

HCF Program Request for Services – Best Practices for FY2024

Submitting the FCC Form 461

August 2, 2023



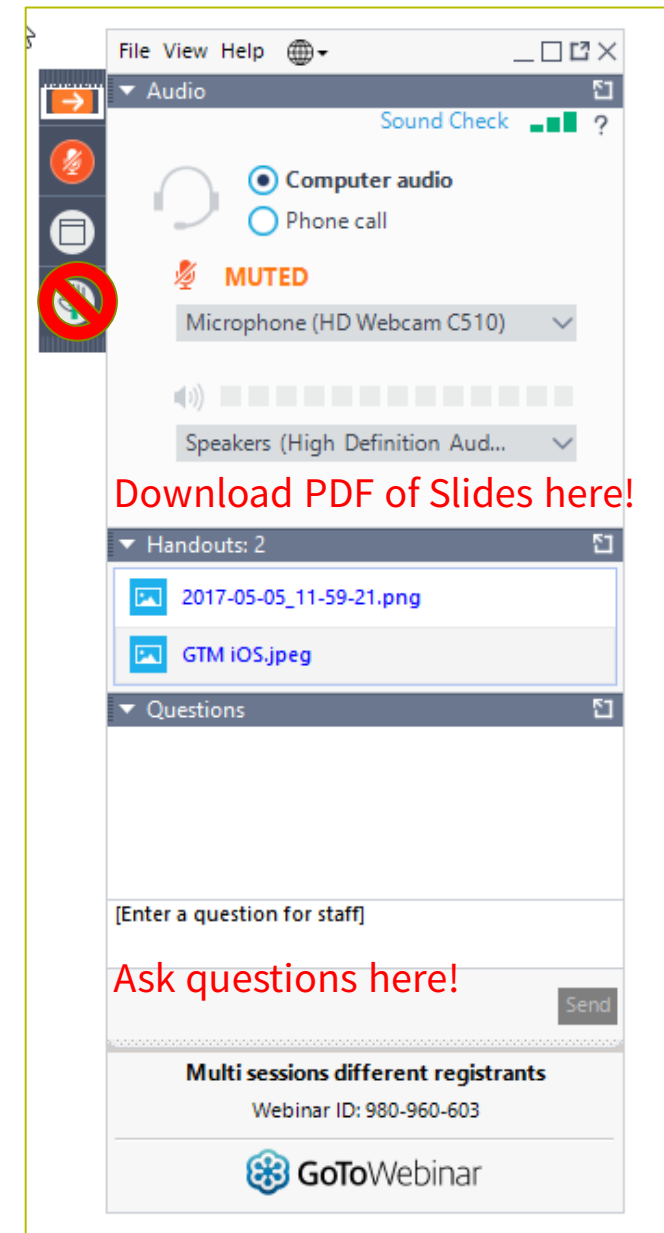
Universal Service
Administrative Co.

DISCLAIMER:

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. 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.



Meet Our Team



Simone Andrews

Senior Communications
Specialist | RHC Outreach



Blythe Albert

Advisor of Program
Management | RHC Outreach

Agenda

- Overview
- Competitive Bidding
 - Evaluation Criteria
 - Competitive Bidding Exemptions
 - Requests for Proposal
- Search Posted Services
- Submitting the FCC Form 461
- Best Practices and Resources

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

- *Complete and submit an FCC Form 461 in My Portal*
 - *Create bid evaluation criteria*
 - *Understand competitive bidding requirements*
 - *Identify applicable competitive bidding exemptions*
- *Locate current requests for services and other important resources on the USAC website*

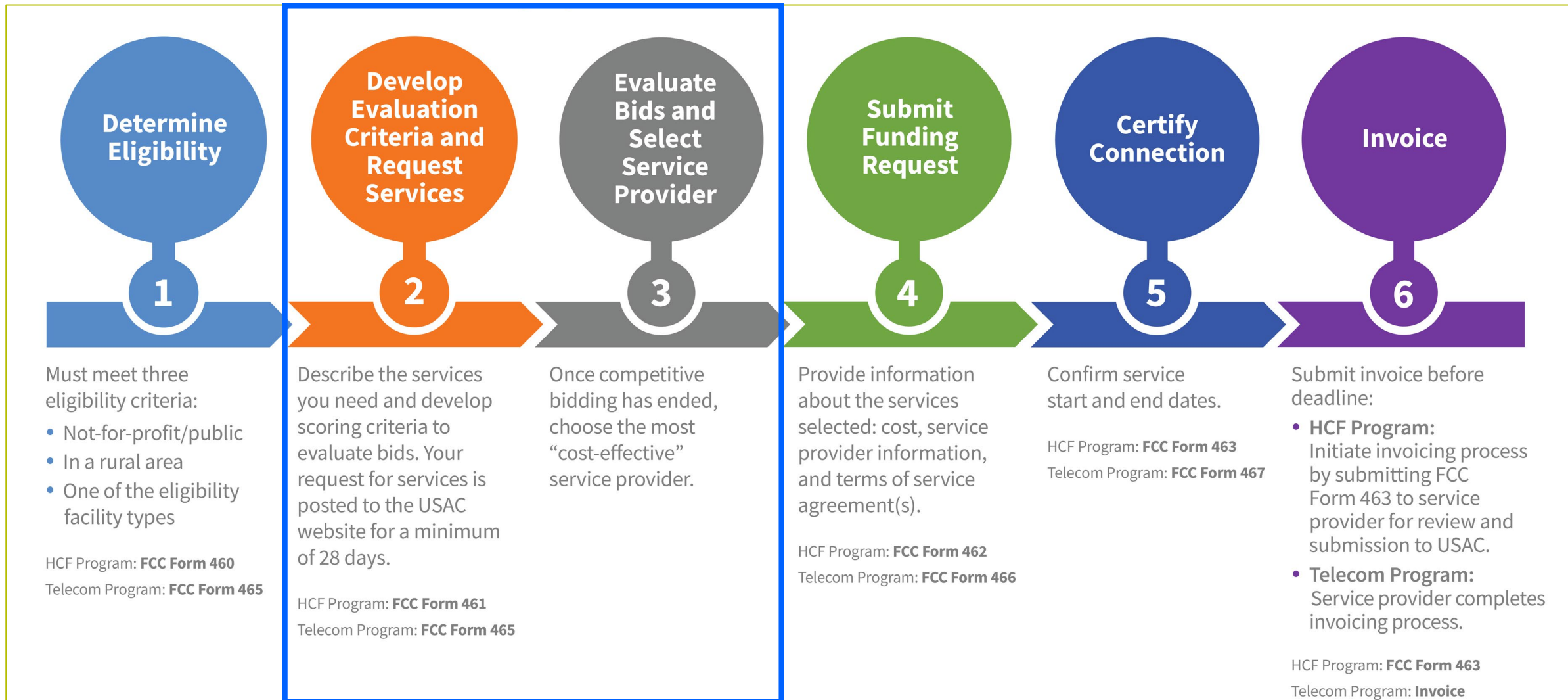
RHC Program Glossary

| Acronym | Meaning |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| FCC | Federal Communications Commission |
| HCP | Health Care Provider (your site) |
| HCP Number | Number associated with your site |
| PAH | Primary Account Holder |
| ACSD | Allowable Contract Selection Date |

