

# HCF Program Funding Request Best Practices for FY2024

Submitting the FCC Form 462  
November 15, 2023



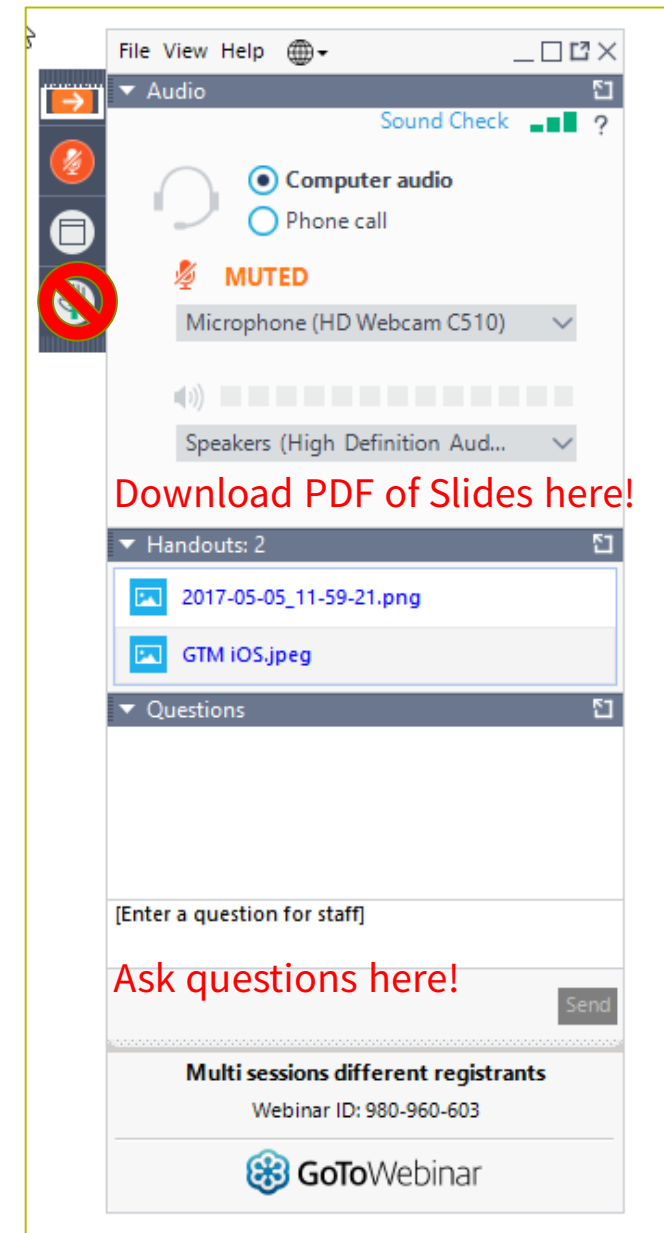
Universal Service  
Administrative Co.

## **DISCLAIMER:**

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. 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
- Program Updates
- RHC Connect - Submitting the FCC Form 462
  - Individual vs. Consortia Applications
  - Exemptions
  - Submitting With and Without a Contract
  - Funding Caps and Limitations
  - Best Practices for Equipment, Networks, Off-Site Data Centers and Admin Offices
- Important Dates and Resources

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

- *Understand what a funding request is, who must submit, and when*
- *Complete and submit an FCC Form 462 in RHC Connect*
  - *Avoid common errors*
  - *Upload a contract for evergreen designation*
  - *Apply best practices about equipment and networks to your funding request form*
  - *Submit your funding request before the deadline*
- *Respond to Information Requests*
- *Locate important resources on the USAC website*

