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RHC Service Provider Training

Best Practices for Service Providers

March 26, 2025

Universal Service Administrative Co.

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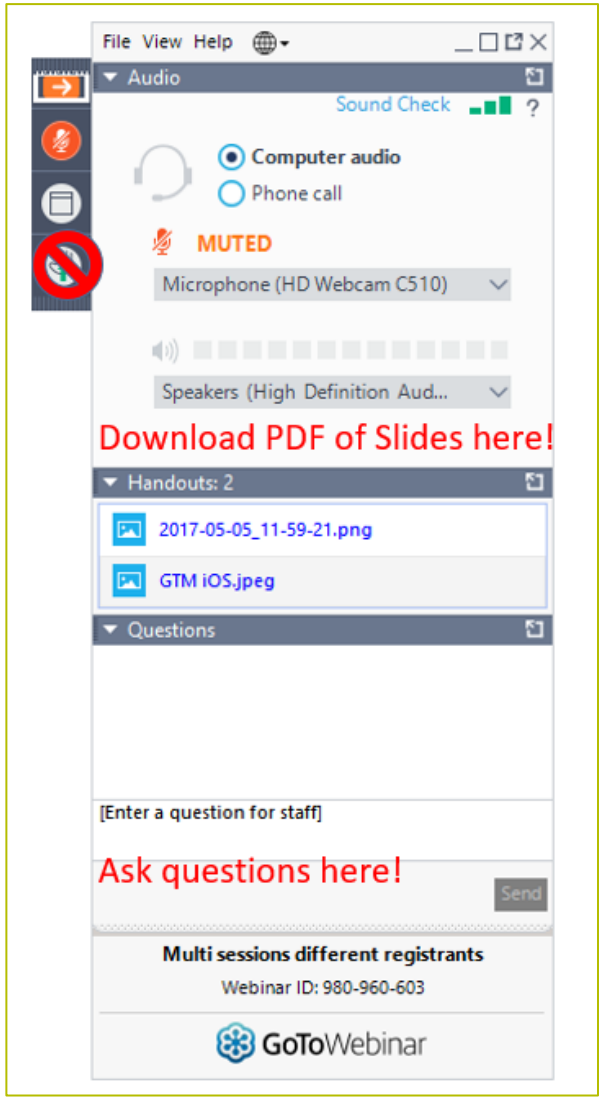
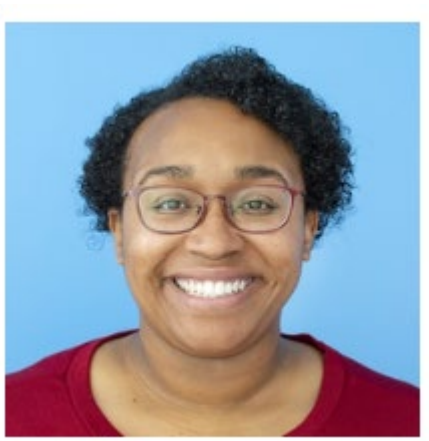


Meet Our Team

Blythe Albert

Advisor of Program Management | RHC Outreach



Ecatarina Grant

Manager of Communications | RHC Outreach

Agenda

- RHC Program Basics
- Program Updates
- Competitive Bidding
- Funding Requests
- Invoicing and Disbursement Process
- Resources

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

- *Understand the application process for RHC programs from eligibility through invoicing*
- *Understand the difference between the two RHC programs*
- *Learn about RHC program updates for FY2025*
- *Understand competitive bidding requirements*
- *Understand invoicing and disbursement processes*
- *Understand best practices for service providers*

Program Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HCP	Health Care Provider (the site receiving services)
SP	Telco company providing services (you)
HCF program	Healthcare Connect Fund program
Telecom program	Telecommunications program
SPIN/498 ID	Service Provider Identification Number
ACSD	Allowable Contract Selection Date
FRN	Funding Request Number
FY	Funding Year

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Program Basics

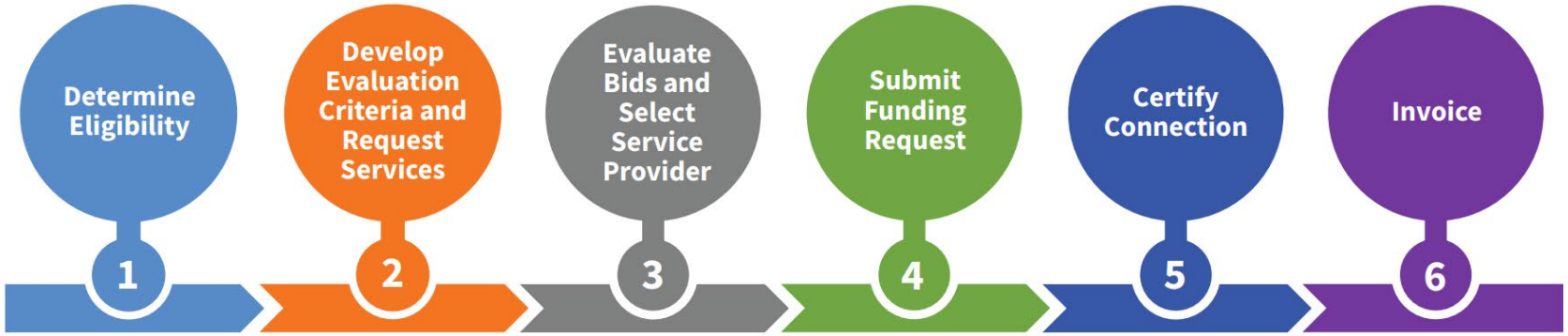
Best Practices for Service Providers

Differences Between RHC Programs

- Services funded:
  - Telecom program funds telecommunications services
    - The Telecom program **does not** provide support for equipment, network buildout, and non-common carrier services, e.g., information and private carriage services.
  - HCF program funds advanced telecommunications and information services for broadband connectivity.
    - The HCF program **does** provide support for equipment, network buildout, and non-common carrier services, e.g., information and private carriage services.
- Telecom Program - Single year funding requests for recurring telecommunications services.
- HCF Program - Can be a multi-year request (up to three years). Funds telecommunications services related to the use of telemedicine and telehealth.
- Method of calculating discount:
  - **Telecom program** funds the difference between the urban and rural rates.
  - **HCF program** funds a flat 65%.

RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

Application Process



Must meet three eligibility criteria:

- Not-for-profit/public
- In a rural area
- One of the eligibility facility types

HCF Program: **FCC Form 460**

Telecom Program: **FCC Form 460**

Describe the services you need and develop scoring criteria to evaluate bids. Your request for services is posted to the USAC website for a minimum of 28 days.

HCF Program: **FCC Form 461**

Telecom Program: **FCC Form 465**

Once competitive bidding has ended, choose the most "cost-effective" service provider.

Provide information about the services selected: cost, service provider information, and terms of service agreement(s).

HCF Program: **FCC Form 462**

Telecom Program: **FCC Form 466**

Confirm service start and end dates.

HCF Program: **FCC Form 463**

Telecom Program: **FCC Form 469**

Submit invoice before deadline:

- **HCF Program:** Initiate invoicing process by submitting FCC Form 463 to service provider for review and submission to USAC.
- **Telecom Program:** Service provider completes invoicing process.

HCF Program: **FCC Form 463**

Telecom Program: **FCC Form 469**

Telecom Program – FCC Forms

- FCC Form 460 (Eligibility)
- FCC Form 465 (Description of Services Requested and Certification Form):
  - Submit bids for services included on the posted Request for Services forms.
- FCC Form 466 (Funding Request and Certification Form):
  - Provide supporting documentation or necessary information (e.g., bills, invoices, a contract) to the HCP during the application (Funding Request) process.
- FCC Form 469 (Invoice) FY2024 and forward:
  - Service provider submits the FCC Form 469 after the HCP pays the urban rate.
  - HCP validates the FCC Form 469 and certifies that the information is correct.

HCF Program – FCC Forms

- FCC Form 460 (Eligibility):
  - Determine eligibility of HCP - Submitted by HCP.
- FCC Form 461 (Request for Services):
  - Submit bids for services included on the posted Request for Services forms.
- FCC Form 462 (Request for Funding):
  - Provide information and supporting documentation to the HCP during the application process.
- FCC Form 463 (Invoice):
  - HCP submits invoice once they have paid their 35% contribution.
  - Service provider validates the FCC Form 463 and certifies that the information is correct.

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RHC Program Updates

Best Practices for Service Providers

FCC Order DA 25-224

- On March 13, 2025, the FCC released Order DA 25-224 extending the deadline for the FY2025 application filing window to June 2, 2025.
- This means all funding requests (FCC Forms 462 or 466) must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on June 2, 2025.

FCC 23-110 Third Report and Order

- On December 14, 2023, the FCC released Order FCC 23-110. This order improves RHC program administration and facilitates participation in the program by allowing health care providers that expect to become eligible during a funding year to complete the processes required to request funding, aligns program deadlines, simplifies rules for calculating urban rates, streamlines administrative processes, and frees up unused funding for other purposes. Changes to RHC program rules are as follows:
  - Permits health care providers to be granted conditional eligibility, thus allowing them to initiate competitive bidding and request funding while awaiting a final eligibility determination.
  - Provides health care providers more time to complete Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes by moving the SPIN change deadline to align with the invoice filing deadline.
  - Simplifies urban rate calculations by eliminating the seldom-used “standard urban distance” component of the rule for determining urban rates in the Telecommunications (Telecom) program.
  - Allows health care providers to request changes to the dates covered by an evergreen contract post-commitment.
  - Adopts the FCC Form 460 for eligibility determinations in the Telecom program, which will eliminate the need for Telecom program participants to seek an eligibility determine every time they engage in competitive bidding.

FCC Order DA 23-6

- On January 26, 2023, the FCC released Order DA 23-6, waiving the requirement that HCPs and service providers participating in the Telecom program use the Rates Database to calculate urban and rural rates for FY2024 and FY2025.
- For FY2024 and FY2025, rules requiring rural rates to be calculated using Methods 1 through 3 and the pre-Rates Database calculation method for urban rates will be reinstated with the following minor changes:
  - For FY2024 and FY2025, applicants and service providers using Methods 1 and 2 to calculate rural rates are not permitted to use previously approved rates.
  - For FY2024 and 2025, service providers will be permitted to use previously approved rates for rural rates that would otherwise be calculated under Method 3.
  - If there are no comparable rural and urban rates within 30 percent of the speed of the requested service, service providers may use the rate for a higher bandwidth service that is otherwise similar to the requested service to justify a rural or urban rate.
- Please use the Urban and Rural Rate Information FY2024-2025 tip sheet as a resource.

Supply Chain Order

- As a reminder, when service providers login to My Portal and RHC Connect they will see two 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 for specified transactions with companies deemed to pose a national security threat. The second certification affirms compliance with Section 54.10, which prohibits the use of any Federal subsidies on any communications equipment and services on the Covered List.
- If you provided services or equipment that contain components of products produced by any of the listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates or subsidiaries, an invoice can't be submitted for these funds.
- Instead, the HCP should immediately request a service substitution.
- As you proceed with competitive bidding, please ensure you are not submitting bids for services or equipment from listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates or subsidiaries.

Supply Chain Web Page

- Supply Chain webpage

Key Takeaways for Service Providers

- Telecom program – Use of the Rates database to calculate discounts is eliminated for FY2024 and 2025.
  - Method for determining rates is described in FCC Order 23-6.
- Please use the Urban and Rural Rate Information FY2024-2025 tip sheet as a resource.
- Applicants and service providers must ensure they are not requesting funding for services or equipment from any company identified on the FCC-issued Covered List.

Questions?

Competitive Bidding

Best Practices for Service Providers

What is a Request for Services?

- The Request for Services form is used by HCPs to let service providers know what services they are seeking, and it starts the competitive bidding process.
  - FCC Form 461 – HCF program
  - FCC Form 465 – Telecom program (the FCC Form 465 also determines an HCPs eligibility)
- Service providers use the information on the form to create a responsive bid to provide the requested services.

Competitive Bidding

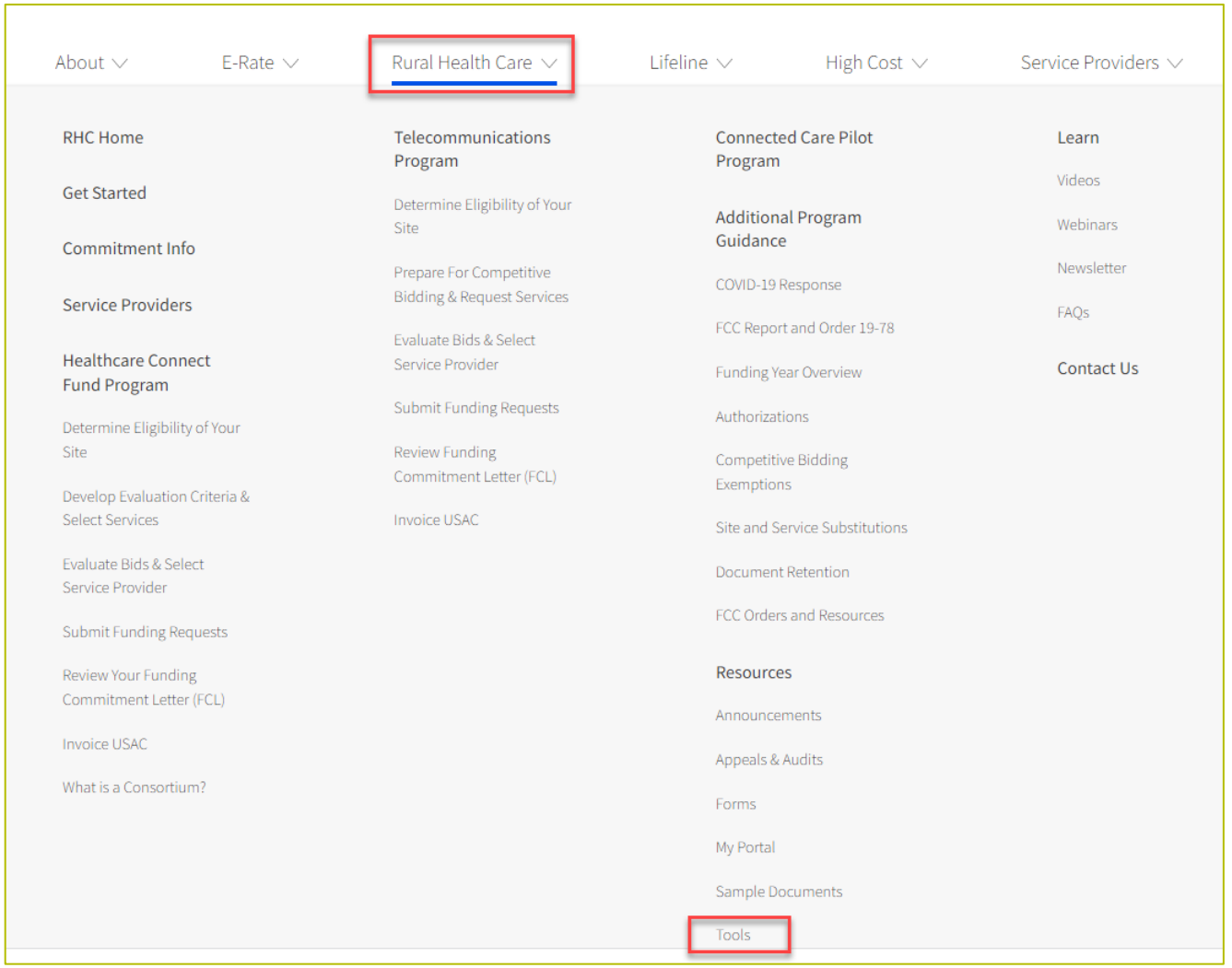
- RHC program rules and FCC Orders require that the competitive bidding process be “fair and open.”
  - The process must allow all service providers an equal opportunity to understand the HCP’s service requirements and offer the most cost-effective solution to address those needs.
  - All potential bidders and service providers must have access to the same information about the HCP’s service needs and must be treated in the same manner.
- Service providers who plan to bid cannot also simultaneously help the HCP choose a winning bidder or participate in the vendor selection process in any way.
- All applicants and service providers must comply with FCC rules and any applicable state or local competitive bidding requirements.

Search Posted Services Tool

- An enhanced Search Posted Services tool is now available.
- This tool, and the underlying data set , have replaced the HCF Search Posted Services tool for Funding Year (FY) 2023 and forward.
- The data set contains data from the FCC Forms 461 and 465, i.e., services requested for current and past funding years.
- For the Connected Care Pilot Program, please continue to use the original Search Posted Services tool on the USAC website.