Overview

Submitting the FCC Form 461

RHC Program Application Process



What is a Request for Services?

- The HCP submits the FCC Form 461 to let service providers know what types of services and/or equipment are being requested.
- Service providers use the information on the FCC Form 461 to create a bid to provide those services.
- For the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) program, the FCC Form 461 is the “Request for Services” form.

What is a Request for Services? (continued)

- The HCP and service provider may not enter into an agreement to purchase services until 28 days after the FCC Form 461 (Request for Services) is posted.
 - The 28-day competitive bidding process begins the next full business day after the FCC Form 461 is publicly posted.
 - After the 28-day period is complete, the HCP and service provider are welcome to sign a contract.
 - This day is called the **Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD)**.

Rural Health Care Program: **Funding Year 2024**

FY2024: JULY 1, 2024-JUNE 30, 2025



JULY 1, 2023: First Day to Submit Request for Services Form

- **FCC Form 461** HCF Program
- **FCC Form 465** Telecom Program
- Request for services must be posted to USAC's website by March 3, 2024



DEC 1, 2023 - April 1, 2024: Funding Request Filing Window Period

- **FCC Form 462** HCF Program
- **FCC Form 466** Telecom Program



OCT 28, 2025: Invoicing Deadline

- **FCC Form 463** HCF Program
- **Telecom Invoice**

Questions?

Competitive Bidding

Submitting the FCC Form 461

Competitive Bidding

- The purpose of competitive bidding is to allow all service providers an equal opportunity to understand the HCP's service requirements and offer the most cost-effective solution to address those needs.
- RHC program rules and FCC Orders require a fair and open competitive bidding process.

Competitive Bidding (continued)

- Service providers who plan to bid cannot assist with the preparation of the FCC Form 461, choose a winning bidder, or participate in the vendor selection process in any way.
- All potential bidders must have access to the same information about the service needs and must be treated in the same manner.
- All applicants and service providers must comply with all applicable state, Tribal, or local procurement laws.

Bid Evaluation Criteria

- The bid evaluation criteria is a list of weighted standards included in the FCC Form 461, that will be used to determine the most cost-effective bid.
- Applicants must disclose minimum requirements for each criterion.
- Each criterion is given a certain weight. The sum of these weights must equal 100.
- The bid evaluation criteria should address the needs of the HCP as indicated on the FCC Form 461 and be based on the FCC's definition of “cost-effective.” (47 CFR 54.622(c)).
- Cost must be a primary factor but need not be the only primary factor.
- Although other factors may receive the same weight as cost, no single factor can receive a weight that is greater than cost (47 CFR 54.622(c)).

Example of Evaluation Criteria

Block 5: Bid Evaluation

22 Select selection criteria (and weights assigned to each) that will be used to evaluate bids received as a result of this request for services. Attach supplemental information (if necessary).

| Criteria | Weight | Minimum Requirement |
|---|--------|-----------------------------------|
| a. Cost | 40 | See attached for more information |
| b. One vendor solution | 30 | |
| c. Prior experience, including past performance | 30 | |
| d. | | |
| e. | | |

Examples of Evaluation Criteria

Bid evaluation criteria should include the factors that are most important to satisfy the needs and requirements of the HCP.

Criteria commonly included on the FCC Form 461 include:

- Technical support;
- Quality of transmission;
- Reliability;
- Service provider to provide a single point of contact; and
- Prior experience, including past performance.

What is a Competitive Bidding Exemption?

- In some cases, the service needs or contract conditions allow the HCP to be exempt from competitive bidding.
- With a competitive bidding exemption, HCPs will not have to undergo competitive bidding and do not need to create evaluation criteria or collect bids from service providers.
- A competitive bidding exemption will allow the HCP to skip the FCC Form 461 entirely and proceed directly to submitting a funding request.

Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- HCPs must meet one of the following criteria to be exempt from submitting the FCC Form 461 and participating in the competitive bidding process:
 - Purchasing services or equipment from a master service agreement (MSA) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on behalf of the HCP and others, and was awarded pursuant to applicable competitive bidding requirements;
 - Requesting support using contracts previously approved by USAC (MSA under the RHC 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
 - Using a contract approved under the Schools and Libraries (E-rate) program.
 - Seeking support for \$10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year under a contract with a term of one year or less.
- If the HCP does not meet any of the competitive bidding exemptions, the FCC Form 461 must be submitted and the HCP must go through competitive bidding.

Evergreen Contracts

- HCPs are not required to file an FCC Form 461 or competitively bid for the life of a multi-year contract designated as [evergreen](#) under the HCF or Telecom programs.
- A contract may be designated as evergreen if the contract meets all of the following requirements:
 - Both parties are identified;
 - Contract specifies the service type, bandwidth, and quantity;
 - Contract is signed and dated by the HCP or consortium leader after the Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD);
 - Contract specifies the term and cost of service(s); and
 - Contract includes the physical addresses of the HCP(s) purchasing from the contract.
- USAC must have designated the contract evergreen **prior** to submission of the funding request.

Site and Service Substitutions

- Site and service substitutions allow the HCP to reallocate un-invoiced committed funds to substitute the services, modify the services, or provide the requested services to other eligible sites.
- Substitutions allow the flexibility, for an HCP with an approved funding commitment, to spend all of the committed funds, even if the USAC-supported services or the service locations may change over the course of the commitment.
- An HCP 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 requested change is within the scope of the controlling Request for Services, including any applicable RFP used in the competitive bidding process; and
 - The substitution does not violate any contract provision or state, Tribal, or local procurement laws.
 - The site must be an eligible HCP and the service be an eligible service under HCF program rules.
- HCPs with month-to-month approved funding commitments may not utilize site and service substitutions as they did not apply with a contract.
- Site and service substitutions must be submitted by the service delivery deadline.
- Click here for more information about [site and service substitutions](#).