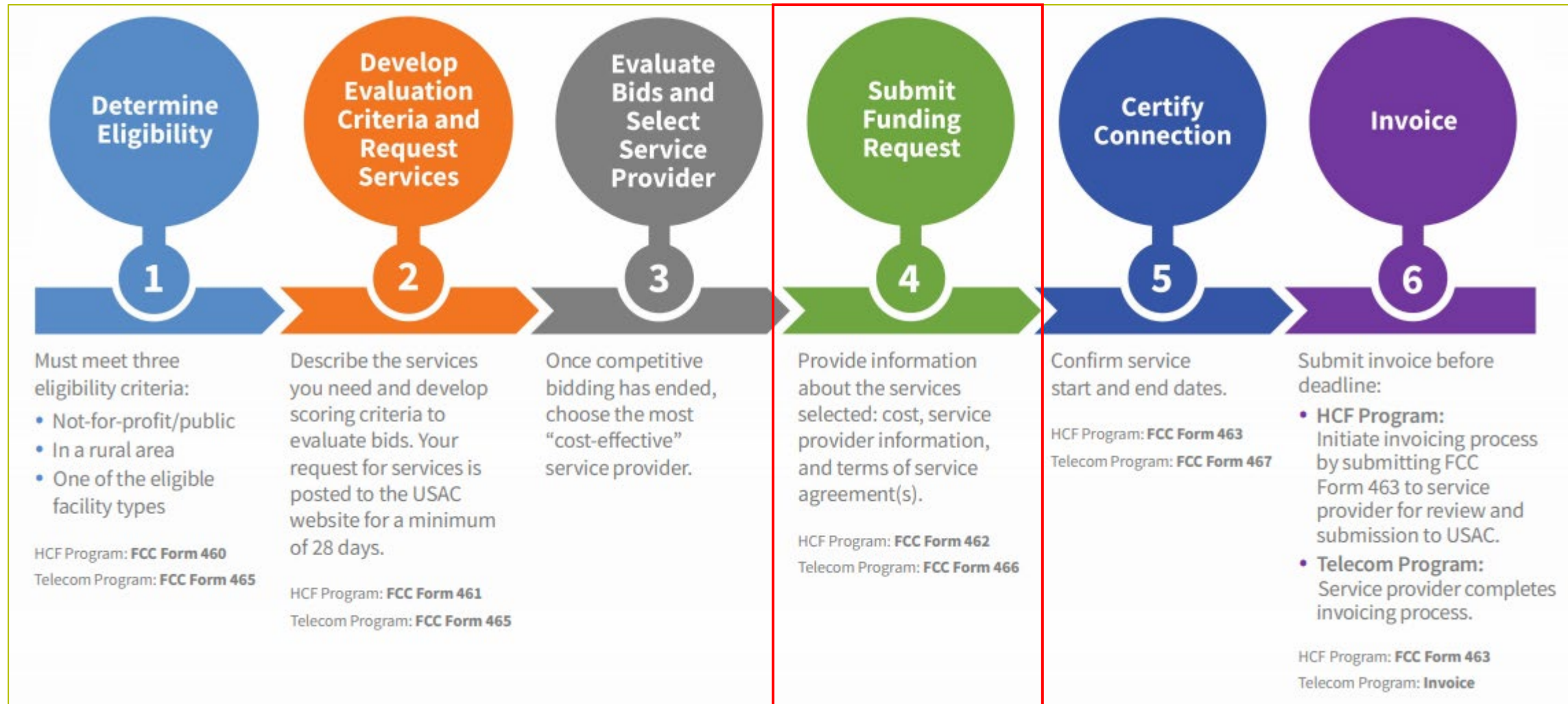
# Glossary

Acronym	Definition
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HCF	Healthcare Connect Fund
FY	Funding Year
HCP	Health Care Provider (your site)
HCP Number	Number associated with your site
PAH	Primary Account Holder
FCL	Funding Commitment Letter
NCW	Network Cost Worksheet
BAN	Billing Account Number
SPIN/498 ID	Service Provider Identification Number

# **Funding Request Overview**

Best Practices for FY2024

# RHC Program Application Process



# FY2024 Calendar

## 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

# What is a Funding Request?

- Once a service provider is selected, the next step is to submit a **funding request** to USAC to provide information about the services selected and certify that those services are the most cost-effective option of the offers received.
- Specifies the type of service(s) ordered, cost, name of service provider(s), and terms of the service agreement(s).
- Applicants submit their HCF funding request using an **FCC Form 462** (Funding Request Form).
- Download a blank [FCC Form 462](#).