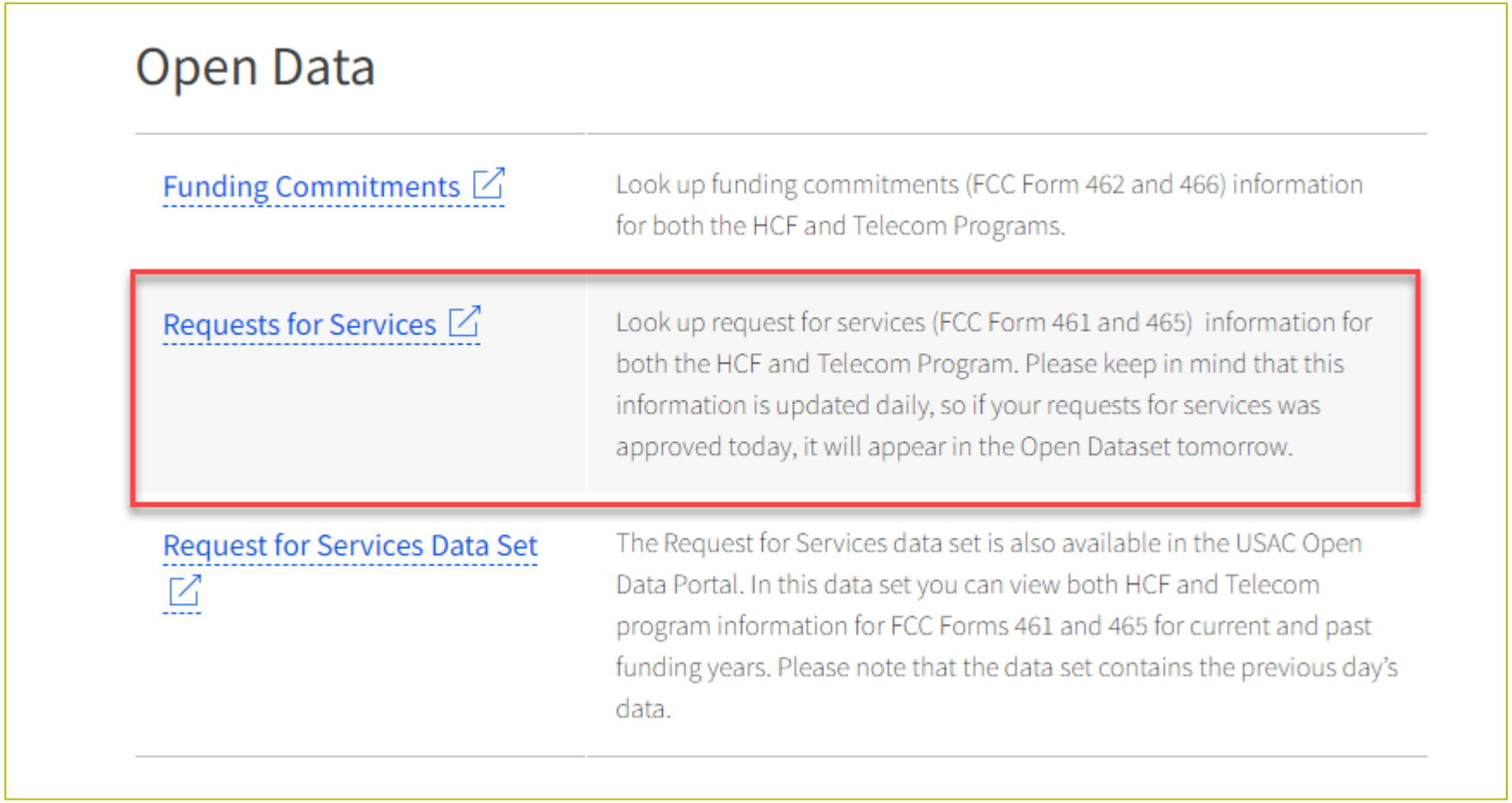
Search Posted Services

- Click on “Tools” on the mega menu for Rural Health Care

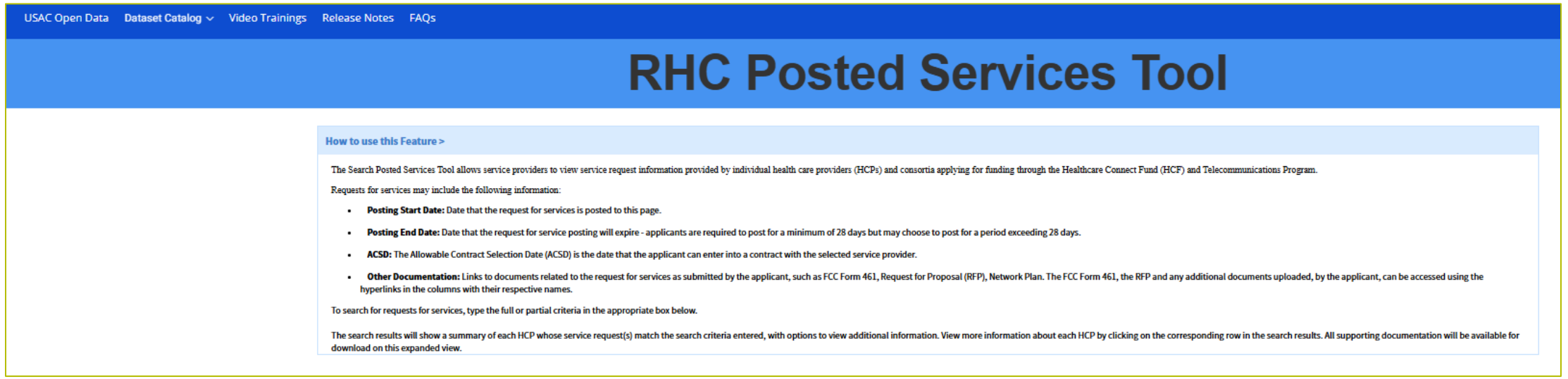


Search Posted Services (continued)

- Click “Requests for Services” under the Open Data section.

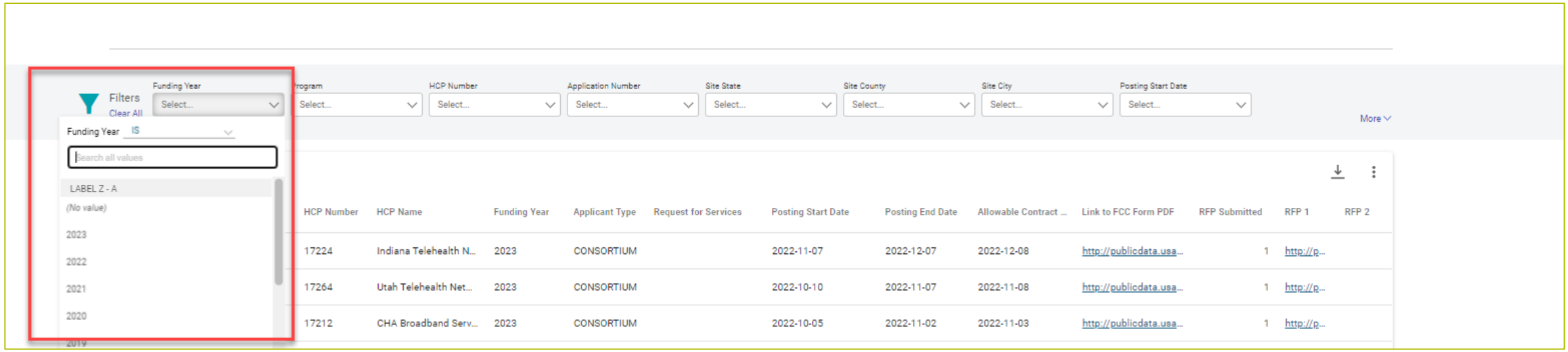


Search Posted Services (continued)



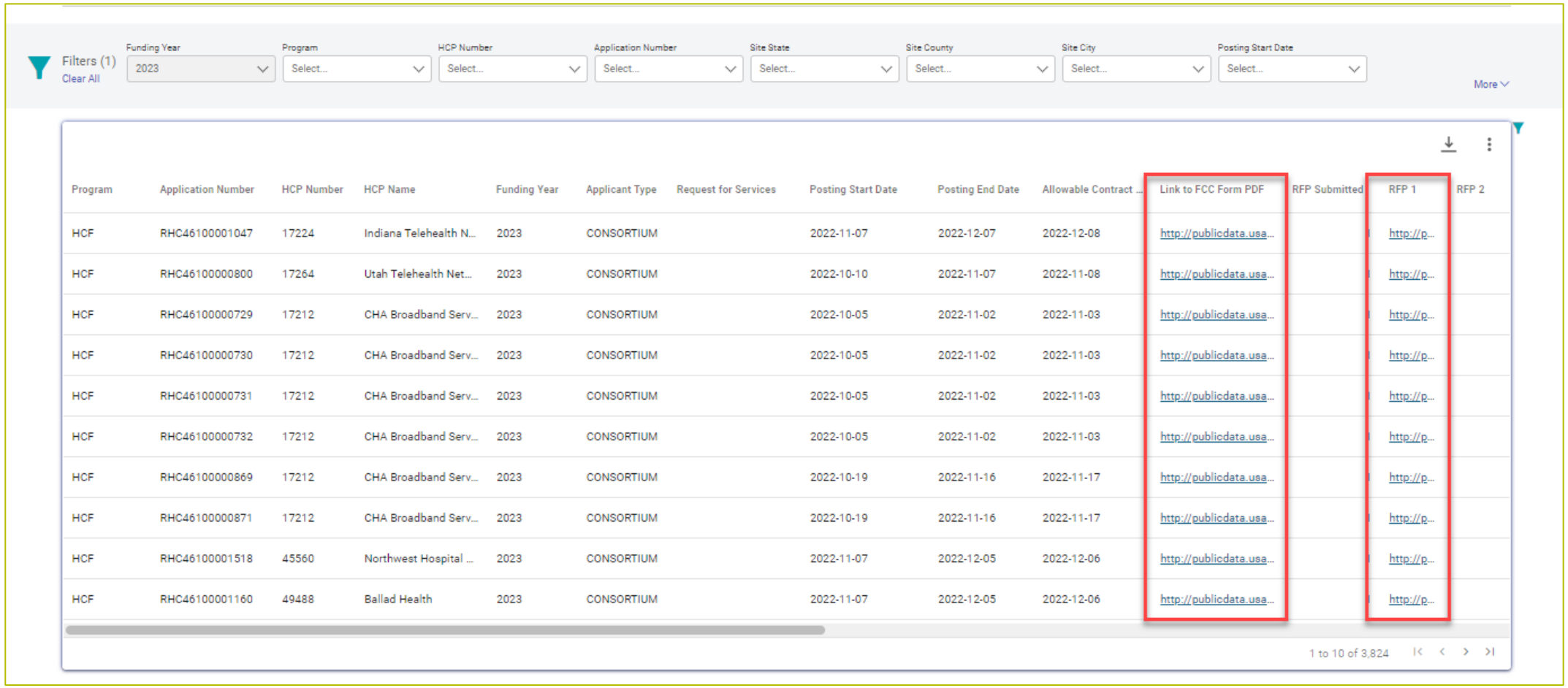
Search Posted Services (continued)

- Apply filters to narrow search



Search Posted Services (continued)

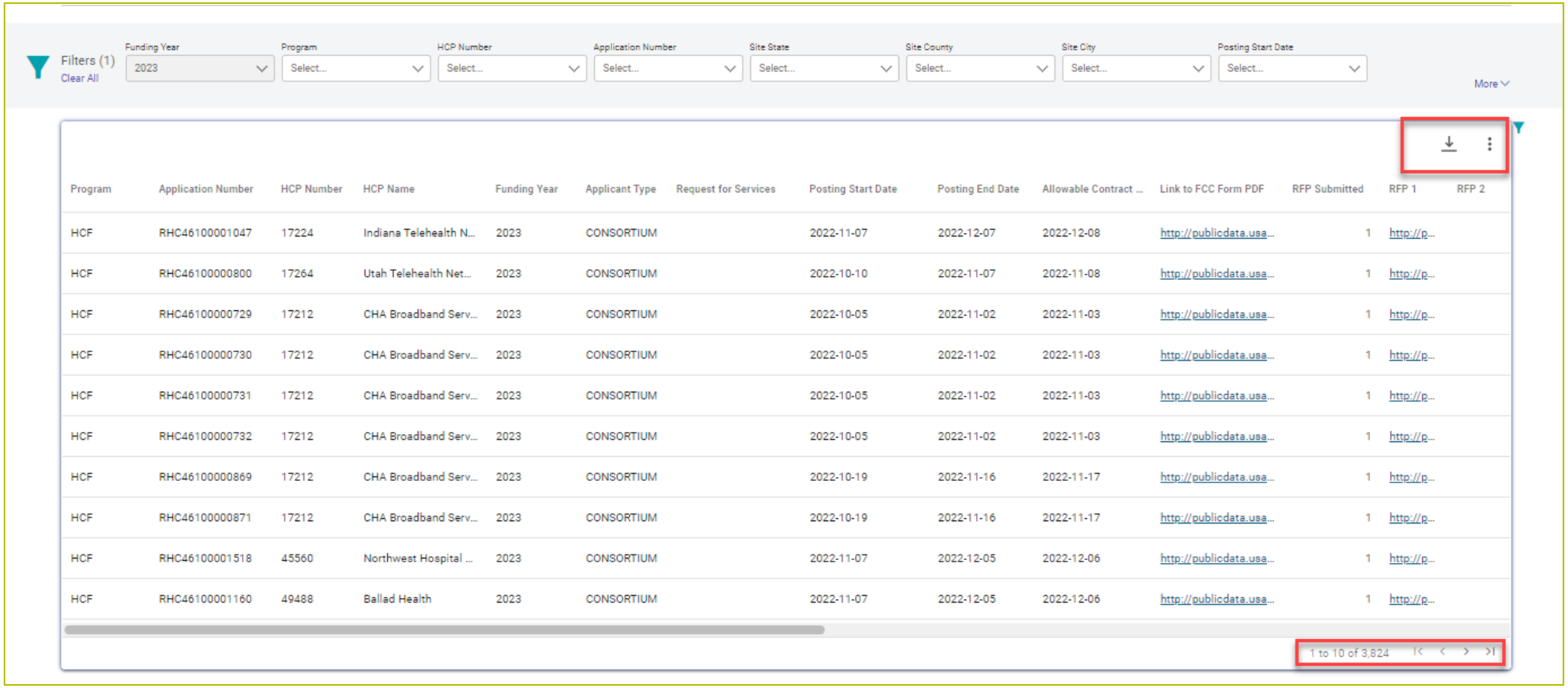
- Click on hyperlink to download a PDF copy of the FCC Form 461 or 465 and RFP



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	2022-12-07	2022-12-08	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000800	17264	Utah Telehealth Net...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-10	2022-11-07	2022-11-08	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000729	17212	CHA Broadband Serv...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-05	2022-11-02	2022-11-03	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000730	17212	CHA Broadband Serv...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-05	2022-11-02	2022-11-03	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000731	17212	CHA Broadband Serv...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-05	2022-11-02	2022-11-03	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000732	17212	CHA Broadband Serv...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-05	2022-11-02	2022-11-03	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000869	17212	CHA Broadband Serv...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-19	2022-11-16	2022-11-17	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100000871	17212	CHA Broadband Serv...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-10-19	2022-11-16	2022-11-17	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100001518	45560	Northwest Hospital ...	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-11-07	2022-12-05	2022-12-06	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	
HCF	RHC46100001160	49488	Ballad Health	2023	CONSORTIUM		2022-11-07	2022-12-05	2022-12-06	http://publicdata.usa...		http://p...	

Search Posted Services (continued)

- Click on arrow at the top right to download data in Excel
- Click hyperlinks on the bottom right to view more postings

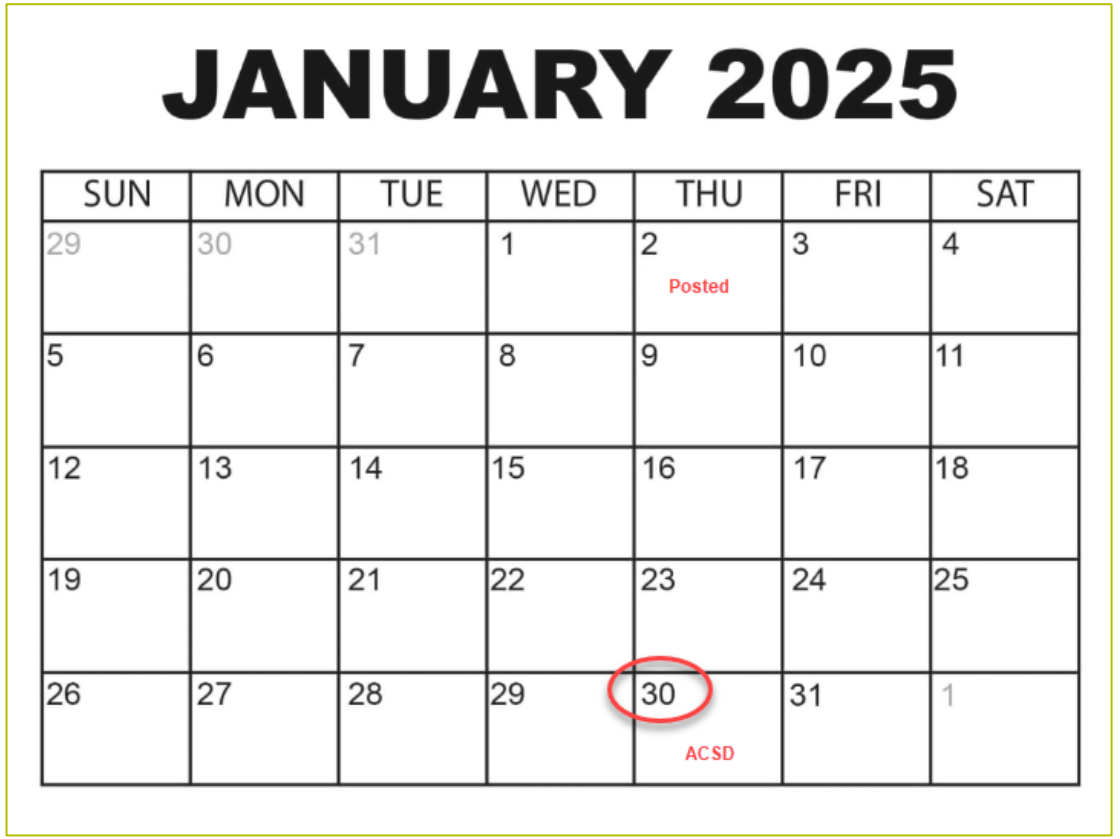


Bid Evaluation Criteria Process

- The bid evaluation criteria is a list of weighted standards that HCPs will use to determine the most cost-effective bid. Service providers cannot assist with this process.
- Each criterion is given a certain weight, and the sum of these weights will equal 100.
  - Cost must be a primary factor for evaluating HCF program bids.
  - Examples of evaluation criteria include cost, reliability, quality of transmission.
- The bid evaluation criteria should address the HCP’s needs, as indicated on the FCC Form 461 or 465, and be based on the FCC's definition of “cost-effective.”