Requests for Proposal

- A [request for proposal](#) (RFP) is a comprehensive bidding solicitation that describes the business priorities and functional requirements of the HCP in sufficient detail to ensure an effective and fair and open competitive bidding process.
- Per FCC Order 19-78 (§ 54.622(e)(5)(ii)), an HCP is required to submit an RFP if:
 - (A) it is required under applicable state, Tribal, or local procurement rules or regulations;
 - (B) the HCP is a consortium seeking more than \$100,000 in program support during the funding year, including applications that seek more than \$100,000 in program support for a multi-year commitment; or
 - (C) the HCP is a consortium seeking support for participant-constructed and owned network facilities.

Requests for Proposal (continued)

- If the HCP chooses to include an [RFP](#), it must be submitted with the FCC Form 461 for USAC review and approval, and it should include, at a minimum:
 - A description of the service needs and a defined scope of the project and network costs (if applicable);
 - The number of days during which bids will be accepted (28 days or more);
 - Clearly delineated deliverables; and
 - The bid evaluation criteria, including the weight assigned to each criterion.
- The RFP should align with all of the data entered into the FCC Form 461 and provide more details.

Service Providers and Competitive Bidding

- Service providers are prohibited from preparing, signing, or submitting an HCP's FCC Form 461 or any other competitive bidding documents.
- Service providers are prohibited from being involved in developing the bid evaluation criteria or participating in the vendor selection process in any way.
- If it is determined that a service provider helped an HCP with its request for services and was subsequently chosen to provide services, the HCP will have committed a competitive bidding violation, and the funding request will be denied, and any funding payments will be subject to rescission.

Supply Chain Order

- As a reminder, when service providers login to [My Portal](#) they will see two new [supply chain certifications](#) included in the FCC Form 463 and Telecom program invoice.

The first certification affirms compliance with the [Section 54.9 prohibition](#) on USF support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by the covered companies deemed to pose a national security threat to the integrity of the communications network or communications supply chain. 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](#), which includes those offered by Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, Dahua Technology Company, AO Kaspersky Lab, China Mobile International USA Inc., China Telecom (Americas) Corp. and their affiliates and subsidiaries.

- **FY2023 Applicants:** If you requested services or equipment provided or that contain components of products produced by any of the listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries in FY2022, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a [service substitution](#) prior to invoicing in order to ensure complete program compliance.
- **FY2024 Applicants:** As you proceed with competitive bidding beginning in July, please ensure you are not requesting funding for services or equipment from listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries.

Supply Chain Web Page

- [Supply Chain webpage](#)



The screenshot shows the FCC's Supply Chain webpage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: About, E-rate, Rural Health Care, Lifeline, High Cost, and Service Providers. Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads: USAC | About | Reports & Orders | **Supply Chain**. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with the following items: Reports & Orders, Annual Report, FCC Filings, FCC Orders, and **Supply Chain** (which is highlighted with a green bar). The main content area has a large heading "Supply Chain" in blue. Below the heading, there is a paragraph of text: "Since November 2019, the FCC has taken a number of actions to protect the national security of the United States, the security and safety of United States persons, and the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. The FCC has also implemented the [Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019](#). The FCC's actions can be found at www.fcc.gov/supplychain". Below this paragraph, there is another paragraph: "In November 2019, the FCC released the [Supply Chain First Report and Order](#) adopting a rule (47 CFR Section 54.9) which prohibits the use of Universal Service Fund (USF) support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by companies found to pose a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain."

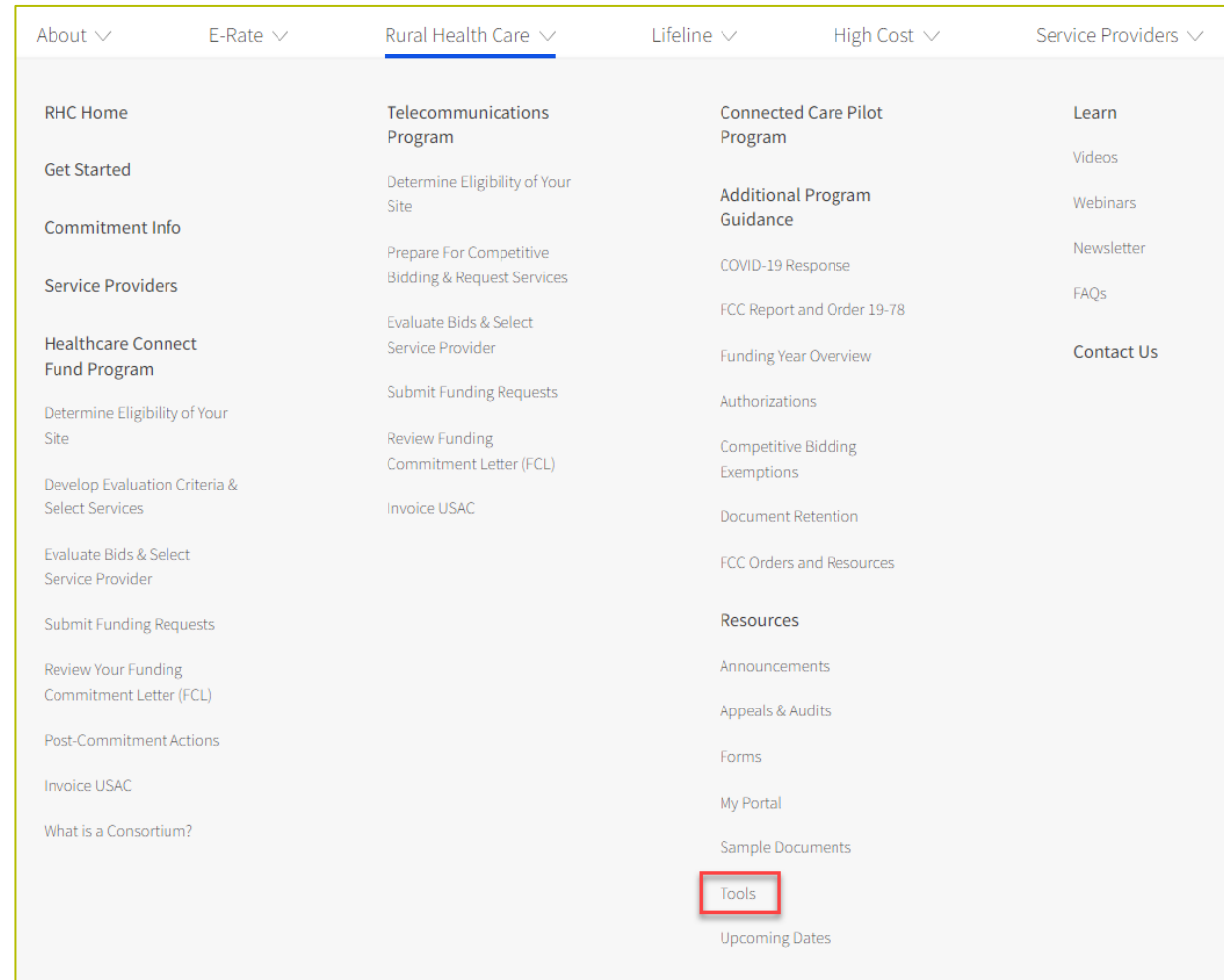
Questions?