# Who Must Submit a Funding Request

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

# When to Submit a Funding Request

- Funding Year (FY) 2024 Filing Window:
  - December 1, 2023 – April 1, 2024, 11:59 p.m. ET.
- Applicants are unable to submit funding request forms outside of a filing window period.
  - Draft FCC Forms 466 may be created in RHC Connect beginning November 1 but cannot be submitted before the filing window opens.
- USAC suggests that applicants submit the funding requests as early as possible during the filing window.
- The FCC Form 466 must be submitted by the close of a filing window to be considered for funding.

# Information Requests

- Forms with missing or incomplete information or documentation cannot be processed.
- If USAC requires information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation, this will result in an Information Request.
- All account holders will receive all Information Requests.
- Applicants are given 14 calendar days to provide a response to the Information Request.
  - 11:59 p.m. ET on the 14<sup>th</sup> day would be the last time to respond to the Information Request.
  - Requests for extensions must be received prior to the 14-day deadline.
- Information Requests not responded to within 14 calendar days **will result in a denial** of that form.

# Submission Checklist

- ☐ Document(s) confirming the monthly cost for your services (e.g., a copy of your bill dated within the requested funding period) or the most currently available bill as the filing window closes before the funding year opens
- ☐ A copy of all bids that were received for your request for services including the winning bid, all bids that were rejected and any bids that were disqualified and why
- ☐ A list of the bid evaluation criteria and copy of the bidding evaluation matrix
- ☐ A list of people who evaluated bids including title, role, and their relationship to the applicant
- ☐ Internal documents related to the selection of the service provider (upon request)
- ☐ Copies of any correspondence with service providers prior to and during the competitive bidding process (upon request)
- ☐ A copy of any new contract signed for your services
- ☐ Award letter to winning vendor (upon request)
- ☐ Contact information for the service provider and all responsible account holders
- ☐ The start and end location of your services.
- ☐ Viable source letter for consortia applicants (35 percent contribution)

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

# Evergreen Contracts

- An **evergreen contract** is a multi-year contract between an HCP and a service provider that has been reviewed by USAC in a prior funding year request and endorsed as evergreen, which allows an applicant to bypass competitive bidding for the life of the contract.
- Applicants who will be exercising voluntary extensions for an approved evergreen contract should list the remaining expense periods as one expense and the length of the extension as another expense.
  - Voluntary extensions must be memorialized in the contract and must have been included in the original evergreen endorsement.
  - The decision to extend the contract must have been made before a funding request is filed.
  - Voluntary extensions cannot exceed five years in aggregate.

## Evergreen Contracts (continued)

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

# Submission Tips

- Use the information on the original documentation (bill, contract, or service order) to enter the data into the FCC Form 462 and upload that document into RHC Connect with your submission.
- Remember you must also submit:
  - **Copies of all bids received** including winning, losing and disqualified,
  - **List of the people who evaluated the bids** with their names and titles,
  - **Evaluation documents** including the scores received by bidders based on the weighted criteria posted in the FCC Form 461; and
  - **Award letter** to the winning vendor (if applicable).
- Per program rules, you must have all supporting documents on hand at the time of submission and they must be uploaded when you submit your forms.

## Submission Tips (continued)

- It is helpful to submit a cover letter that includes a summary of your submission.
- Recommended things to include in your cover letter:
  - Where to find information about your circuit in the supporting documentation (i.e., Ethernet 20M - \$XX.XX – Page 5 of Invoice).
  - Highlight/label any documentation that is submitted.
- Information that isn't clearly identified via supporting documentation must be confirmed by the service provider.
  - It is the HCP's responsibility to reach out to the service provider to get any missing information.
  - USAC cannot reach out to the service provider on an HCP's behalf.