When Can a Contract Be Signed?

- Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD): Once a Request for Services is publicly posted on the USAC website, service providers have at least 28 days to submit their bids to the applicant.
  - The HCP and service provider may not enter into an agreement to purchase services until the 29th day from the first date of posting the FCC Form 461 or 465 on USAC's website.
  - After the 28-day period ends, the HCP and the selected service provider may sign a contract.



Competitive Bidding Exemptions

Per RHC program rules, applicants are exempt from competitive bidding under the following circumstances:

- **For HCF program only:** Applicants seeking support for $10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year;
- Applicants that are purchasing services from a government master service agreement (MSA) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on its behalf, and which was awarded pursuant to applicable competitive bidding requirements;
- Applicants that are requesting support using contracts previously approved by USAC (MSA under the RHC Pilot program or the HCF program);
- Applicants that are using an active multi-year contract designated as evergreen for the RHC program (exemption applies for the life of the contract plus up to five years of voluntary extensions); or
- Applicants that are using a contract approved under the E-rate program.

Competitive Bidding Exemptions - Evergreen Contracts

- A contract is considered “evergreen” when it covers more than one funding year and is granted evergreen status by USAC.
- An evergreen contract exempts the HCP from seeking bids for services requested under the contract for the life of the contract, including voluntary extensions not to exceed five years in the aggregate (or until the contract is modified).
- A contract is reviewed for evergreen designation at the time of the FCC Form 462/466 submission.
- The contract may be designated as “evergreen” if the contract meets all of the following requirements:
  - Both parties 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.

Documentation

- All bid correspondence and supporting documentation should be sent via email for audit purposes.
- All communications with the HCP regarding the discounted services, facilities, or equipment should be in writing and retained.
- All documentation related to the delivery of discounted services, facilities, or equipment must be retained for at least five years after the last day of delivery of discounted services, facilities or equipment (47 CFR § 54.631(b)(1)(iii) & (2)(ii)).

Key Takeaways for Service Providers

- RHC program rules and FCC Orders require that the competitive bidding process be “fair and open.”
  - All potential bidders and service providers must have access to the same information about the HCP’s service needs and must be treated in the same manner.
  - Use Search Posted Services to download Request for Services forms to provide the applicant with a bid.
- **Service providers who plan to bid cannot also simultaneously help the HCP choose a winning bidder or participate in the vendor selection process in any way.**
- The HCP and service provider may not enter into an agreement to purchase services until after 28 days from the date the FCC Form 461/465 is posted on USAC’s website.
  - After the 28-day period ends, the HCP and the selected service provider may sign a contract.
- All bid correspondence and supporting documentation should be handled via email for audit purposes.
- All documentation related to the delivery of discounted services, facilities, or equipment must be retained for at least five years after the last day of delivery of discounted services.

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Questions?

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Funding Requests and Submitting the FCC Form 469

Best Practices for Service Providers

What is a Funding Request?

- Once a service provider is selected, the HCP submits a funding request (FCC Form 462/466) to USAC.
- Specifies the type of service(s) ordered, cost, name of service provider(s), and terms of the service agreement(s).
- HCP must demonstrate that selected services are the most cost-effective option of the offers received.
- The FCC Forms 462/466 must be submitted by the close of the filing window to be considered for funding.
  - The FY2025 filing window opened on December 1, 2024, and will end on June 2, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Telecom Program Rural Rate

- Your customer may not have the information needed to document that the rural rate on the FCC Form 466 is compliant with the rule.
  - You should check the rural rate for a service before you submit a bid in response to the FCC Form 465.
  - Carriers should not begin the process of determining a rural rate when they submit a bid. They should already know what their rural rates are.
- Be sure that the correct contact person is on the FCC Form 498 (Service Provider Identification Number and General Contact Information Form) so that Information Requests that require the service provider's input are received in a timely manner.
- In the rare case where you deem the information provided to USAC as confidential, please mark it clearly as confidential in the subject line and take the appropriate measures to protect the email correspondence.

Calculating Urban and Rural Rates

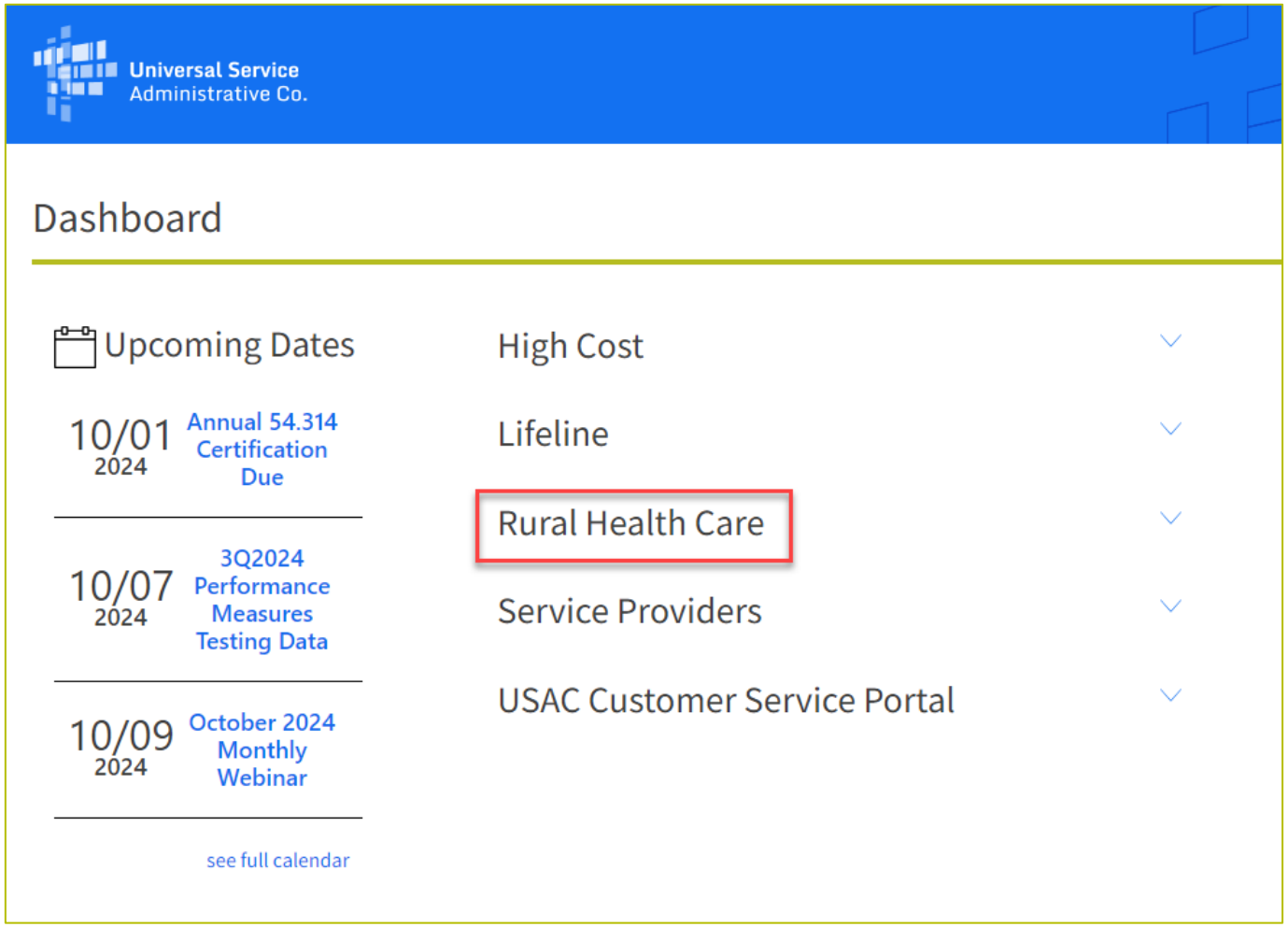
- On January 26, 2023, the FCC released Order DA 23-6, waiving the requirement that HCPs and service providers participating in the Telecom program use the Rates Database to calculate urban and rural rates for FY2024 and FY2025.
- For FY2024 and FY2025, rules requiring rural rates to be calculated using Methods 1 through 3 and the pre-Rates Database calculation method for urban rates will be reinstated with the following minor changes:
  - For FY2024 and FY2025, applicants and service providers using Methods 1 and 2 to calculate rural rates are not permitted to use previously approved rates.
  - For FY2024 and 2025, service providers will be permitted to use previously approved rates for rural rates that would otherwise be calculated under Method 3.
  - If there are no comparable rural and urban rates within 30 percent of the speed of the requested service, service providers may use the rate for a higher bandwidth service that is otherwise similar to the requested service to justify a rural or urban rate.
- Please use the Urban and Rural Rate Information FY2024-2025 tip sheet as a resource.

Information Requests

- FCC Forms with missing or incomplete information or documentation cannot be processed.
- USAC will send out an Information Request to an applicant when it requires information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation.
- Information Requests can be received two ways:
  - Via RHC Connect; or
  - Via email from an RHC reviewer.
- Applicants are given 14 calendar days to provide a response to the Information Request.
- Information Requests not responded to within 14 calendar days will result in a denial of that form.

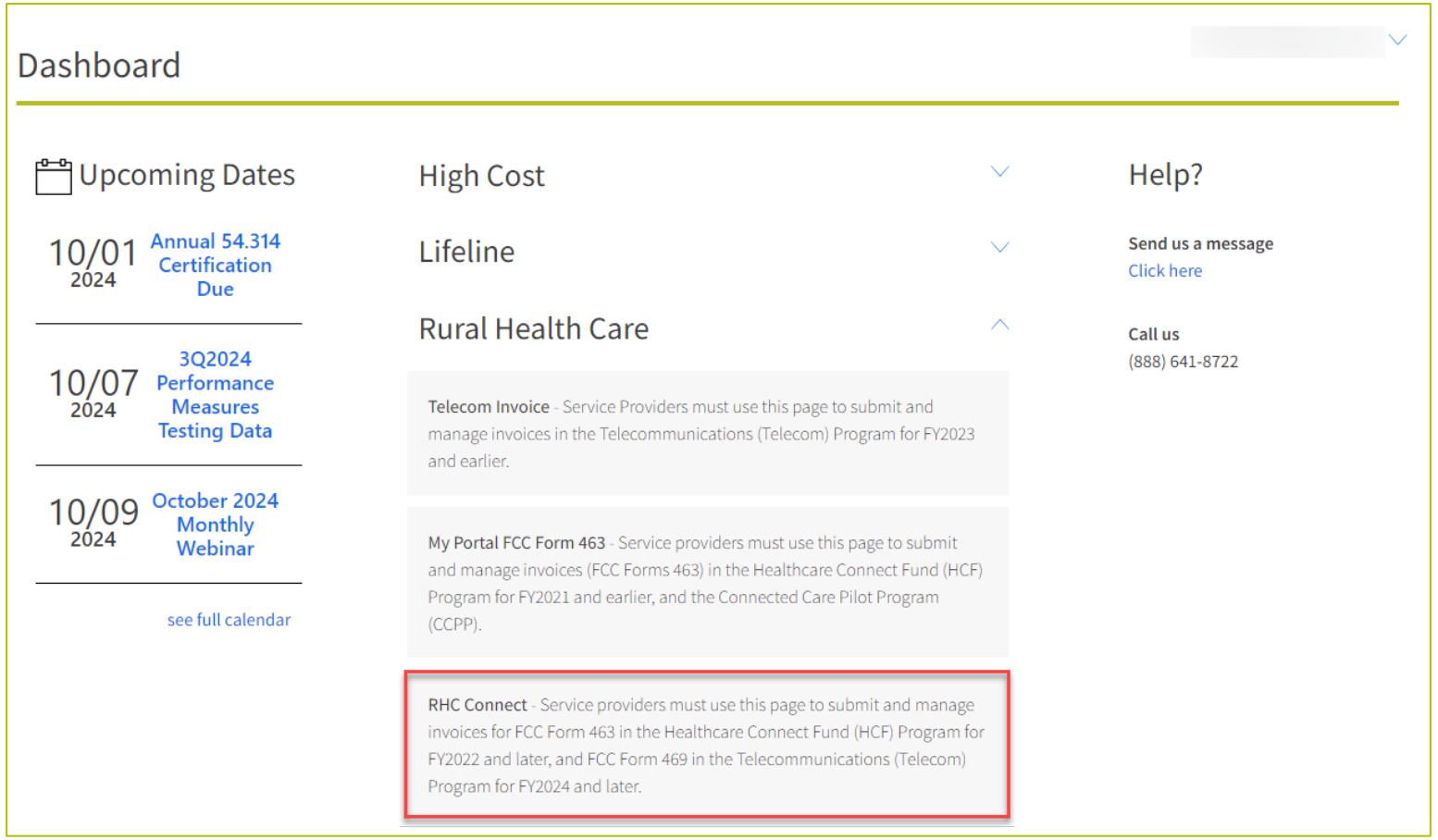
My Portal Landing Page

- Log in to My Portal and click **Rural Health Care.**



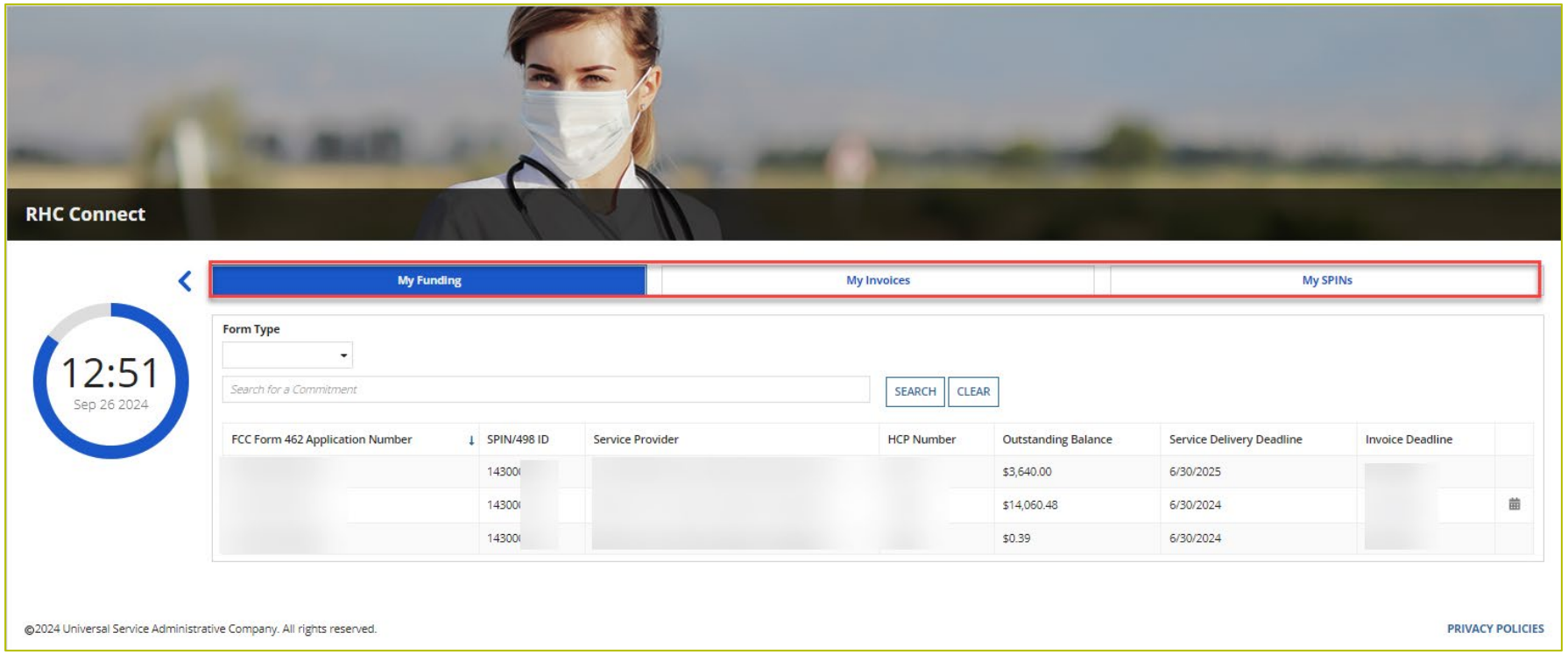
My Portal Landing Page (continued)

- Click **RHC Connect.**



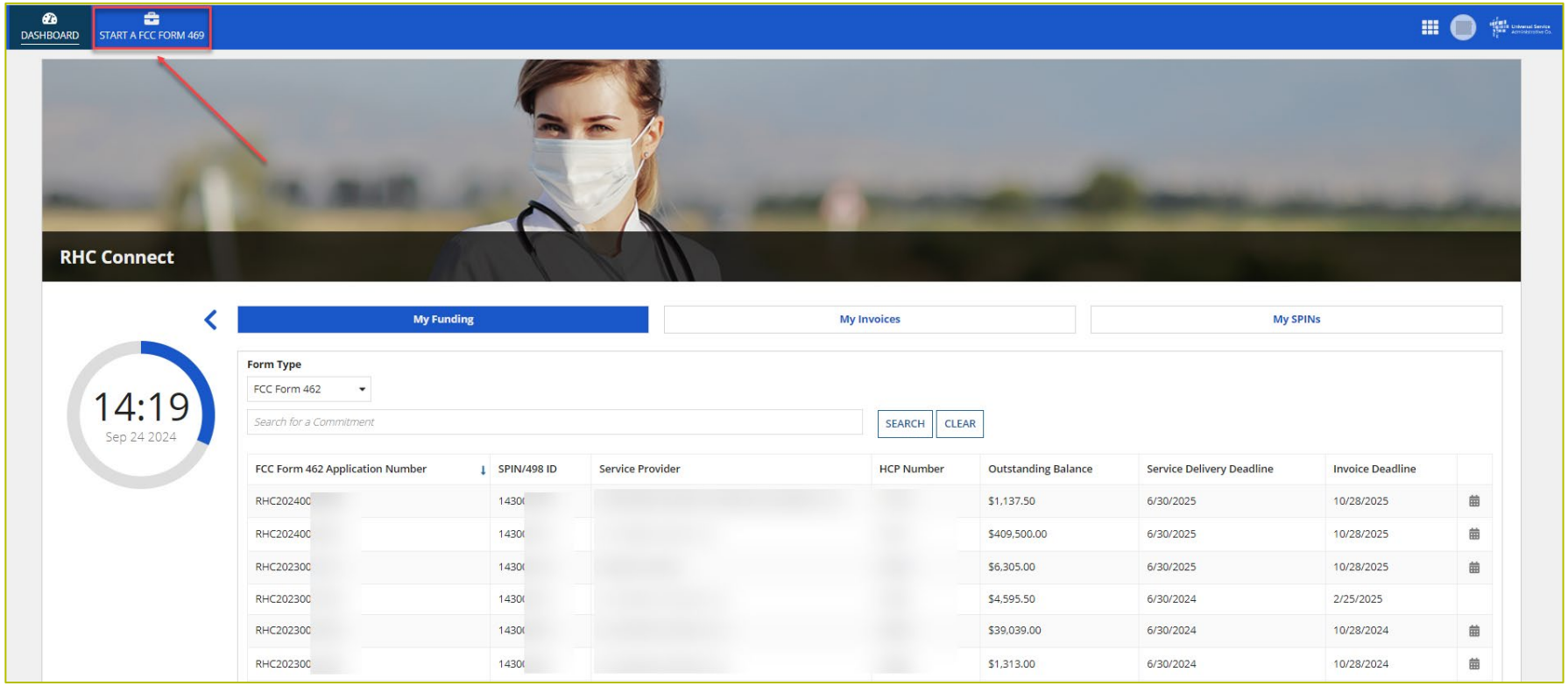
Dashboard

- The **My Funding** tab is a summary of all commitments associated with your SPIN.
- The **My Invoices** tab displays the status of all invoices associated with your SPIN.
- The **My SPINs** tab displays all of the SPINs you have entitlements for.