Search Posted Services

Submitting the FCC Form 461

HCF Search Posted Services




- The Search Posted Services tool for HCF has moved to the Open Data Platform on the USAC website.



Search Posted Services (continued)

- **Request for Services** is a streamlined tool and **Request for Services Data Set** is the complete data set.

Open Data

| | |
|---|--|
| Funding Commitments  | Look up funding commitments (FCC Form 462 and 466) information for both the HCF and Telecom Programs. |
| Requests for Services  | Look up request for services (FCC Form 461 and 465) information for both the HCF and Telecom Program. Please keep in mind that this information is updated daily, so if your requests for services was approved today, it will appear in the Open Dataset tomorrow. |
| Request for Services Data Set  | The Request for Services data set is also available in the USAC Open Data Portal. In this data set you can view both HCF and Telecom program information for FCC Forms 461 and 465 for current and past funding years. Please note that the data set contains the previous day's data. |

Search Posted Services – Requests for Services

- A PDF copy of the FCC Form 461, RFP (if applicable) and any additional posted supporting documentation can be downloaded by clicking the hyperlink under each column.
- ACSD is clearly displayed.

Search Posted Services

[How to use this Feature >](#)

The Search Posted Services Tool allows service providers to view service request information provided by individual health care providers (HCPs) and consortia applying for funding through the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program.

Requests for services may include the following information:

- **Posting Start Date:** Date that the request for services is posted to this page.
- **Posting End Date:** Date that the request for service posting will expire - applicants are required to post for a minimum of 28 days but may choose to post for a period exceeding 28 days.
- **ACSD:** The Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD) is the date that the applicant can enter into a contract with the selected service provider.
- **Other Documentation:** Links to documents related to the request for services as submitted by the applicant, such as FCC Form 461, Request for Proposal (RFP), Network Plan. The FCC Form 461, the RFP and any additional documents uploaded, by the applicant, can be accessed using the hyperlinks in the columns with their respective names.

To search for requests for services, type the full or partial criteria in the appropriate box below.

The search results will show a summary of each HCP whose service request(s) match the search criteria entered, with options to view additional information. View more information about each HCP by clicking on the corresponding row in the search results. All supporting documentation will be available for download on this expanded view.

Filters
Clear All

Funding Year: Select... Program: Select... HCP Number: Select... Application Number: Select... Site State: Select... Site County: Select... Site City: Select... Posting Start Date: Select... More ▾

| Program | Application Number | HCP Number | HCP Name | Funding Year | Applicant Type | Request for Services | Posting Start Date | Posting End Date | Allowable Contract | Link to FCC Form PDF | RFP Submitted | RFP 1 | RFP 2 |
|---------|--------------------|------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|---|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| HCF | RHC46100001047 | 17224 | Indiana Telehealth N... | 2023 | CONSORTIUM | | 2022-11-07 | 2022-12-14 | 2022-12-15 | http://publicdata.usa... | 1 | http://p... | |
| HCF | RHC46100003150 | 17224 | Indiana Telehealth N... | 2023 | CONSORTIUM | | 2022-12-08 | 2023-01-05 | 2023-01-06 | http://publicdata.usa... | 1 | http://p... | |
| HCF | RHC46100000800 | 17264 | Utah Telehealth Net... | 2023 | CONSORTIUM | | 2022-10-10 | 2022-11-07 | 2022-11-08 | http://publicdata.usa... | 1 | http://p... | |
| HCF | RHC46100004065 | 17264 | Utah Telehealth Net... | 2023 | CONSORTIUM | | 2023-01-11 | 2023-02-08 | 2023-02-09 | http://publicdata.usa... | 1 | http://p... | http://p... |
| HCF | RHC46100004395 | 17259 | CHRISTUS Health, d... | 2023 | CONSORTIUM | | 2023-02-07 | 2023-03-07 | 2023-03-08 | http://publicdata.usa... | 1 | http://p... | |

Columns

Search Posted Services – Request for Services Data Set

- You can view the dataset directly on the screen or you can export the data to an Excel spreadsheet.

The screenshot shows the USAC Open Data interface. The top navigation bar includes links for USAC Open Data, Dataset Catalog (with a dropdown arrow), Video Trainings, Release Notes, and FAQs. A light blue banner below the navigation bar features a 'BETA' badge and text about a new data shaping and exploration experience, with links to 'Try it now' and 'Learn more'.

The main content area displays the dataset 'Rural Health Care Posted Services (FCC Form 461/465)' with a 'Rural Health Care' tag. To the right of the dataset title are several action buttons: 'View Data' (highlighted with a red box), 'Visualize' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Export' (highlighted with a red box), 'API', and a three-dot menu. Below the title, a description states: 'This dataset contains data allowing service providers to view service request information provided by individual Health Care Providers (HCPs) and consortia applying for funding through the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program. The data is collected from the FCC Forms 461 and 465, which includes the service request information.' A 'More' link is located at the bottom left of the description. On the right side, the 'Updated' date is 'July 27, 2022', and the 'Data Provided by' is 'Universal Service Administrative Company'.