# Identifying Applicable Charges on a Bill/Invoice - Example

- Annotated invoice clearly reflects HCP, Billing Account Number (BAN), Circuit Location(s), Bandwidth, Service Type, and Monthly Recurring Charge (MRC)

**Spectrum BUSINESS**

June 17, 2021  
 Invoice Number: [REDACTED]  
 Account Number: [REDACTED] **BAN**  
 Security Code: [REDACTED]  
 Service At: [REDACTED] **Circuit location**

**SPECTRUM BUSINESS NEWS**

**Contact Us**  
 Visit us at [SpectrumBusiness.net](http://SpectrumBusiness.net)  
 Or, call us at 1-877-283-8091

Save money with Spectrum Mobile when you switch to the fastest mobile provider in the nation. Call 1-833-589-1743 to see how much you can save!

Page 2 of 4      June 17, 2021      **HCP name**

Invoice Number: [REDACTED] **PHYSICIANS**  
 Account Number: [REDACTED] **BAN**  
 Security Code: [REDACTED]

**Charge Details**

Previous Balance		69.91
Payment Received	06/02	-69.91
Remaining Balance		\$0.00

Payments received after 06/17/21 will appear on your next bill.

**Referenced billing period**

Services from 06/16/21 through 07/15/21

**Spectrum Business Internet**

Broadband Internet Promo		-30.04
Static IP Address		14.99
High Speed Internet Discount		-20.00
Broadband High Speed Data	<b>12M x 1.5M</b>	189.99
		\$154.94

**Service type**

Spectrum Business™ Internet Total      **MRC**      \$154.94

# Questions?

# **Program Updates**

## Best Practices for FY2024

# Reminder: FCC Report and Order 19-78




- [FCC Report and Order 19-78](#) webpage summarizes the Report and Order's major changes.

**Additional Program Guidance**  
[COVID-19 Response](#)  
**FCC Report and Order 19-78**  
[Funding Year Overview](#)  
[Authorizations](#) ▾  
[Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#) ▾  
[Site and Service Substitutions](#)  
[Document Retention](#)  
[FCC Orders and Resources](#)

## FCC Report and Order 19-78

On August 20, 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Report and Order reforming the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program to promote transparency and predictability, and to further the efficient allocation of limited program resources while guarding against waste, fraud, and abuse. The Report and Order was published in the Federal Register on October 11, 2019 and effective on November 12, 2019. Read the Report and Order [here](#).

While the Report and Order includes a number of changes to the RHC Program, the overall structure of the Program will remain the same. As before, the RHC Program will still have two sub-programs: the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program and the Telecom Program. Further, applicants will still be required to seek eligibility, submit requests for funding, requests for services, and invoicing forms.

**Additional Resources**  
[FCC Report and Order](#)   
[Report and Order 19-78 Tip Sheet](#)  
[Summary Webinar](#)  
[Webinar Slides](#)   
[Public Notice DA 19-1253](#) 

## FCC Report and Order 19-78 (continued)

- **Consortia Majority Rural Rule (HCF Only)** – Every consortium participating in the HCF Program must consist of more than 50 percent eligible rural sites.
  - [Rurality Compliance Tip Sheet](#)
- **Consultant Registration** – USAC will issue a unique registration number to the consultant or outside expert and that number will be linked to the HCP's organization.