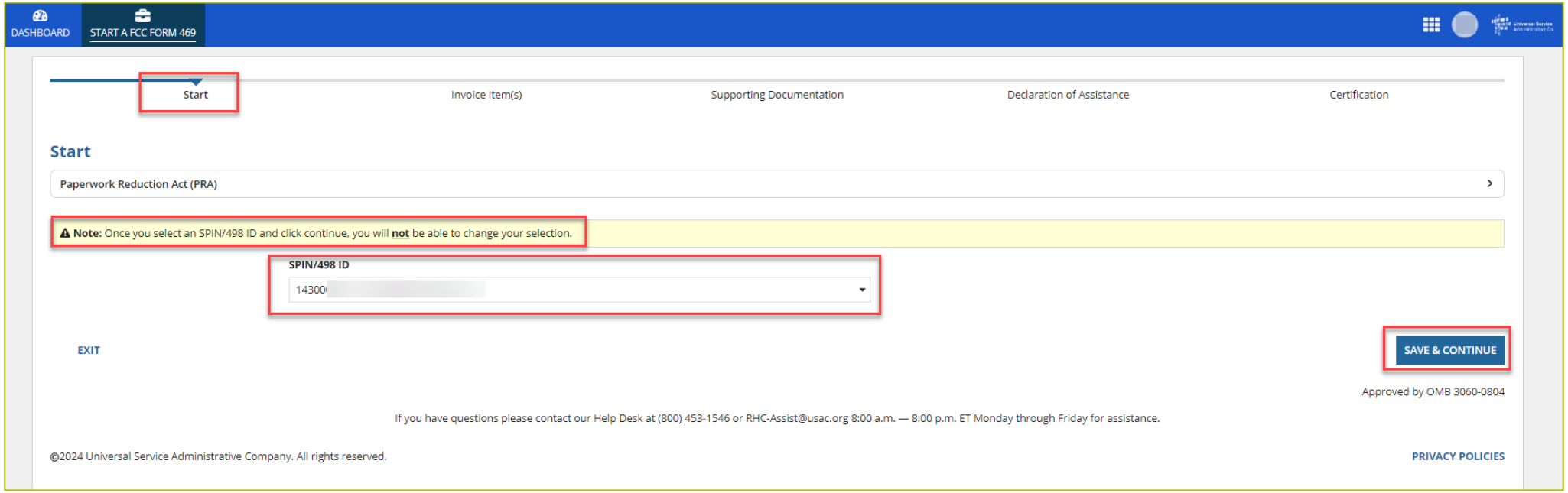
Dashboard

- Click **START AN FCC FORM 469**.



Start Page

- Select the **SPIN/498 ID** from the dropdown menu.
- Note: Once you select a SPIN and click **Save & Continue** you will be unable to change your selection.
- Click **Save & Continue**.



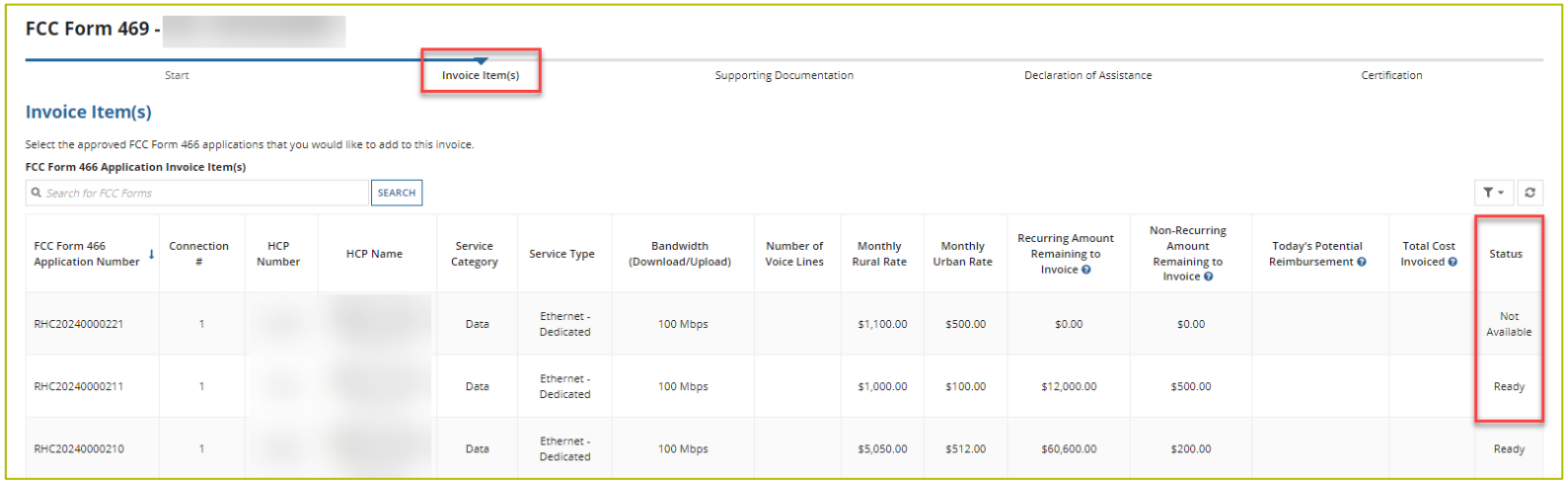
Invoice Items – Status Column

Not Available

- If the FRN is on submitted FCC Form 469, you must wait until the submitted FCC Form 469 is processed and disbursed.
- If the FRN is on a draft FCC Form 469, delete the draft before creating a new form.
- All funds have been invoiced and disbursed.

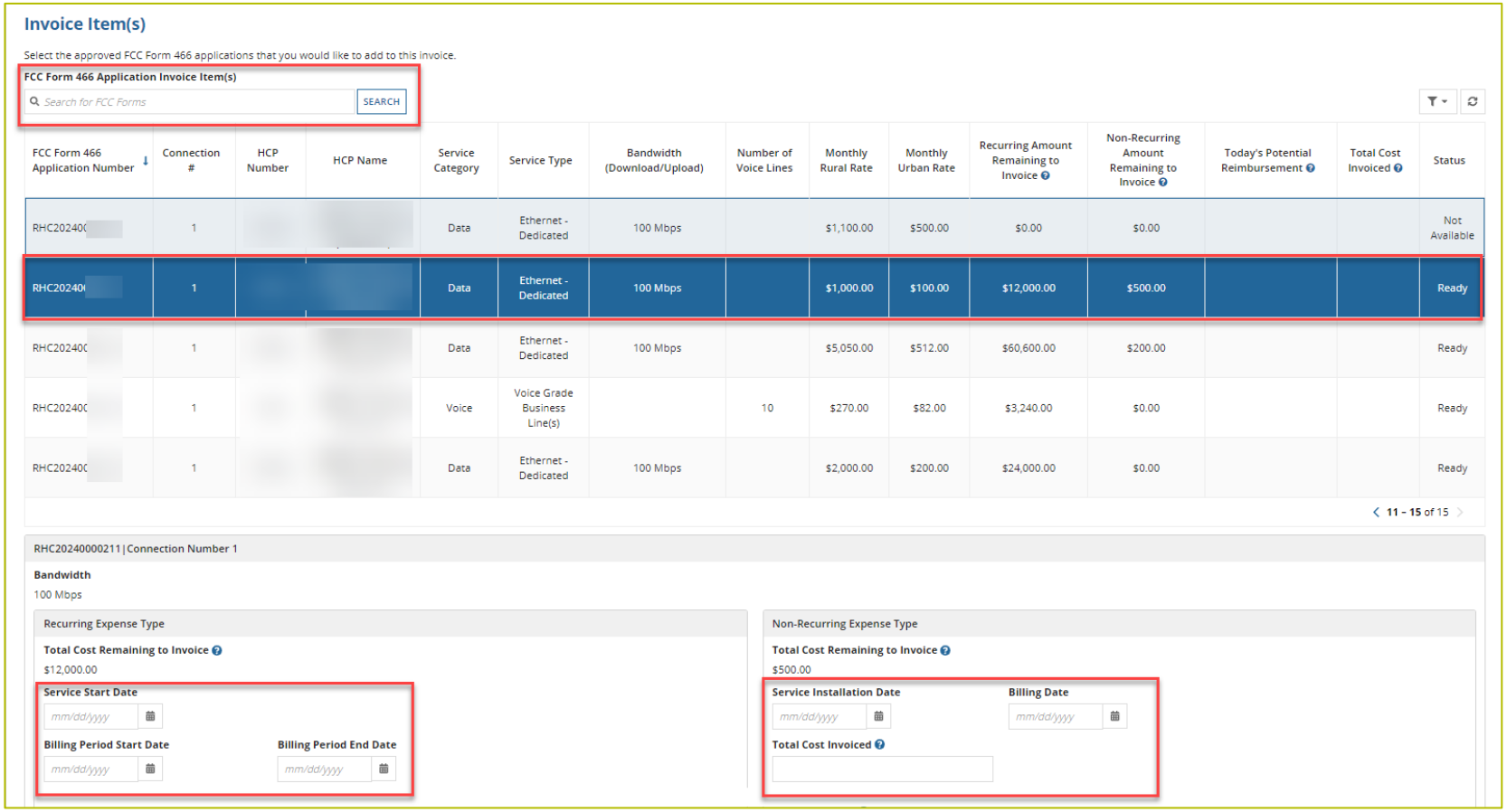
Ready

- FRN is available for filing an FCC Form 469



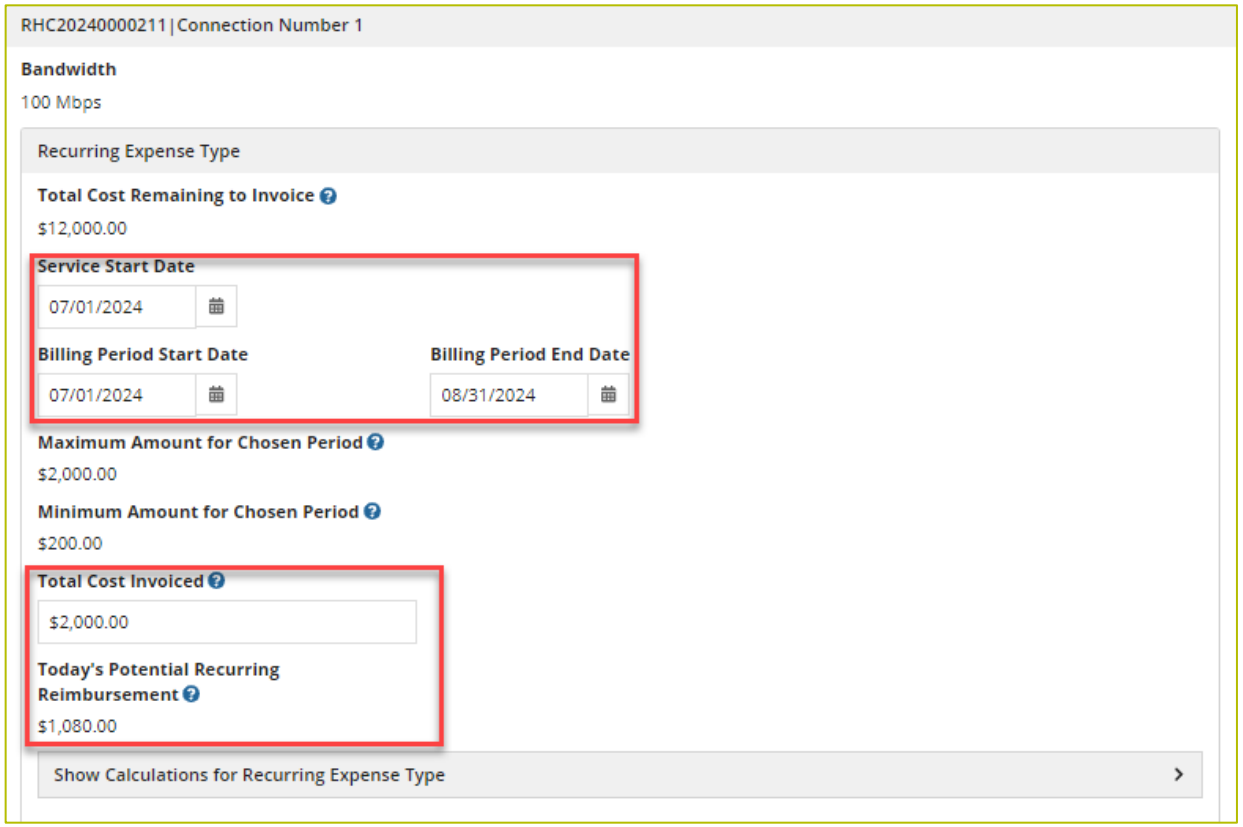
Invoice Items

- Select FRN and complete information in the fields.
- Use the search bar to select multiple FRNs.
- Service providers can add multiple FRNs to a single invoice.



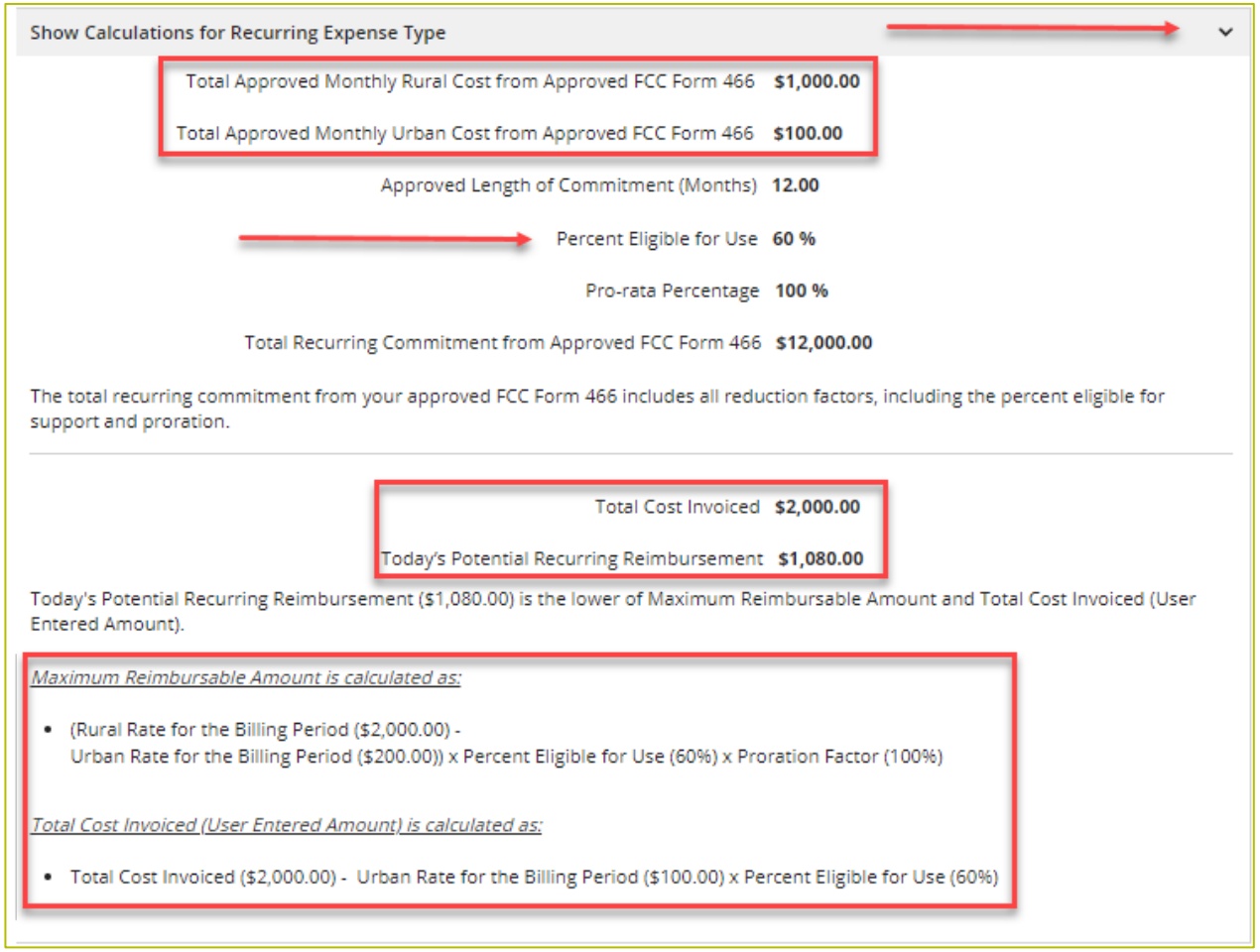
Recurring Expense Type

- Enter the following information:
  - Service Start Date
  - Billing Period Start Date
  - Billing Period End Date
  - Total Cost Invoiced