Search Posted Services – Request for Services Data Set (continued)

- This is the on-screen view of the dataset.
- Click the three dots beside each column title to sort and filter.

Universal Service Administrative Co.

USAC Open Data Dataset Catalog Video Trainings Release Notes FAQs

BETA Introducing our new data shaping and exploration experience: Filter, group, aggregate, and more! [Try it now](#) [Learn more](#)

Rural Health Care Posted Services (FCC Form 461/465)

This dataset contains data allowing service providers to view service request information provided by individual Health Care Providers

| Program | Applicat... | Fundin | HCP Nu... | HCP Na... | Status | Applican... | Site/Con... | Site Add... | Site Add... | Site City | Site Cou... | Site State | Site ZIP ... |
|---------|---------------|--------|-----------|------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 12695 | Dyersburg H... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 400 E TICKLE ... | | DYERSBURG | Dyer | TN | 38024 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 17798 | West Tennes... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 4039 Highlan... | | Milan | Gibson | TN | 38358 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 54371 | Valley Profes... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 777 S. Main S... | | Clinton | Vermillion | IN | 47842 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 62108 | Prime Care - ... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 270 E COURT... | | SELMER | McNairy | TN | 38375 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 17790 | West Tennes... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 650 Nuckolls ... | | Bolivar | Hardeman | TN | 38008 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 49970 | Jackson Madi... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 9550 Highwa... | | Lexington | Henderson | TN | 38351 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 31265 | Lewis County... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 7785 N STAT... | | LOWVILLE | Lewis | NY | 13367 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 16452 | Bolivar Tech... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 1135 N Oakla... | | Bolivar | Polk | MO | 65613 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 17797 | Jackson Madi... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 3525 Chere C... | | Humboldt | Gibson | TN | 38343 |
| HCF | RHC4610000... | 2023 | 17796 | West Tennes... | Processed - A... | INDIVIDUAL | | 175 Hospital ... | | Camden | Benton | TN | 38320 |


Submitting the FCC Form 461 in RHC Connect


Submitting the FCC Form 461

My Portal Landing Page

- Log into My Portal and click on **RHC Connect**.

Dashboard

 In accordance with the Supply Chain orders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 and the and High Cost & Lifeline - FCC Form 481. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional informat



Upcoming Dates

07/07
2022

New Filer ID
Basics Webinar

08/01
2022

Quarterly Filing
due August 1

Rural Health Care

RHC Connect - Health care providers must use this section to create and submit required forms for the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program for all required forms other than the FCC Form 460 for FY2022 and later.

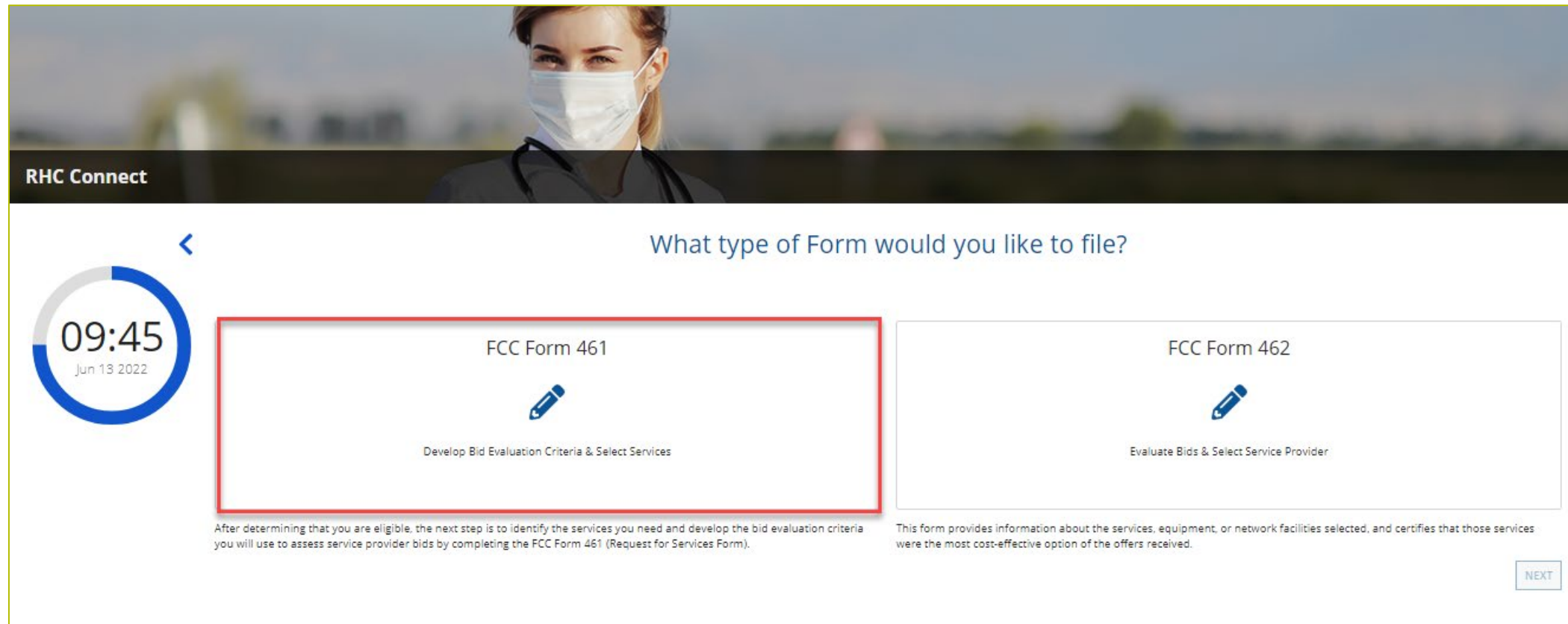
RHC My Portal - Health care providers must use this section to create and submit required forms for the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program, the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP), and the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program for the FCC Form 460 and all required forms for FY2021 and earlier.

Connected Care Pilot Program - Health care providers must use this form to complete and submit their original Connected Care Pilot Program proposal application directly to FCC.

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RHC Connect

- Click **FCC Form 461**.



