FCC Form 462 with a contract, you will enter contract information in the appropriate fields and upload a complete copy of the contract
    - Contract sign date and contract end date
    - Contract term
    - Voluntary extensions
- Unlike the RHC programs, contracts entered into for CCPP products or services will not be reviewed for nor approved for evergreen status.
- Projects may use contracts already approved as evergreen under the HCF or Telecom programs and bypass competitive bidding using the Evergreen Exemption

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 competitive bidding 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 twelve months of support.

- Projects 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.

Questions?

Circuit Information

- Information on line 20 is prepopulated based on information in the FCC Form 460.

Financial Information

- Choose frequency of expense.

- Enter quantity of expense periods.

- Enter undiscounted costs and taxes and fees (if applicable).

- Upload the contract or invoice with information about the cost of the service.

- Check all that apply under **Source of HCP Contribution**.

Additional Documentation

- Upload all supporting documentation including competitive bidding documents.

Certifications

- Read and click all certifications

Signature

- Sign using your My Portal password.

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 signed and fully submitted the form.

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

- Funding decisions will be issued on a rolling basis.

- 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.

Best Practices - Equipment

- Equipment that terminates a service provider's transmission facility

  - Includes any router/switch that is directly connected to either the facility or the terminating equipment

- Network equipment that helps manage, control or operate a supported broadband service (consortia only)

- Network equipment purchases necessary to make a connected care information service functional

- Servers used exclusively for eligible broadband services

- Routers (including at a patient's home)

- Switches

- Installation, Activation and Initial Configuration

- Fees and charges that are a necessary component of an eligible service

  - Shipping charges

  - Taxes, surcharges and other reasonable charges incurred in obtaining eligible products or services

*Note: This eligible services list is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

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Best Practices - Equipment, Continued

Financial Information

AA. Quantity of Items Invoiced *

AB. Multi-Year Funding Request ☐

AC. Expense Frequency * One-Time

AD. Quantity of Expense Periods * 1

- Components of a piece of equipment should be broken out by part on the invoice or contract so that USAC 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.

- Please note, similar to HCF, inside connections and inside wiring, including wireless access points, are not eligible for funding under CCPP.

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.

- Please use the Equipment in Connected Care Pilot Program tip sheet as a resource

Best Practices - Consortia

- All sites participating in the project must be **registered through an FCC Form 460**.

- The documentation submitted must be associated with the HCP listed on the 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**.

Site and Service Substitutions

- After the submission and approval of an FCC Form 462, CCPP Program participants may request a site or service substitution if:

    - The substitution is provided for in the contract, within the change clause, or constitutes a minor modification;

    - The site is an eligible health care provider and the service is an eligible service under the CCPP Program;

    - The substitution does not violate any contract provision or state, Tribal, or local procurement laws; and

    - The requested change is within the scope of the controlling Request for Services, including any applicable RFP used in the competitive bidding process.

- Site and service substitutions cannot increase the funding commitment.

- Please use the information on the [Site and Service Substitutions](#) webpage as a resource.

Questions?

Best Practices & Resources

CCPP Funding Request Webinar

Best Practices – Communicating with Your Service Provider

- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the funding request and disbursement process.

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

- USAC cannot reach out to service providers on your behalf.

- Account holders and service providers are required to retain documentation for a period of five years after the conclusion of the Pilot project.

After Submitting

- You will receive an email confirmation that your form was submitted with a copy of the PDF form.

- Respond to Information Requests within 14 calendar days or by the deadline listed in the email.

  - Failure to respond to the Information Request will result in a denial.

  - Information requests will come from a reviewer using an @usac.org domain address.

Important Dates and Deadlines

- All projects are required to submit anonymized, aggregated data to the FCC regarding their project.

- Each project must submit three reports: one at the end of the project's first year of funding, a report after the second year of funding, and a final report six months after the end of the pilot project.

- Failure to provide the required data may result in either the elimination of the participant from CCPP, loss or reduction of support, or recovery of prior distributed funds.

- Reports are entered in My Portal.

What	Deadline to submit
First Annual Report - Three years from start date on Funding Commitment Letter (FCL)	Six months after first year ends
Second Annual Report	Six months after second year ends
Third/Final Annual Report	Six months after third years ends

Resources

- [Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP)](#)
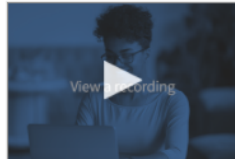
- [Submit Funding Requests](#)

- [CCPP Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#)

- [CCPP Equipment Tip Sheet](#)
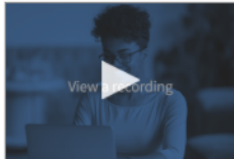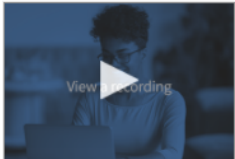
- Blank [FCC Form 462 and Instructions](#)

RHC Program Customer Service Center

Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org

- Include in your email
  - HCP Number
  - FRN Number
- Phone: **(800) 453-1546**
  - Hours are 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. ET
  - Monday- Friday

Available for Public Use

RHC Program Customer Service Center

The RHC Program Customer Service Center CAN	The RHC Program Customer Service Center CANNOT
• Answer general questions regarding both programs	• Determine the eligibility of a specific site or services before an official form submission
• Provide account holder information for an HCP	• Review a form for accuracy before submission
• Provide clarity regarding FCC Reports and Orders	• Contact a service provider or account holder on someone else's behalf
• Provide helpful resources and best practices	• Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal
• Assist with My Portal	• Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

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Questions?

Thank You!