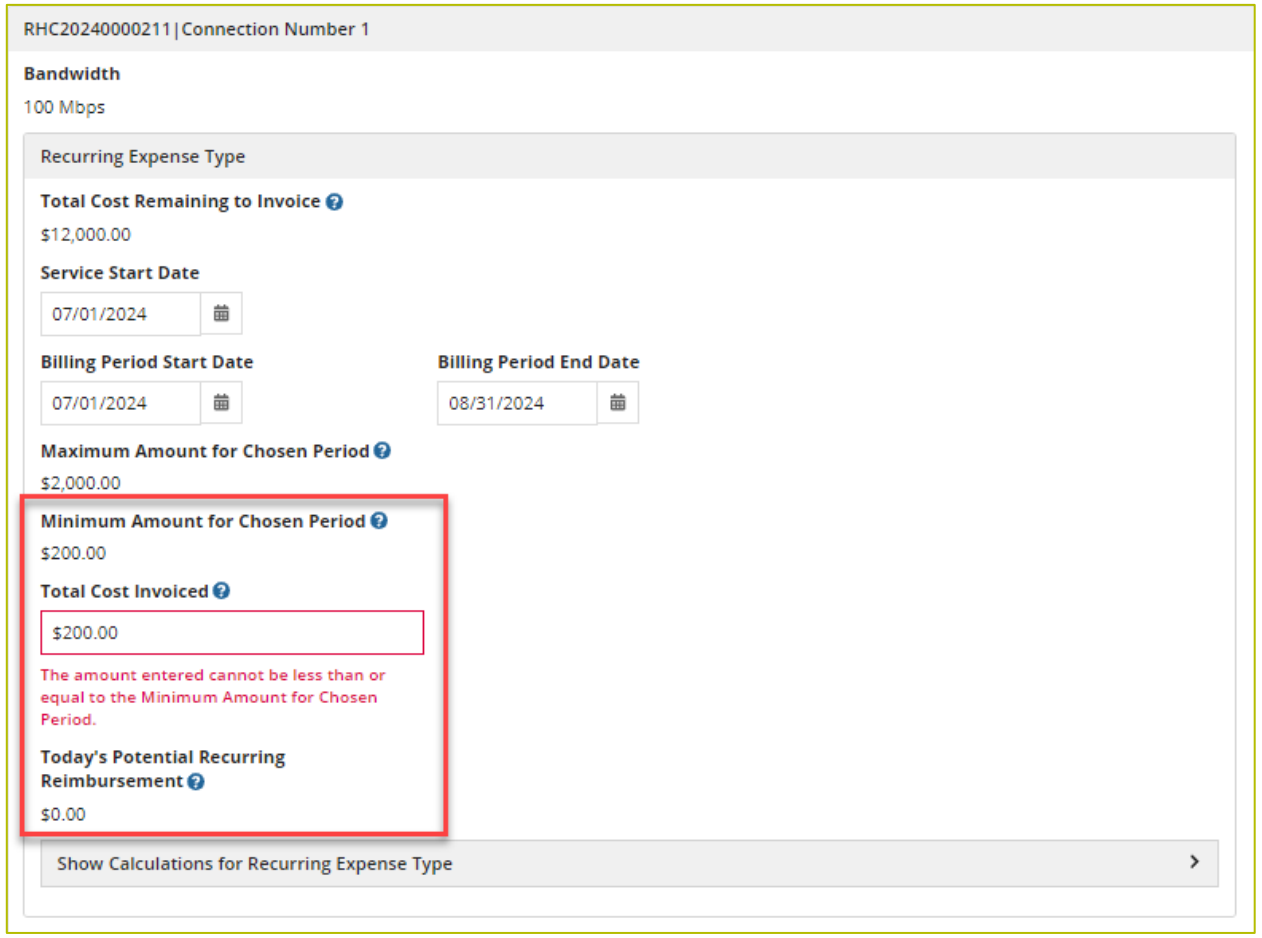
Recurring Expense Type (continued)

- Click the arrow beside **Show Calculations for Recurring Expense Type** to understand how the system is calculating the potential reimbursement.



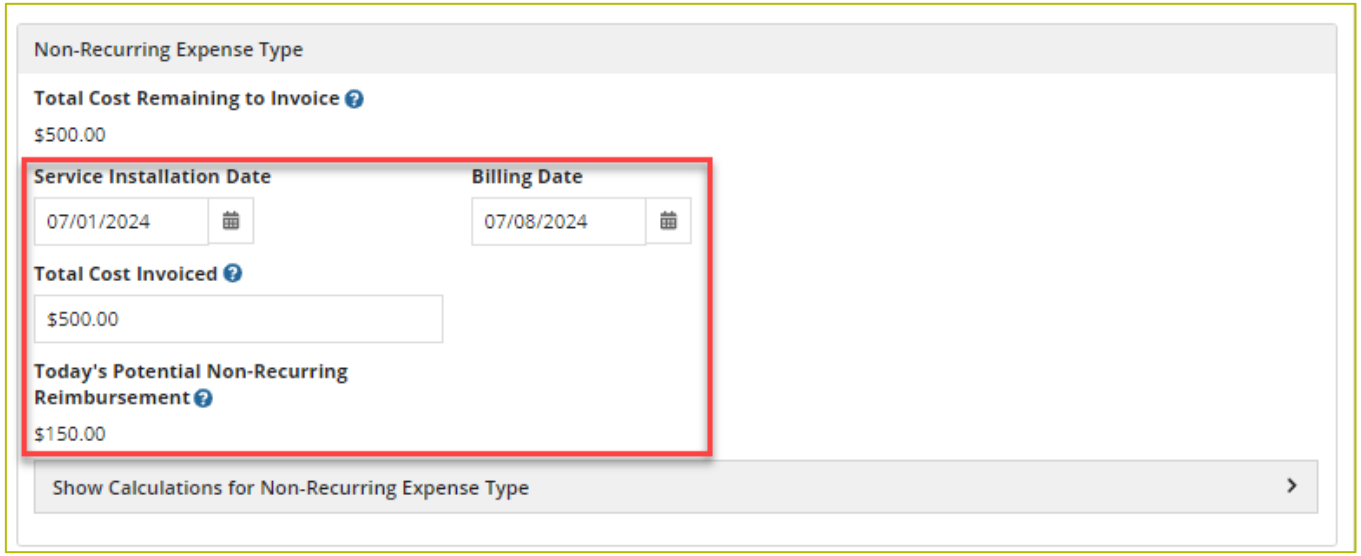
Recurring Expense Type (continued)

- If the amount entered is equal to or less than the **Minimum Amount for the Chosen Period**, a warning message will be displayed.



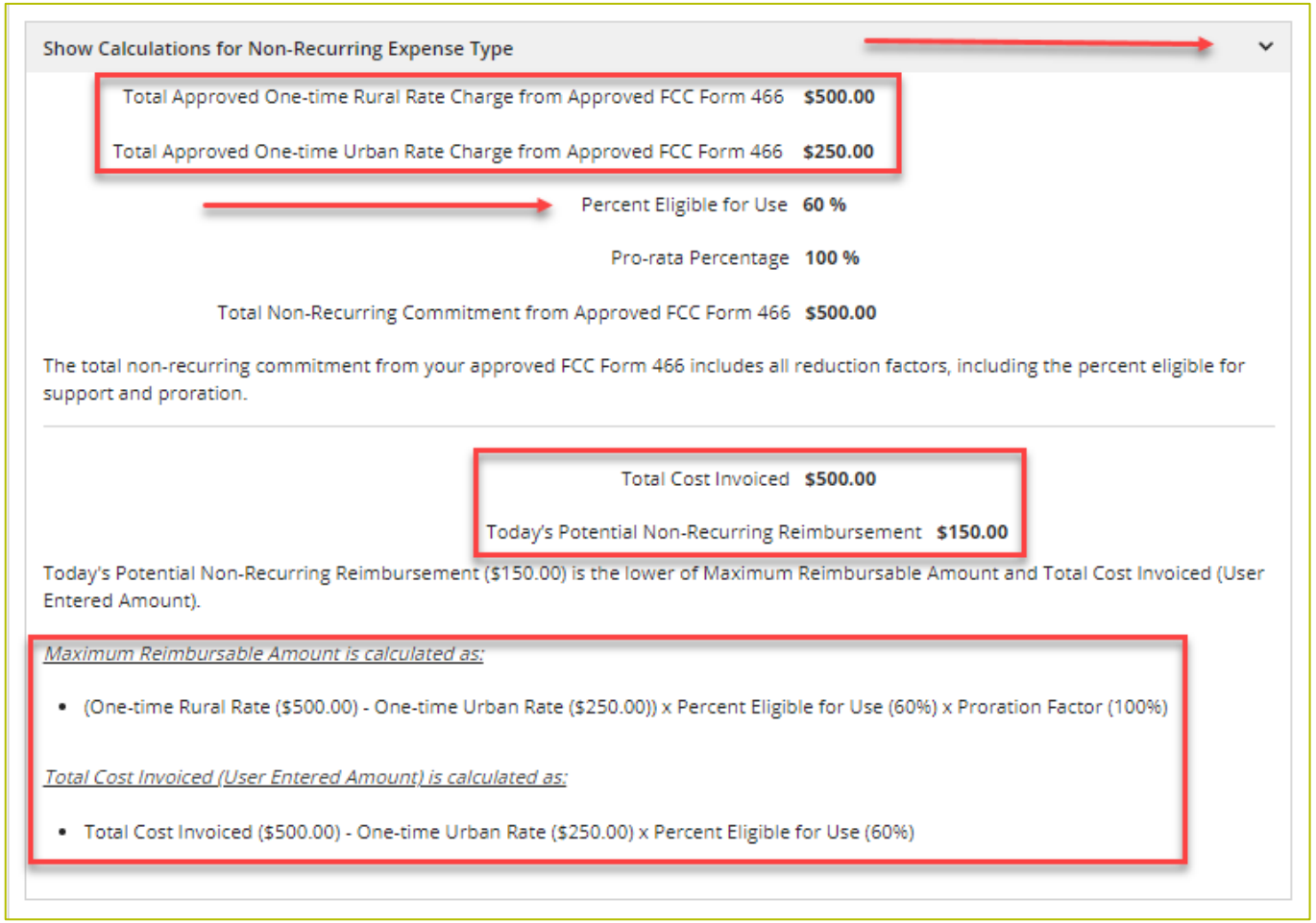
Non - Recurring Expense Type

- Enter the following information:
  - Service Installation Date
  - Billing Date
  - Total Cost Invoiced
- For non-recurring expense types, only one FCC Form 469 may be submitted.
  - Please wait to submit until you're ready to submit an invoice for the entire charge.



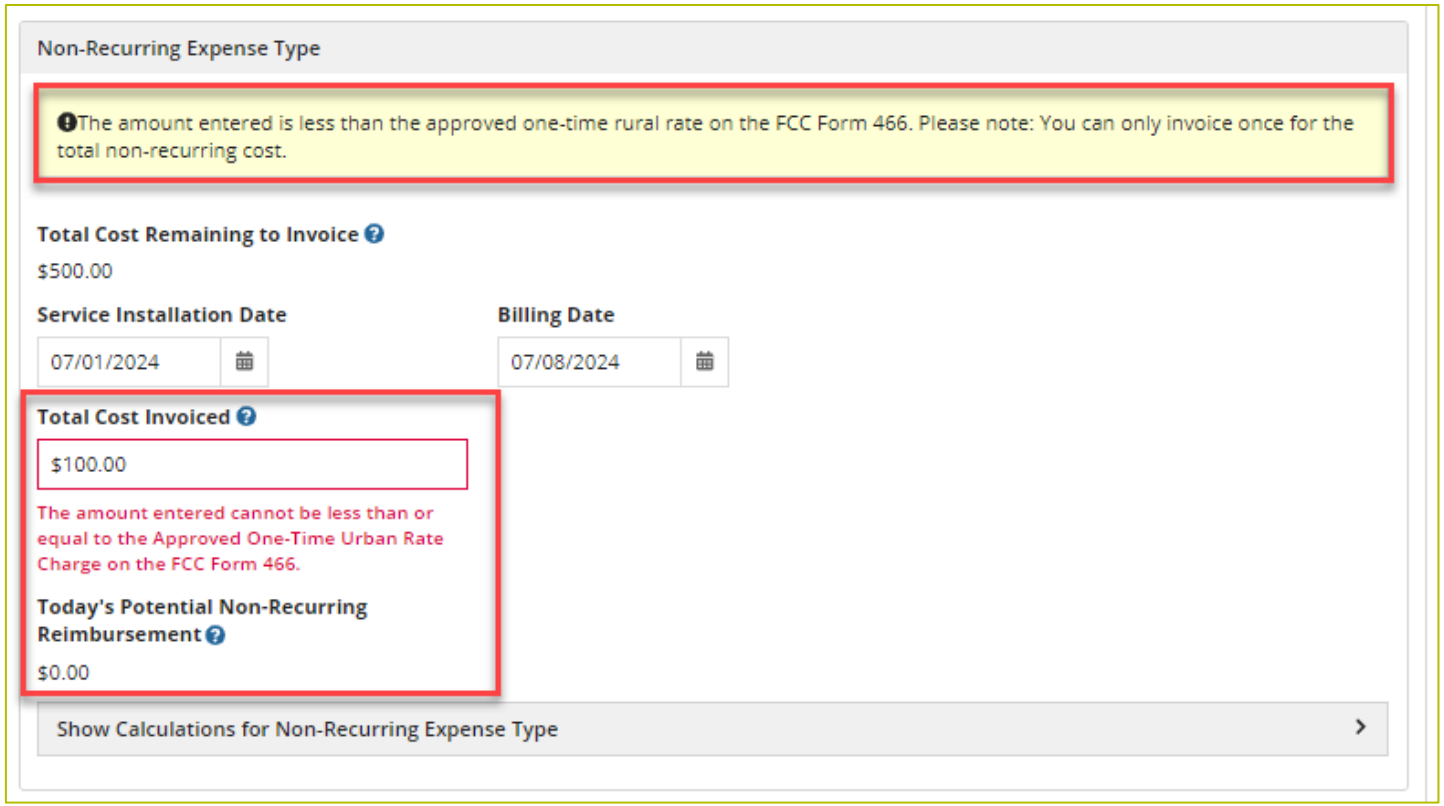
Non-Recurring Expense Type (continued)

- Click the arrow beside **Show Calculations for Non-Recurring Expense Type** to understand how the system is calculating the potential reimbursement.



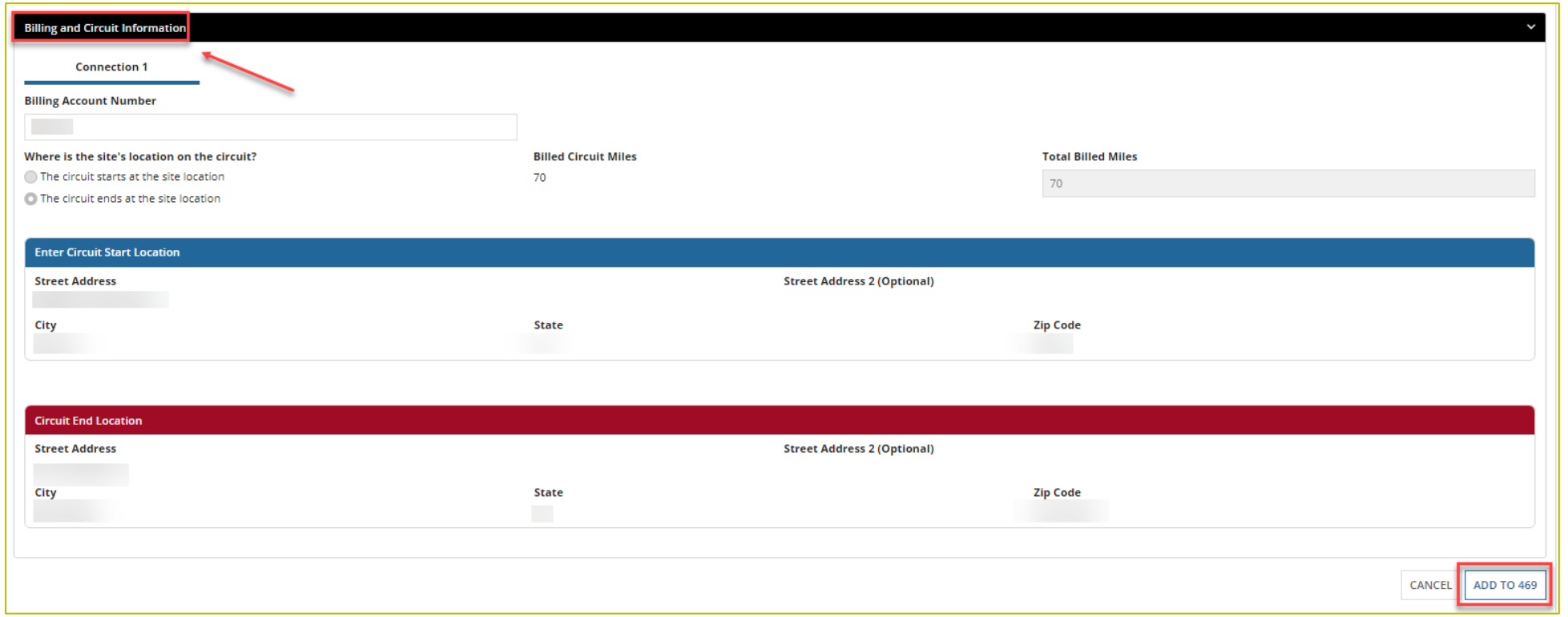
Non-Recurring Expense Type (continued)

- If the amount entered is equal to or less than the **Total Cost Remaining to Invoice**, a warning message will be displayed since non-recurring costs may only be invoiced once.
- If the amount entered is equal to or less than the **One-Time Urban Rate Charge** on the FCC Form 466, a warning message will be displayed.