The screenshot shows the RHC Connect web application interface. At the top, there is a header with a background image of a healthcare worker wearing a mask and a stethoscope, with the text "RHC Connect" on the left. Below the header, the main content area has a title "What type of Form would you like to file?". On the left side of this area, there is a circular clock icon showing the time "09:45" and the date "Jun 13 2022". To the right of the clock, there are two rectangular buttons. The first button, titled "FCC Form 461", is highlighted with a red border and contains a pencil icon and the text "Develop Bid Evaluation Criteria & Select Services". Below this button is a descriptive paragraph: "After determining that you are eligible, the next step is to identify the services you need and develop the bid evaluation criteria you will use to assess service provider bids by completing the FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form)." The second button, titled "FCC Form 462", contains a pencil icon and the text "Evaluate Bids & Select Service Provider". Below this button is a descriptive paragraph: "This form provides information about the services, equipment, or network facilities selected, and certifies that those services were the most cost-effective option of the offers received." At the bottom right of the interface, there is a "NEXT" button.

RHC Connect

What type of Form would you like to file?

09:45
Jun 13 2022

FCC Form 461

Develop Bid Evaluation Criteria & Select Services

After determining that you are eligible, the next step is to identify the services you need and develop the bid evaluation criteria you will use to assess service provider bids by completing the FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form).

FCC Form 462

Evaluate Bids & Select Service Provider

This form provides information about the services, equipment, or network facilities selected, and certifies that those services were the most cost-effective option of the offers received.

NEXT

RHC Connect (continued)

- Click **Next**.

RHC Connect

< What type of Form would you like to file?

09:45
Jun 13 2022

FCC Form 461
Develop Bid Evaluation Criteria & Select Services

After determining that you are eligible, the next step is to identify the services you need and develop the bid evaluation criteria you will use to assess service provider bids by completing the FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form).

FCC Form 462
Evaluate Bids & Select Service Provider

This form provides information about the services, equipment, or network facilities selected, and certifies that those services were the most cost-effective option of the offers received.

NEXT

Start

- Select the HCP from the drop-down menu and select funding year.
- Click **Save & Continue**.

FCC FORM 461


Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Start

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) >

Note: Once you select HCP, and then Save & Continue, you will not be able to change the HCP. Please select carefully.

Health Care Provider (HCP) Information

HCP or Consortium 


FCC Registration Number

Address

State

Application Basics

Application Nickname

Funding Year 

Application Number

Funding Priority

EXIT **SAVE & CONTINUE**

Start (continued)

- If you select a consortium, select all participating sites from the second drop-down menu.
- Click **Save & Continue**.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Start

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) >

Note: Once you select HCP, and then Save & Continue, you will not be able to change the HCP. Please select carefully.

Health Care Provider (HCP) Information

HCP or Consortium

FCC Registration Number

Address

State

Application Basics

Application Nickname

Funding Year

Application Number

Funding Priority

Consortium Participating Sites

Select Participating Sites

| HCP Number | HCP Name | LOA Expiry | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------|---|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | - | x |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | - | x |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | - | x |

EXIT **SAVE & CONTINUE**

Requested Services

- Click **Add Requested Services**.

The screenshot shows the FCC FORM 461 interface. The top navigation bar includes 'DASHBOARD' and 'START A FORM'. The main header is 'FCC FORM 461'. Below it is a progress bar with steps: Start, Requested Services (active), Dates & Timing, Bid Evaluation, Main Contact, RFP & Summary, Additional Documentation, Declaration of Assistance, Certifications, and Signature.

Requested Services

| Type Of Services | If "Other", describe | Min Download Speed | Max Download Speed | Min Upload Speed | Max Upload Speed | Bits per Second | Allow Bids for Similar Services? ⓘ |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| No items available | | | | | | | |
| + Add Requested Services | | | | | | | |

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site data center? ⓘ

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site administrative office? ⓘ

☐ Yes

☐ No

EXIT

Approved by OMB 3060-0804

Requested Services (continued)

- Select type of service from the drop-down menu.
- Enter minimum and maximum bandwidths.
- Answer **Yes** or **No** if you'll consider bids for similar services.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Requested Services

| Type Of Services | If "Other", describe | Min Download Speed | Max Download Speed | Min Upload Speed | Max Upload Speed | Bits per Second | Allow Bids for Similar Services? |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Data | If Other is selected | | | | | Mbps | Yes |

[Add Requested Services](#)

Showing 1 - 1 of 1

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site data center?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site administrative office?

☐ Yes

☒ No

EXIT [BACK](#) [SAVE & CONTINUE](#)

Requested Services (continued)

- Answer questions about off-site data centers and off-site administrative offices.
- If you answer **Yes**, you'll be asked to select the off-site data center or off-site administrative office from the drop-down menu.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Requested Services

| Type Of Services | If "Other", describe | Min Download Speed | Max Download Speed | Min Upload Speed | Max Upload Speed | Bits per Second | Allow Bids for Similar Services? ⓘ |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| No items available | | | | | | | |
| + Add Requested Services | | | | | | | |

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site data center? ⓘ

☒ Yes
☐ No

Select the supported off-site data center

Other

data center

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site administrative office? ⓘ

☒ Yes
☐ No

Select the supported off-site administrative office

EXIT BACK

SAVE & CONTINUE

Approved by OMB 3060-0804

Requested Services (continued)

- Click **Add Requested Services** for each additional service and follow the same steps.
- Click **Save & Continue**.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Requested Services

| Type Of Services | If "Other", describe | Min Download Speed | Max Download Speed | Min Upload Speed | Max Upload Speed | Bits per Second | Allow Bids for Similar Services? | |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Data | If Other is selected | 10 | 250 | 10 | 250 | Mbps | Yes | ✗ |
| Equipment | If Other is selected | | | | | Select | Yes/No | ✗ |

[Add Requested Services](#)

Showing 1 - 2 of 2

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site data center? [?](#)

☐ Yes

☒ No

Will the selected service(s) support an off-site administrative office? [?](#)

☐ Yes

☒ No

EXIT BACK

SAVE & CONTINUE

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Dates & Timing

- Use the drop-down menu to select **Up to** or **Equal to** to select the desired contract length.
- Enter number of year(s).

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services **Dates & Timing** Bid Evaluation Main Contract RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Dates & Timing

What is the HCP's desired service contract length?

Up to 3 Year(s)

Will the HCP consider bids with contract extension language?

☐ Yes, This is preferred
☒ Yes
☐ No

Will the HCP consider bids for month-to-month contracts?

☐ Yes, This is preferred
☒ Yes
☐ No

What is the HCP's desired time to publicly post this request for services?