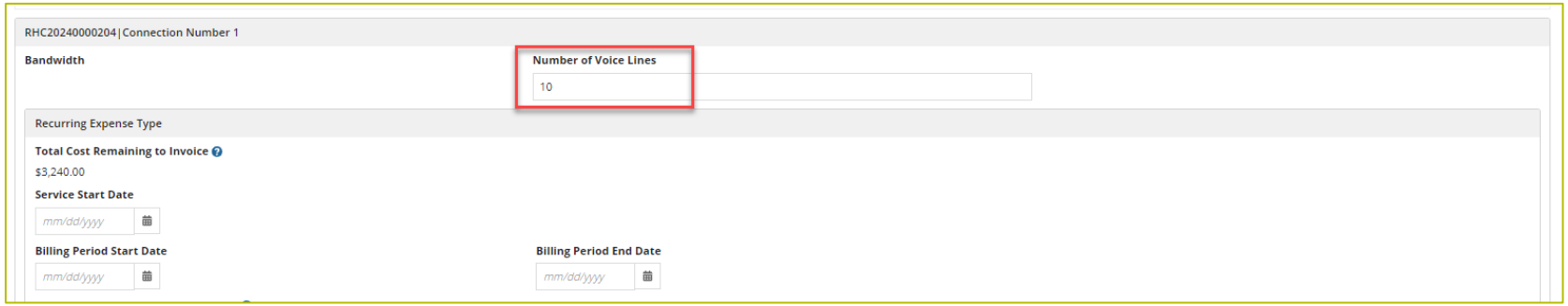
Billing and Circuit Information

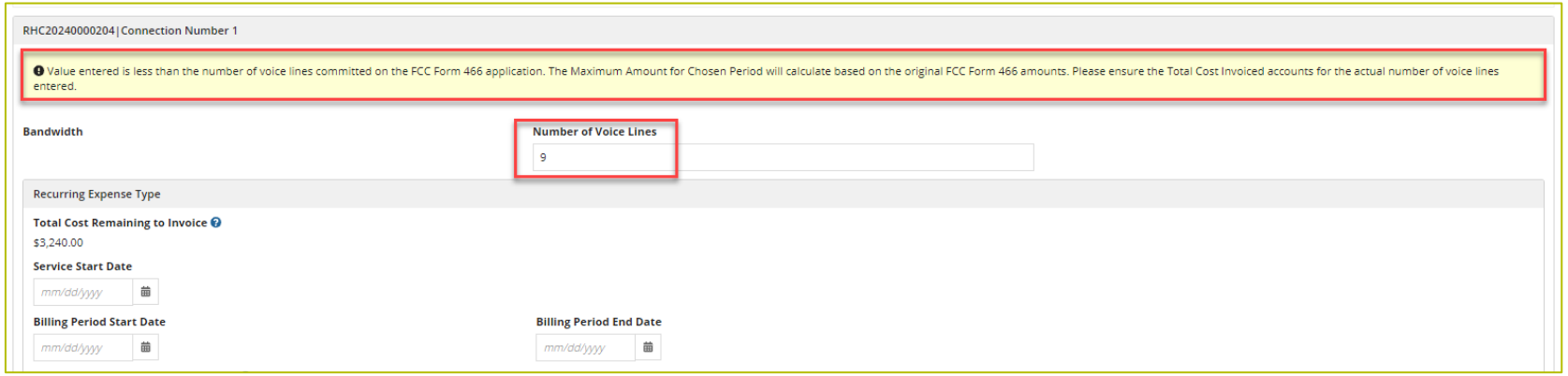
- Information is pre-populated based on information in the approved FCC Form 466.
- If information is correct, click **Add to 469**.



Voice Lines

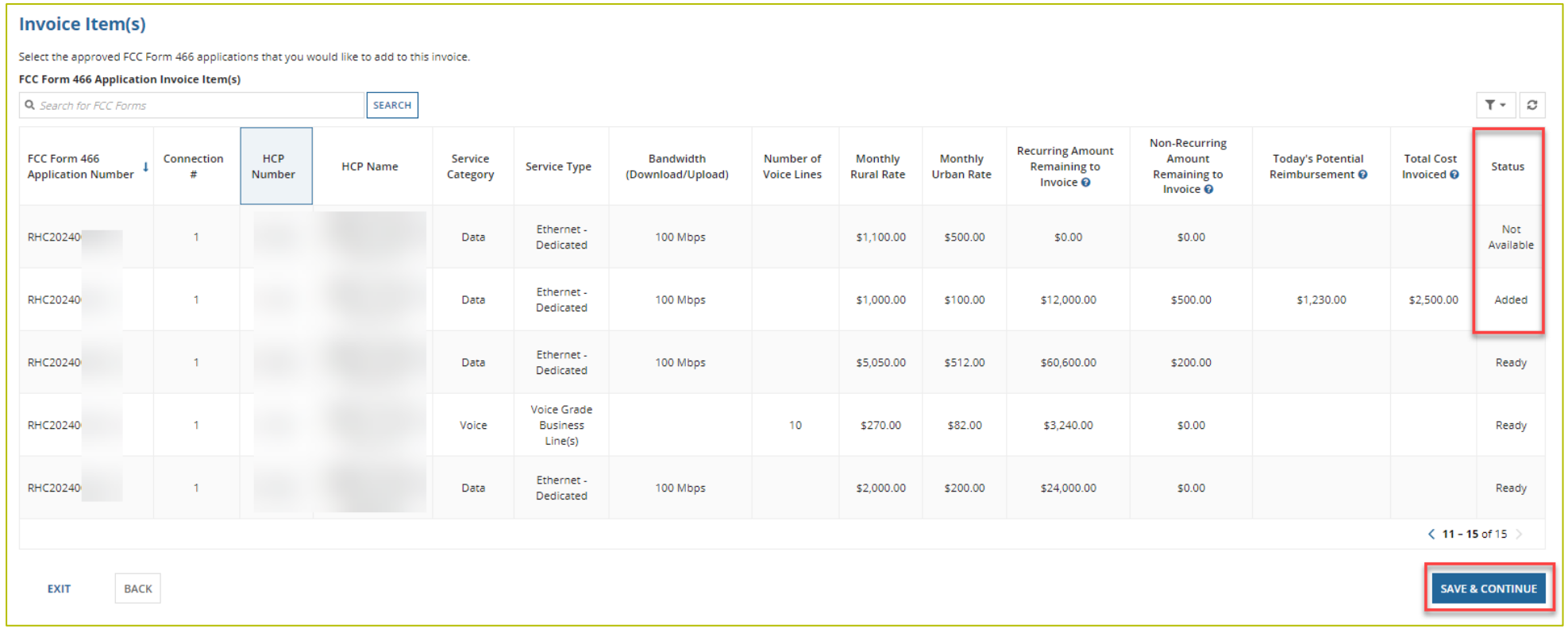
- If the number of approved voice lines has changed, enter the corrected number in the editable field titled **Number of Voice Lines**.
- Warning message will appear if the value entered is less than the number of voice lines on the committed FCC Form 466.
- Note: the system will not recalculate the cost so the service provider and HCP must ensure the total cost invoiced is correct based the reduced number of lines.





Invoice Item(s)

- Once all invoice items have been added, click **Save & Continue**.
- Note, multiple FRNs for multiple HCPs may be added to an FCC Form 469.



Invoice Item(s)

Select the approved FCC Form 466 applications that you would like to add to this invoice.

FCC Form 466 Application Invoice Item(s)

Search for FCC Forms | SEARCH

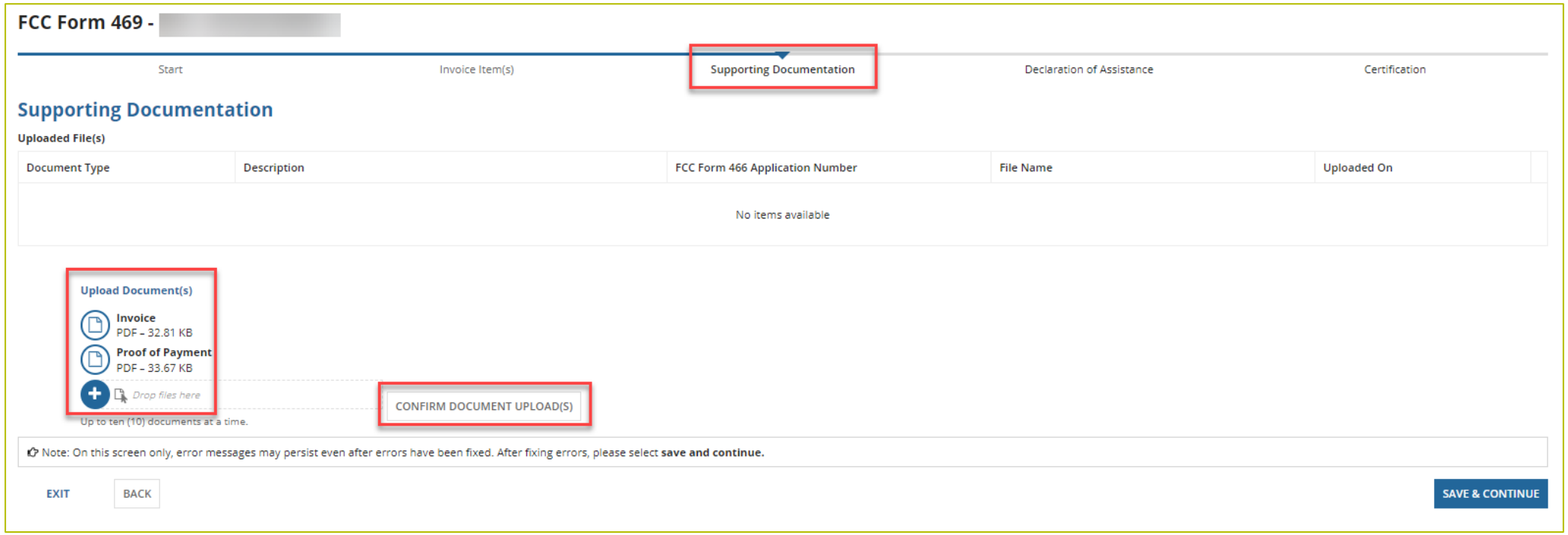
FCC Form 466 Application Number	Connection #	HCP Number	HCP Name	Service Category	Service Type	Bandwidth (Download/Upload)	Number of Voice Lines	Monthly Rural Rate	Monthly Urban Rate	Recurring Amount Remaining to Invoice	Non-Recurring Amount Remaining to Invoice	Today's Potential Reimbursement	Total Cost Invoiced	Status
RHC20240	1			Data	Ethernet - Dedicated	100 Mbps		$1,100.00	$500.00	$0.00	$0.00			Not Available
RHC20240	1			Data	Ethernet - Dedicated	100 Mbps		$1,000.00	$100.00	$12,000.00	$500.00	$1,230.00	$2,500.00	Added
RHC20240	1			Data	Ethernet - Dedicated	100 Mbps		$5,050.00	$512.00	$60,600.00	$200.00			Ready
RHC20240	1			Voice	Voice Grade Business Line(s)		10	$270.00	$82.00	$3,240.00	$0.00			Ready
RHC20240	1			Data	Ethernet - Dedicated	100 Mbps		$2,000.00	$200.00	$24,000.00	$0.00			Ready

11 - 15 of 15

EXIT | BACK | SAVE & CONTINUE

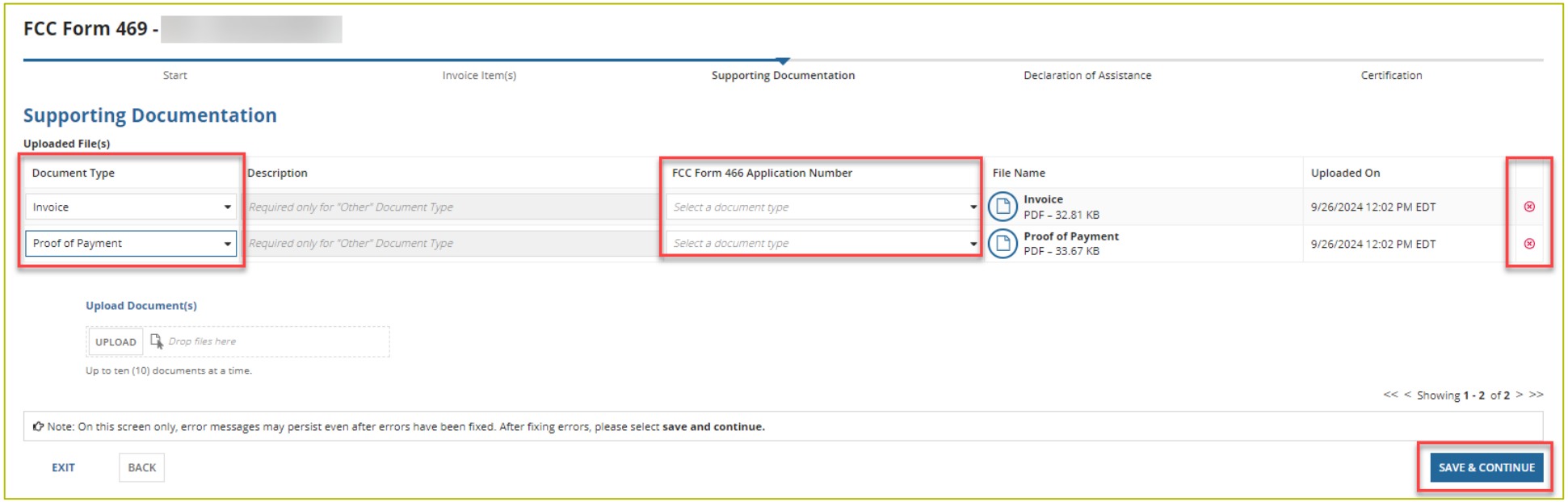
Supporting Documentation

- Click **Upload** to upload first document, then click the plus sign (**+**) to add each additional document.
- Click **Confirm Document Uploads**.



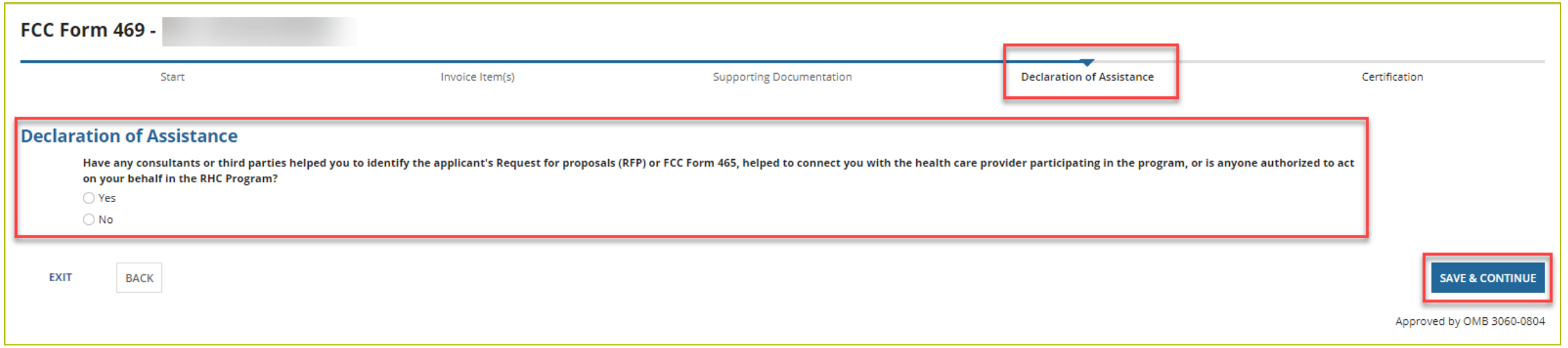
Supporting Documentation (continued)

- Use the dropdown menu for **Document Type** to select **Invoice** or **Proof of Payment** or select **Other** and enter a description of the document.
- Select the **FCC Form 466 Application Number**.
- Click the red **x** to remove a document, then click **Save & Continue**.



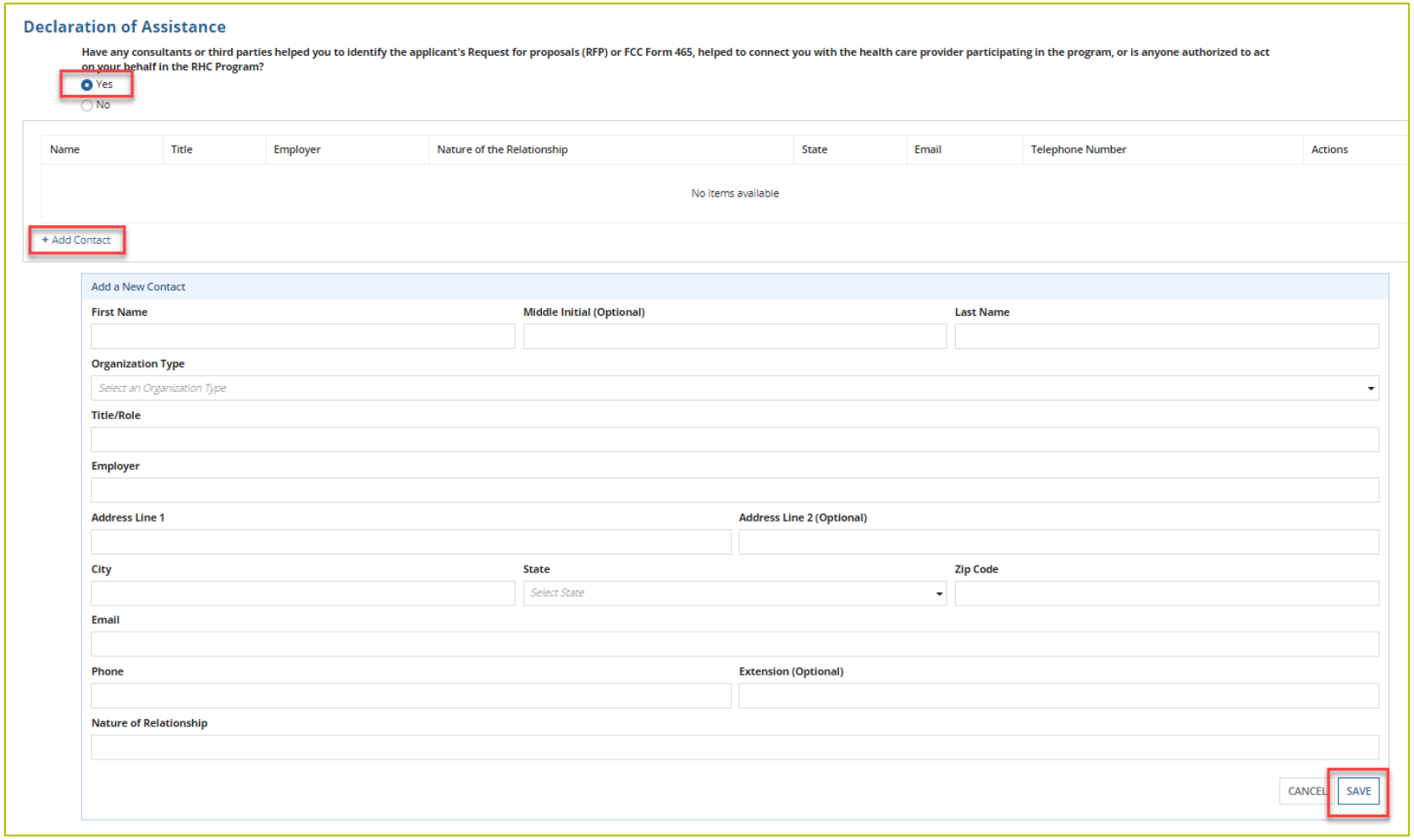
Declaration of Assistance

- Click the correct radio button to indicate whether any third parties were involved during the competitive bidding process.
- If **No** is selected, click **Save & Continue**.



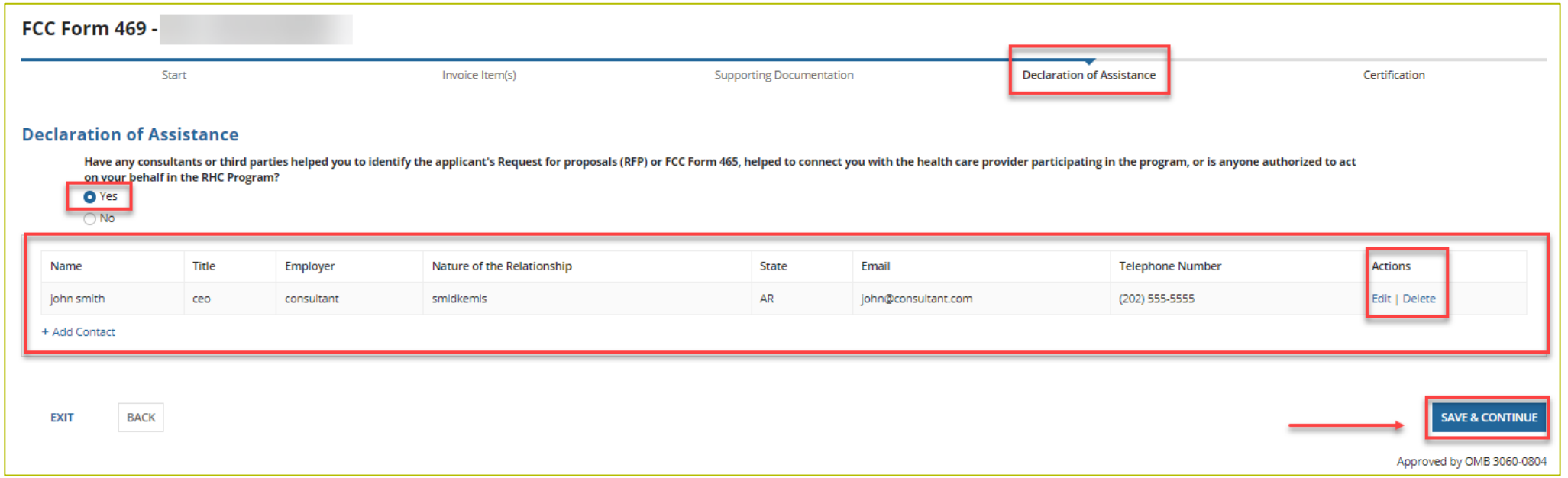
Declaration of Assistance (continued)

- If **Yes** is selected, click the **Add Contact** hyperlink and enter information about the third-party assistance.
- Once all fields are complete, click **Save** to continue.



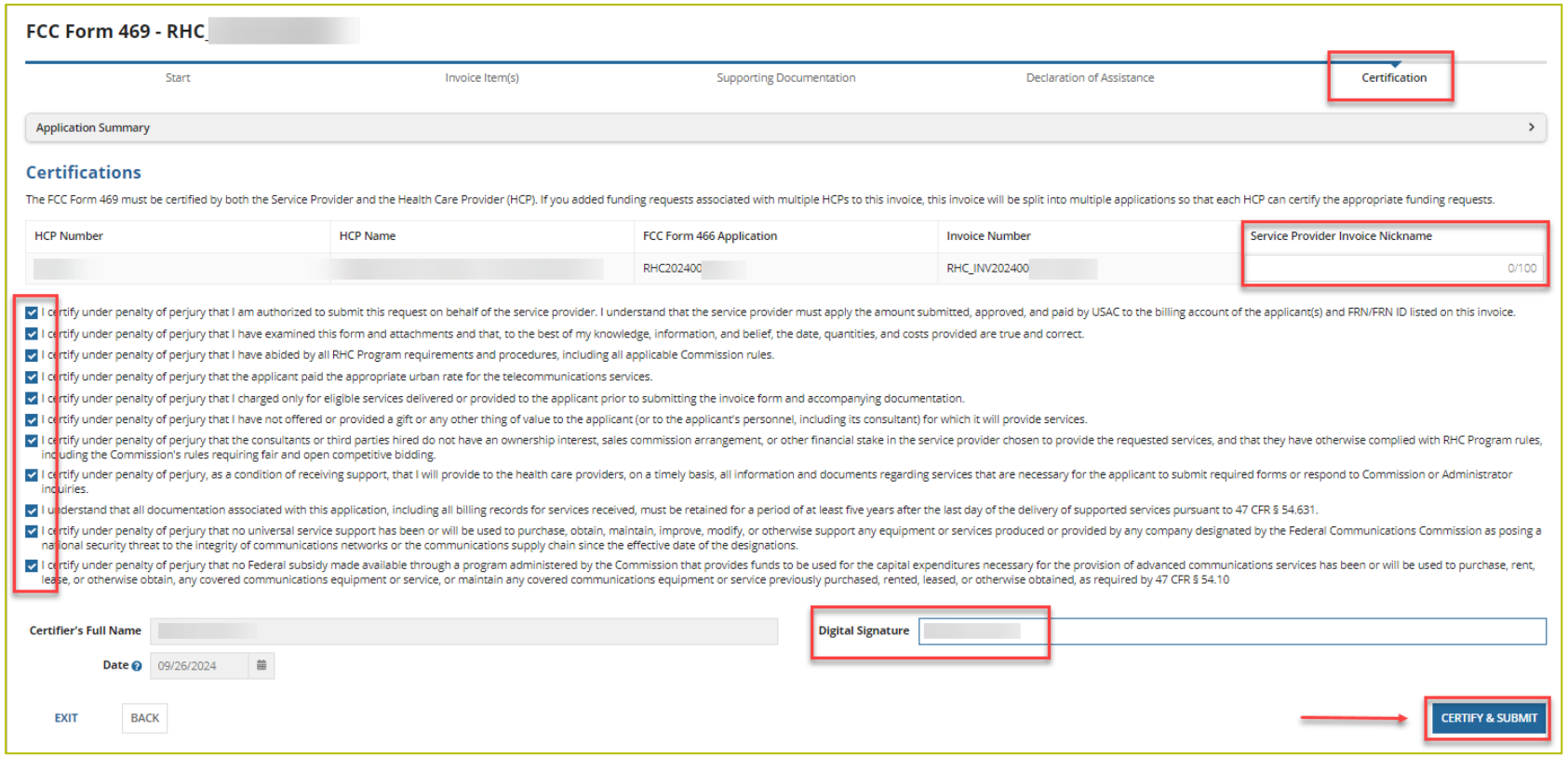
Declaration of Assistance (continued)

- Once the information is saved, it will be displayed on the screen.
- Click **Edit** or **Delete** to remove or make changes, then click **Save & Continue.**



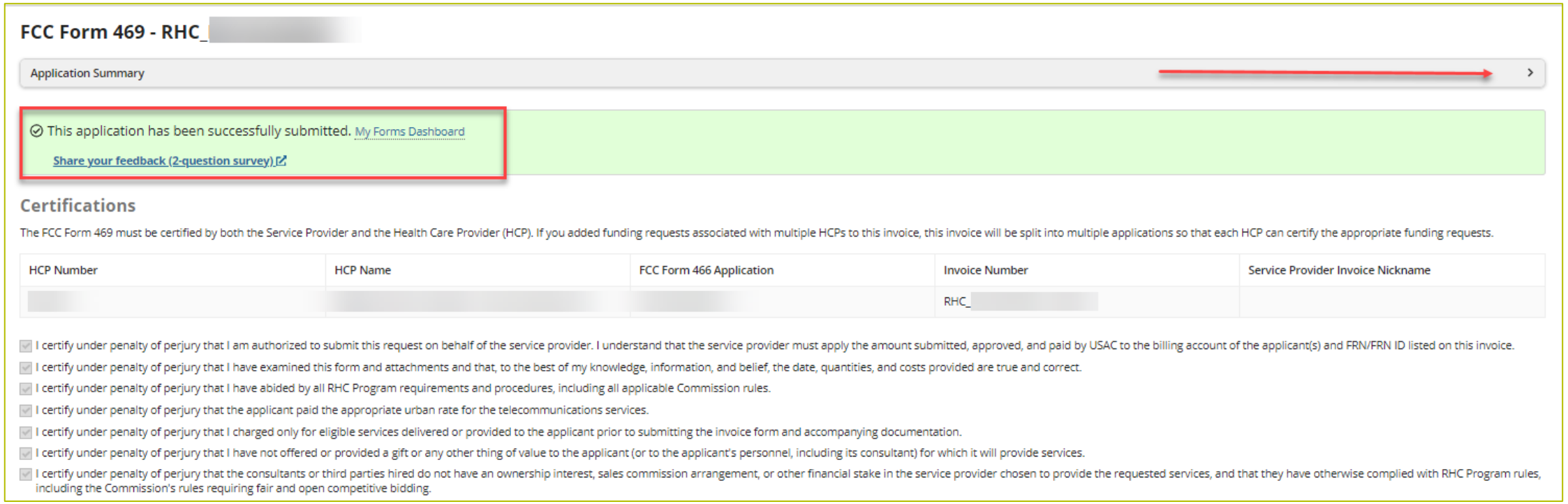
Certifications

- Read and click all certifications.
- All certifications must be clicked to continue.
- **Service Provider Invoice Nickname** is an optional field to help identify the invoice.
- Type your full name as it appears in RHC Connect in the **Digital Signature** field, then click **Certify & Submit**.



After Submitting

- Once you click **Certify & Submit**, this message will appear.
- Click the arrow at the far right. to see the **Application Summary**.
- If there are multiple FCC Forms 466 for multiple HCPs on a single FCC Form 469, the system will generate unique invoice numbers based on each unique HCP.

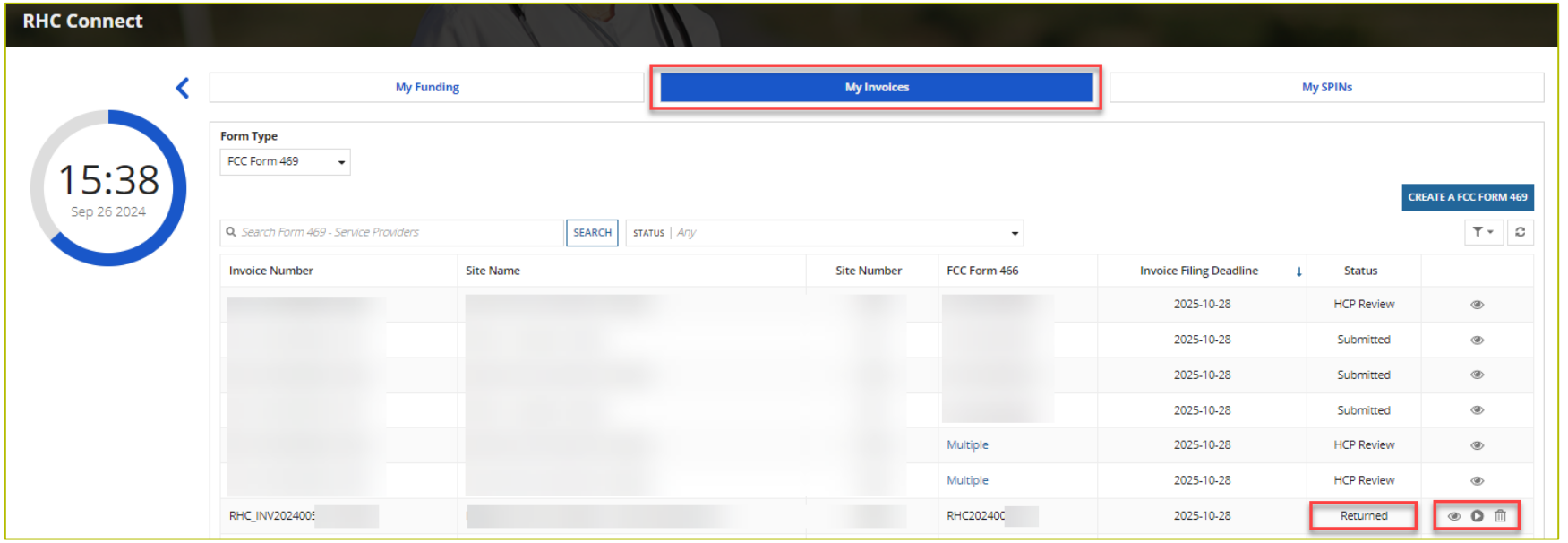


Returned to Service Provider - Summary

- If the HCP has found incorrect information in the FCC Form 469 during their review, the form will be returned to the service provider for corrections.
- Authorized users for the service provider will receive an email alerting them that the form has been returned.
- Service providers should log into RHC Connect to review the form and work with the HCP on the correction requests.
- Once everything is corrected, the service provider will re-certify the form and submit it for another HCP review.
- If the HCP agrees with the corrections, they will certify and submit the FCC Form 469 to USAC.
- Only after both parties certify and submit the FCC Form 469, it’s considered submitted to USAC.