28 Days

What is the HCP's expected bid evaluation period after the public posting?

5 Day(s)

EXIT BACK **SAVE & CONTINUE**

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Dates & Timing (continued)

- Answer the questions about contract extensions and month-to-month agreements.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services **Dates & Timing** Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Dates & Timing

What is the HCP's desired service contract length?

Up to Year(s)

→ Will the HCP consider bids with contract extension language?

☐ Yes, This is preferred
☒ Yes
☐ No

→ Will the HCP consider bids for month-to-month contracts?

☐ Yes, This is preferred
☒ Yes
☐ No

What is the HCP's desired time to publicly post this request for services?

Days

What is the HCP's expected bid evaluation period after the public posting?

Day(s)

EXIT

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Dates & Timing (continued)

- Enter the desired time to publicly post the request for services.
 - A minimum of 28 days is required under program rules.
- Enter the expected evaluation period after the public posting ends.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services **Dates & Timing** Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Dates & Timing

What is the HCP's desired service contract length?

Up to Year(s)

Will the HCP consider bids with contract extension language?

☐ Yes, This is preferred
☒ Yes
☐ No

Will the HCP consider bids for month-to-month contracts?

☐ Yes, This is preferred
☒ Yes
☐ No

What is the HCP's desired time to publicly post this request for services?

Days

What is the HCP's expected bid evaluation period after the public posting?

Day(s)

EXIT BACK **SAVE & CONTINUE**

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Bid Evaluation

- Choose the bid evaluation criteria from the drop-down menu.
 - If you select **Other**, provide a description of the criterion.
- Enter the description of minimum requirements for each criterion.
- Provide details about any disqualification factors.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing **Bid Evaluation** Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Bid Evaluation

Select the criteria that will be used to evaluate the bids collected

| Criteria | | Evaluation Weight (%) | Minimum Requirement |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Cost | <i>Describe if Other is selected</i> | 40 | |
| Quality of transmission | <i>Describe if Other is selected</i> | 30 | Must include Service Level Agreement |
| Technical support | <i>Describe if Other is selected</i> | 30 | Must outline all technical support in response |

[Add Criteria](#)

Showing 1 - 3 of 3

Does the HCP have any disqualifying factors that will remove bids or bidders from consideration?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Describe the disqualifying factors

No Service Level Agreement

EXIT BACK **SAVE & CONTINUE**

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Main Contact

- Choose an account holder from drop-down menu.
- Information is pre-populated based on information from the FCC Form 460.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation **Main Contact** RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Main Contact

Who is the main contact for this request?

Primary - [Redacted]

Full Contact Information

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| First Name | Middle Initial (Optional) | Last Name |
| [Redacted] | | [Redacted] |
| Organization Name | | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| Title | | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| Phone | Extension (Optional) | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| Fax (Optional) | | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| Email | | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| Address Line 1 | | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| Address Line 2 | | |
| [Redacted] | | |
| City | State | Zip Code |
| [Redacted] | [Redacted] | [Redacted] |

EXIT BACK **SAVE & CONTINUE**

RFP & Summary

- Answer questions about the RFP.
- Provide a summary of requested services and/or RFP (if applicable).

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact **RFP & Summary** Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

RFP & Summary

Is the HCP likely to request more than \$100 000 in program support from this request for services?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Do state, Tribal, or local procurement rules require the HCP to include an RFP with this request for services application?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Will the HCP be including an RFP with this application?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Please provide a summary of the HCP's requested services. If an RFP is attached above, summarize that document.

Provide a summary of the HCP's requested services

EXIT BACK

SAVE & CONTINUE

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RFP & Summary (continued)

- If a consortium applicant answers **Yes** to the first question, the third question defaults to **Yes**.
- Upload the RFP.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact **RFP & Summary** Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

RFP & Summary

Is the HCP likely to request more than \$100 000 in program support from this request for services? ⓘ


☒ Yes
☐ No

Do state, Tribal, or local procurement rules require the HCP to include an RFP with this request for services application?

☐ Yes
☒ No

Will the HCP be including an RFP with this application?

☒ Yes
☐ No

UPLOAD  Drop files here

Document is Required

Please provide a summary of the HCP's requested services. If an RFP is attached above, summarize that document.

Provide a summary of the HCP's requested services

EXIT BACK

SAVE & CONTINUE

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Additional Documentation

- Click **Add documents** for each additional document you are including in your submission.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary **Additional Documentation** Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Additional Documentation

| Document Type | Document | Uploaded On |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Select a document type ▼ | Describe if Other is selected | |
| Add Documents | <div>UPLOAD Drop file here</div> | |

<< < Showing 1 - 1 of 1 > >>

Note: On this screen only, error messages may persist even after errors have been fixed. After fixing errors, please select **save and continue**.

EXIT BACK **SAVE & CONTINUE**

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Additional Documentation (continued)

- Use the drop-down menu to select **Network Plan** or **Other**.
 - Consortia applicants are required to upload a Network Plan.
 - If **Other** is selected, provide a description of the uploaded document.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary **Additional Documentation** Declaration of Assistance Certifications Signature

Additional Documentation

| Document Type | Document | Uploaded On | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Network Plan | Describe if Other is selected | 1 - 2 DOCX - 26.56 KB | 6/13/2022 3:07 PM EDT |
| Add Documents | | | |

<< < Showing 1 - 1 of 1 > >>

Note: On this screen only, error messages may persist even after errors have been fixed. After fixing errors, please select **save and continue**.

EXIT BACK **SAVE & CONTINUE**

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Declaration of Assistance

- Enter information about third parties who assisted the HCP with preparing any FCC Forms or participated in the competitive bidding process.
- If a Tertiary Account Holder submits the FCC Form 461, this field is auto-populated with their information.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation **Declaration of Assistance** Certifications Signature

Declaration of Assistance

Have any consultants, service providers, or any other outside experts, whether paid or unpaid, aid in the preparation of the FCC Forms 460 or 461, RFP, bid evaluation, or network plan?