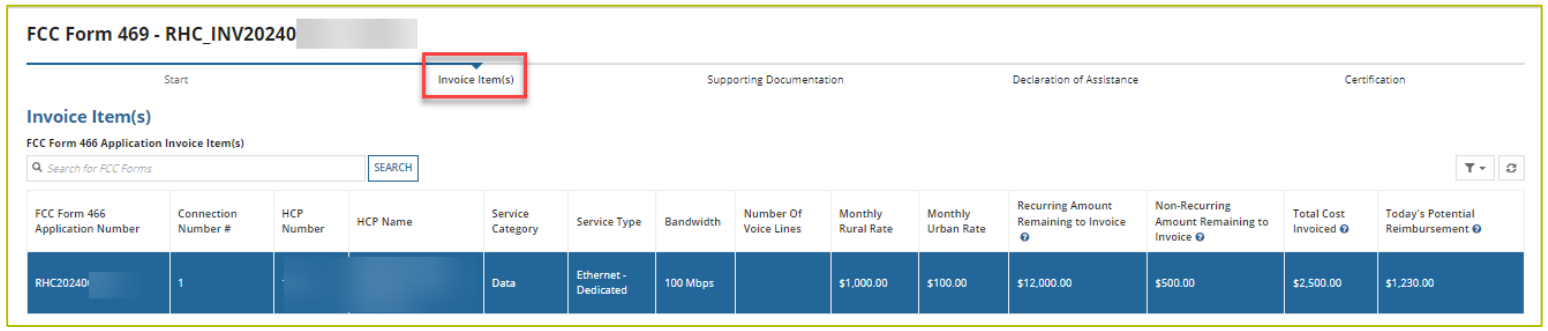
Returned to Service Provider

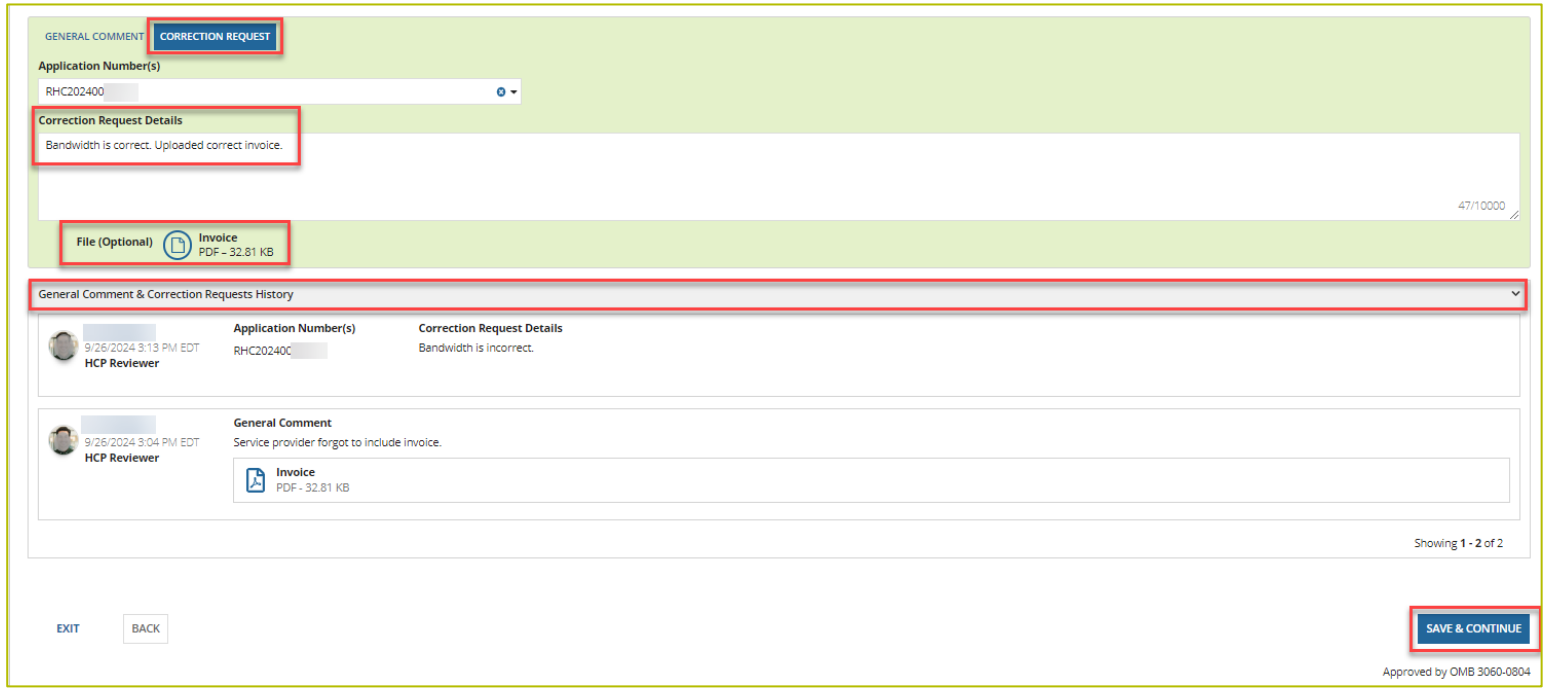
- Navigate to the **Dashboard**.
- Navigate to the **My Invoices** tab and the invoice will appear as **Returned** under the **Status** column.
- Click the icon to view, resume or delete the FCC Form 469.
- Click the forward arrow to resume the form.



Returned to Service Provider (continued)

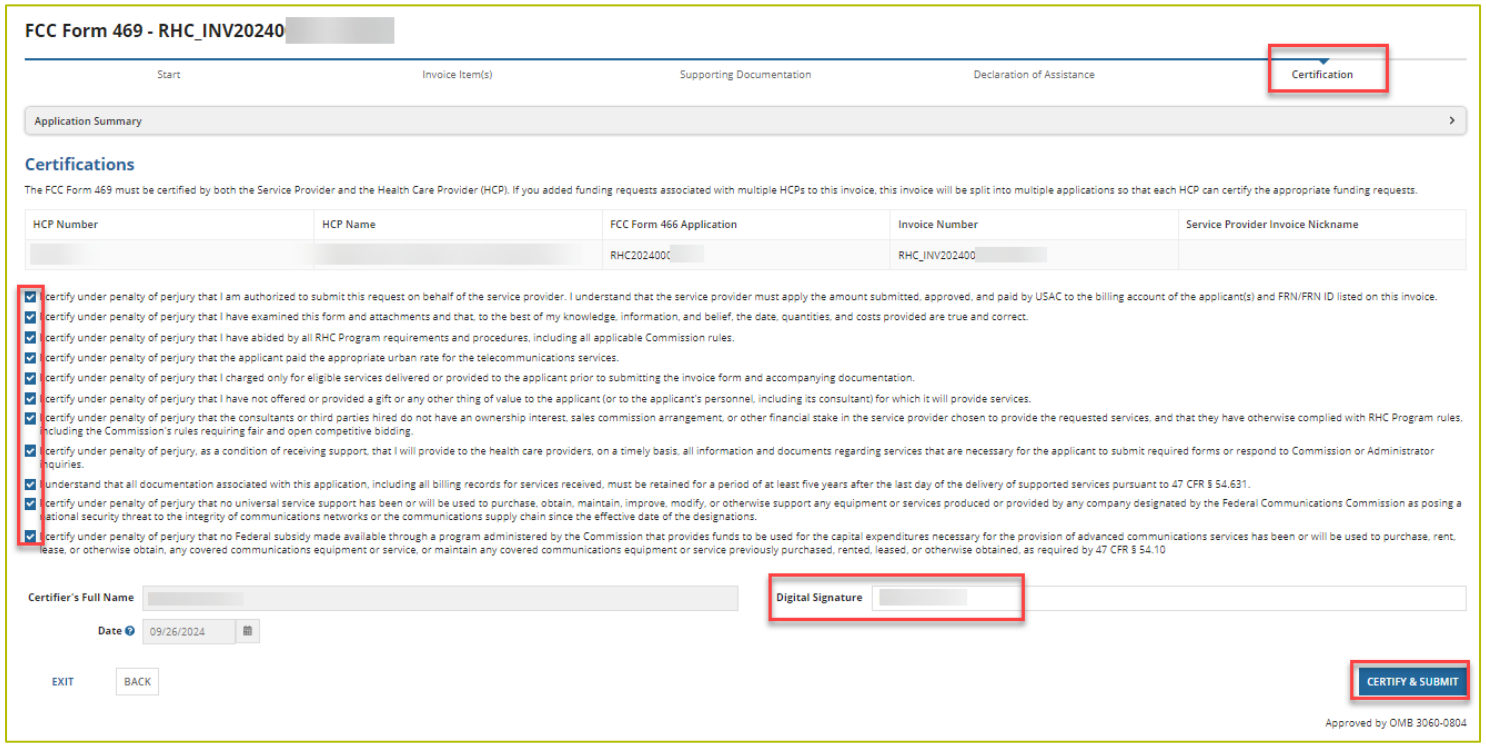
- Navigate to the **Invoice Item(s)** page.
- Select **Correction Request** and select the **Application Number**.
- Click the down arrow to view **General Comment & Correction Requests History**.
- Leave a comment and upload a file, if necessary, then click **Save & Continue**.





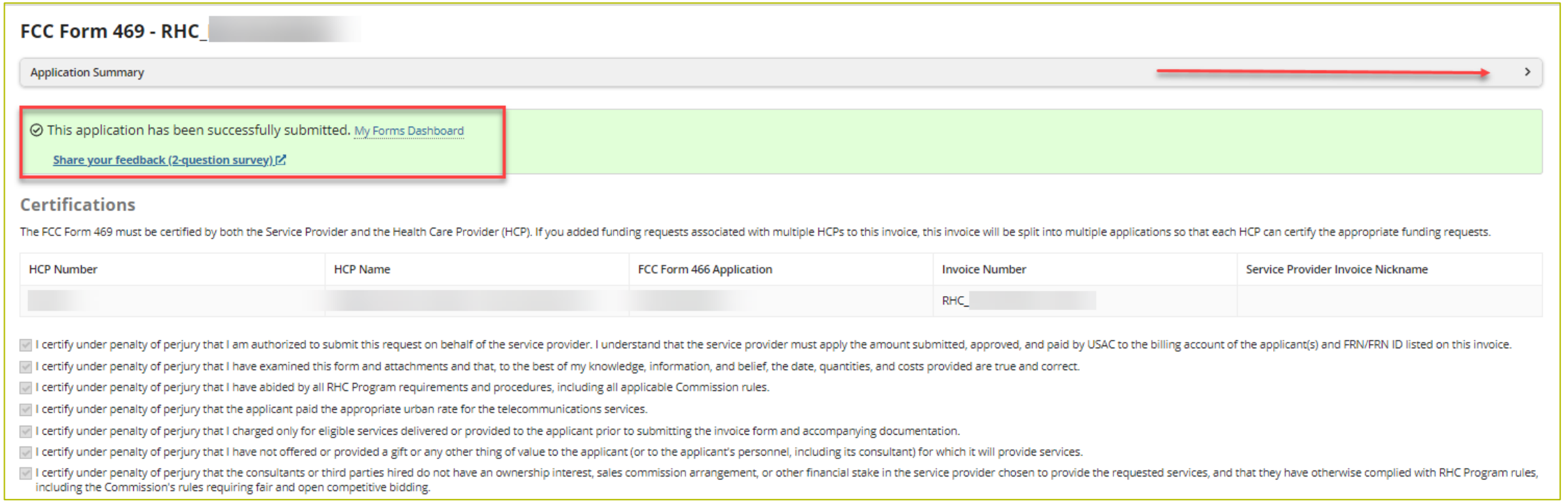
Returned to Service Provider (continued)

- Navigate through all tabs, correcting information as needed.
- Click all **Certifications** to recertify corrected information and type your full name in the **Digital Signature** field.
- Click **Certify & Submit** to return the form to the HCP.



After Submitting

- Once you click **Certify & Submit**, this message will appear.
- Click the arrow at the far right. to see the **Application Summary**.



What to Expect After Submitting to USAC

- An invoice is not considered submitted until approved by the HCP and received by USAC.
- With no Information Requests, the review generally takes about 30 days.
- If an Information Request is sent, it will come from rhcadmin@usac.org.
  - Respond to the Information Request in RHC Connect.
  - Email notifications sent from RHC Connect are from an unattended mailbox.
  - Use the Information Request tip sheet on the USAC website as a resource.
- Approval will be held until response is received and reviewed.
- Email notification of invoice approval will be sent from rhcadmin@usac.org to all account holders.

Best Practices for Creating the FCC Form 469

- Consolidate invoices.
- Use calendar drop down for billing start and end dates.
- Identify eligible amount for chosen period.
- Common issues:
  - Expense items unavailable to invoice
  - $0.00 in the USF Support Amount to be Paid column
  - Error Messages

Common Errors

- Once a funding request is approved, all information entered on the FCC Form 462 and 466 must match documentation associated with the FCC Form 463 and the Telecom invoice/FCC Form 469.
- Common discrepancies:
  - Incorrect bandwidth
  - Incorrect expense type
- Correction to discrepancies must be made prior to approving an invoice or that FCC Form 463 or Telecom invoice/FCC Form 469 will be denied.
- Work with the applicant to ensure that information on the bill, invoice, and/or contract correctly reflects the service. Example:
  - FCC Form 462 – expense type is listed as MPLS as shown on the contract submitted and approved with the form.
  - FCC Form 463 – expense type is listed as ethernet as shown on the bill when the form is submitted.

Key Takeaways for Service Providers

- Once you are selected to provide services, work closely with the HCP to provide information needed to submit accurate information to USAC.
- Applicants have 14 calendar days to respond to Information Requests.
- All information on approved funding requests will be used for invoicing.
- All documentation related to the delivery of discounted services must be retained for at least five years after the last day of delivery of discounted services (47 CFR § 54.631(b)(2)(ii)).
- Telecom program reminders:
  - Service providers should continue to provide rural rate information to their customers as necessary per FCC Order 23-6.

Questions?

Invoicing and Disbursement

Best Practices for Service Providers

Reminder: Invoice Filing Deadlines

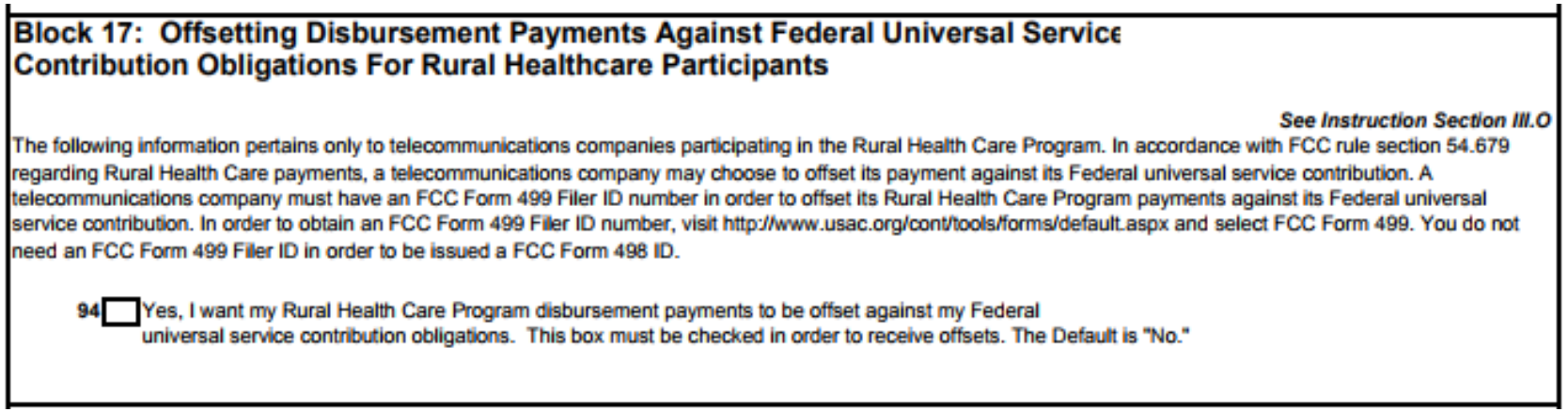
- Per FCC Report and Order 19-78, the invoice filing deadline will be four months (120 days) from the service delivery deadline in both the HCF and Telecom programs, which is normally October 28 of the funding year.
- The invoice filing deadline is displayed on the Funding Commitment Letter (FCL).
- Please use the RHC Invoicing Deadline Tool in the Open Data section of the USAC website to look up invoice filing deadlines.
- For more information, please see the HCF invoice page and Telecom invoice page.
- Please use the RHC Connect User Guide – Invoice Filing Deadline for Service Providers in the Invoice USAC section on the USAC website to help you submit your request to extend the deadline.

Telecom Program Invoicing

- If supporting documentation is found to be insufficient or does not confirm approved services, a reviewer will send an Information Request.
  - If a discrepancy is discovered, the FCC Form 469 may be denied.
- USAC pays invoices in batches on the sixth and the 21st day of each month.
  - If the payment batch falls on a weekend or a holiday, the payment batch will be completed on the next business day.
- Service providers can expect payment of the approved invoice to arrive in their bank accounts three to five business days after the payment batch date.
- The online invoice status report is sent to the service provider point of contact (POC) on the payment batch date.
- The report explains which invoiced line items were accepted and denied (if any).

Red Light Status and Voluntary Netting

- Red Light status
  - Contact Customer Support: (888) 641-8722
- Voluntary Netting



Block 17: Offsetting Disbursement Payments Against Federal Universal Service Contribution Obligations For Rural Healthcare Participants

See Instruction Section III.O

The following information pertains only to telecommunications companies participating in the Rural Health Care Program. In accordance with FCC rule section 54.679 regarding Rural Health Care payments, a telecommunications company may choose to offset its payment against its Federal universal service contribution. A telecommunications company must have an FCC Form 499 Filer ID number in order to offset its Rural Health Care Program payments against its Federal universal service contribution. In order to obtain an FCC Form 499 Filer ID number, visit http://www.usac.org/cont/tools/forms/default.aspx and select FCC Form 499. You do not need an FCC Form 499 Filer ID in order to be issued a FCC Form 498 ID.

94 ☐ Yes, I want my Rural Health Care Program disbursement payments to be offset against my Federal universal service contribution obligations. This box must be checked in order to receive offsets. The Default is "No."

Record Keeping and Audits

- Record-keeping and Audits:
  - Both the HCP and service provider are required to maintain records regarding billing and invoices to USAC for a term of at least five years after the last day of delivery of discounted services.
  - Both HCPs and service providers may be subject to audits regarding participation in the RHC program.

Key Takeaways for Service Providers

- Telecom program:
  - For FY2024 and forward, the FCC Form 469 will be used to submit invoices.
- HCF program:
  - The HCP submits the FCC Form 463, and the service provider confirms the information on the form.
  - Invoicing is completed when both the HCP and service provider have certified and signed the FCC Form 463 and submitted it to USAC.
- Funds are disbursed to the service provider on the 6th and 21st of each month, barring weekends and holidays.
- The HCP and service provider must work together to ensure invoices are submitted to USAC prior to their invoice deadline.
  - The invoice filing deadline for single-year FY2024 FRNs is October 28, 2025.
  - Applicants and service providers may request and receive a one-time 120 extension in RHC Connect.

Questions?

RHC Program Resources

Best Practices for Service Providers

Online Resources

- Service Providers
- Search Posted Services – HCF and Telecom programs
- Step 5: Invoice USAC - HCF program
- Step 5: Invoice USAC – Telecom program
- RHC Connect User Guide FCC Form 463 User Guide
- RHC Connect User Guide Invoice Filing Deadline Extension
- RHC Connect FCC Form 463 self-paced video training guide
- RHC Connect User Guide FCC Form 469
- Webinars

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

Customer Service Center

The Customer Service Center CAN	The 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.	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 and/or RHC Connect.
Assist with My Portal and RHC Connect	Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer.

Questions?

Thank You!

Available for Public Use

Universal Service
Administrative Co.