☒ Yes
☐ No

| Name | Title | Employer | Nature of the Relationship | State | Email | Telephone Number | Action |
|------|-------|----------|----------------------------|-------|-------|------------------|--------|
| | | | Consultant | | | | |

[+ Add Contact](#)

EXIT [BACK](#) [SAVE & CONTINUE](#)

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Certifications

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance **Certifications** Signature

Certifications

- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that I am authorized to submit this request on behalf of the healthcare provider or consortium.
- ☒ 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 contained herein and in any attachments are true.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking supported services has complied with any applicable state, Tribal, or local procurement rules.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that all requested RHC Program support will be used solely for purposes reasonably related to the provision of health care service or instruction that the health care provider is legally authorized to provide under the law of the state in which the services are provided.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking supported services satisfies all of the requirements under section 254 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 254, and applicable Commission rules.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking support has reviewed and is compliant with all applicable RHC Program requirements.
- ☒ I understand that all documentation associated with this request, including a copy of the signed Request for Services (FCC Form 461), any bids/contracts resulting from the FCC Form 461 posting, scoring sheet, and other information that was used in the decision making process, must be retained for a period of at least five years pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.631, or as otherwise prescribed by the Commission's rules.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking supported services is a nonprofit or public entity that falls within one of the seven categories set forth in the definition of health care provider listed in 47 CFR § 54.600 of the Commission's rules.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking supported services is physically located in a rural area as defined in section 47 CFR § 54.600 of the Commission's rules, or is a member of a consortium which satisfies the majority-rural composition requirements set forth in 47 CFR § 54.607 of the Commission's rules.
- ☒ I certify under penalty of perjury that the services will not be sold, resold, or transferred in consideration for money or any other thing of value.

EXIT

BACK

SAVE & CONTINUE

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Signature

- Sign by typing your first and last name in the **Digital Signature** field.

FCC FORM 461

Start Requested Services Dates & Timing Bid Evaluation Main Contact RFP & Summary Additional Documentation Declaration of Assistance Certifications **Signature**

Signature

Current User Information

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Email | |
| Phone | |
| Employer | |
| Title | |
| Employer's FCC RN | |

Signature

Certifier's Full Name

Digital Signature

Date 06/13/2022

EXIT BACK **CERTIFY & SUBMIT**

After Submitting

- After submitting the FCC Form 461, you will be directed back to the Dashboard.
- Click on **My Forms** and filter on **Form Type** to view, download a PDF of the FCC Form 461, or withdraw the form.

The screenshot displays the RHC Connect dashboard. At the top, there is a blue header with 'DASHBOARD' and 'START A FORM' links. Below the header is a banner image of a healthcare worker wearing a mask, with the text 'RHC Connect' overlaid. The main content area features a sidebar on the left with a clock showing '15:39 Jun 13 2022'. The central part of the dashboard has a navigation bar with 'Information Requests', 'My Forms' (highlighted with a red box), and 'My Organizations'. Below this, a notification bar states 'The Funding Year 2022 funding request filing window closes in 16 days.' The 'My Forms' section includes a 'Form Type' dropdown menu (highlighted with a red box) set to 'Form 461'. Below the dropdown is a search bar labeled 'Search Form 461s'. A table lists the submitted forms with columns: Site Name, Site Number, Application Number, Application Nickname, Form, Last Update, Status, and Actions. The first row shows a 'Form 461' submitted on '6/13/2022 3:39 PM EDT'. The 'Status' column shows 'Submitted', and the 'Actions' column contains icons for viewing, downloading, and deleting (highlighted with a red box).

| Site Name | Site Number | Application Number | Application Nickname | Form | Last Update | Status | Actions |
|-----------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| | | | | Form 461 | 6/13/2022 3:39 PM EDT | Submitted | |

After Submitting (continued)

- An email will be sent confirming that your form was submitted along with a copy of the PDF form. If you do not receive a confirmation email, reach out to the RHC Customer Service Center at RHC-Assist@usac.org.
- 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.
- Applicants can receive HCF program Information Requests through RHC Connect or by email.
- For FY2024 FCC Forms 461, an auto-generated email will be sent directing applicants to RHC Connect to respond.
- **Applicants should respond through RHC Connect only.**
- For Information Requests received by email, click “Reply All” to respond to the Information Request.

Questions?

Best Practices and Resources

Submitting the FCC Form 461

Best Practices: Communicating with Your Service Provider

- Once your ACSD has passed and you've chosen a service provider, include them when you reply to Information Requests.
- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.
- Include language in your bid documentation that confirms your service provider will act in compliance with all RHC program rules and FCC Orders.
- All bid correspondence should be handled via email for audit purposes.
- HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a minimum of five years.

Milestones to Apply for Funding for FY2023: 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) | January 8, 2024 Recommended Date |
| FCC Form 461 (Request for Services) | February 10, 2024 Recommended Date |
| FCC Form 462 (Funding Request) | April 1, 2024 Deadline to Submit |

Please note that the FCC Form 460 and 461 submission dates are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to ensure that the FCC Form 461 is posted to USAC’s website early enough for a 28-day competitive bidding period before the deadline to submit an FCC Form 462 .

Milestones to Apply for Funding for FY2023: 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) | January 4, 2024 Recommended Date |
| FCC Form 461 (Request for Services) | February 1, 2024 Recommended Date |
| FCC Form 462 (Funding Request) | April 1, 2024 Deadline to Submit |

Please note that the FCC Form 460 and 461 submission dates are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to ensure that the FCC Form 461 is posted to USAC’s website early enough for a 28-day competitive bidding period before the deadline to submit an FCC Form 462.

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Learn more about the Rural Health Care program.



Videos

Our videos are designed to help you understand and manage the form filing process, FCC requirements, and other elements of the RHC program.


[Browse our Videos](#)



Webinars

Join USAC for live training webinars provided throughout the year for RHC program participants, and watch recordings of those you may have missed.

[View our Webinars](#)



Newsletter

The RHC Monthly Newsletter keeps healthcare providers (HCPs) and service providers up to date about program news, events, and best practices. Be sure to [subscribe](#).

[Consult our Newsletter](#)

Resources

- [Competitive Bidding FAQs](#)
- [RHC Program Request for Services Dataset](#)
- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 461](#)
- [RHC Connect User Guide – FCC Form 461](#)
- [Information Request tip sheet](#)
- Subscribe to the [RHC Monthly Newsletter](#)

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

RHC Customer Service Center

| The RHC Customer Service Center CAN | The RHC Customer Service Center CANNOT |
|---|--|
| Answer general questions regarding both programs | Determine 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 submission |
| Provide clarity regarding FCC Report and Order 19-78 and other FCC Orders | Contact a service 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 and with RHC Connect | Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer |

Questions?

Thank You!