# Reminder: FCC Report and Order 19-78 (continued)

- **SPIN CHANGES** - SPIN changes must be requested by the service delivery deadline.
  - A corrective SPIN change is made when the SPIN associated with a Funding Request Number (FRN) is not correct. This occurs when:
    - The applicant or USAC made a data entry error,
    - SPIN has changed due to the merger of companies or the acquisition of one company by another; or
    - The applicant has not initiated the change (e.g., where the service provider declares bankruptcy).
  - An operational SPIN change is a request to change the actual service provider associated with an FRN.
    - The change in service providers is the result of a deliberate decision by the applicant.
    - The applicant has a legitimate reason to change providers (e.g., breach of contract or the service provider is unable to perform).
- **Site and Service Substitutions** – HCPs in both the HCF and Telecom program are required to submit site and service substitutions by the service delivery deadline.

# FCC Order DA 23-723 – Hawaii Wildfires Order

- On August 18, 2023, the FCC released [Order DA 23-723](#), waiving certain RHC rules and deadlines to assist participants and providers located in areas affected by the Hawaii wildfires. This Order applies to healthcare providers and service providers located in the State of Hawaii in areas affected by the wildfires. FCC waives the following rules on a temporary basis:
  - Automatically provides affected program participants with an additional 150 days to file appeals and waivers. This waiver will be in effect for all deadlines of appeals and waiver requests from August 10, 2023, through 150 calendar days from the release of this Order (January 15, 2024).
  - Waives the 14-day Information Request deadline for Information Requests related to funding requests, appeals and waivers, invoices, audits, and other documentation and applies to all funding years for all Information Requests that had a deadline on or after August 10, 2023, regardless of the funding year. Affected health care providers and service providers have up to 150 calendar days from the effective date of this Order (January 15, 2024) to respond to Information Requests from USAC.
  - Waives the invoice filing deadline for FY2022 funding requests and grants an automatic 120-day extension; and
  - Waives the September 30, 2023, deadline for Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) program annual reports. HCF program participants will have up to 150 calendar days from the effective date of this Order (January 15, 2024) to submit annual reports.
- Impacted program participants will not be penalized for failure to retain records destroyed by the Hawaii wildfires. For more information, read [FCC Order DA 23-723](#).

# FCC Order DA 23-805 – Hurricane Idalia Order

- On September 1, 2023, the FCC released [Order DA 23-805](#), waiving certain RHC rules and deadlines to assist participants and providers located in areas affected by Hurricane Idalia. This Order applies to healthcare providers and service providers located in the areas in Florida and South Carolina that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated as eligible for Individual or Public Assistance for the purposes of federal disaster relief as of the release date of this Order. FCC waives the following rules on a temporary basis:
  - Automatically provides affected program participants with an additional 150 days to file appeals and waivers. This waiver will be in effect for all deadlines of appeals and waiver requests from August 27, 2023, through 150 calendar days from the release of this Order (January 29, 2024).
  - Waives the 14-day Information Request deadline for Information Requests related to funding requests, appeals and waivers, invoices, audits, and other documentation and applies to all funding years for all Information Requests that had a deadline on or after August 27, 2023, regardless of the funding year. Affected health care providers and service providers have up to 150 calendar days from the effective date of this Order (January 29, 2024) to respond to Information Requests from USAC.
  - Waives the invoice filing deadline for FY2022 funding requests and grants an automatic 120-day extension; and
  - Waives the September 30, 2023, deadline for Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) program annual reports. HCF program participants will have up to 150 calendar days from the effective date of this order (January 29, 2024) to submit annual reports.
- Impacted program participants will not be penalized for failure to retain records destroyed by Hurricane Idalia. For more information, read [FCC Order DA 23-805](#).

# 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 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](#).
- **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 FY2023, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a [service substitution](#).
- **FY2024 Applicants:** As you proceed with competitive bidding, please ensure you are not requesting funding for services or equipment from listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries.

# Supply Chain Web Page

- [Supply Chain webpage](#)



The screenshot shows the FCC's Supply Chain webpage. At the top is a navigation bar with links: About, E-rate, Rural Health Care, Lifeline, High Cost, and Service Providers. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: USAC | About | Reports & Orders | **Supply Chain**. On the left is a sidebar with the heading "Reports & Orders" and links to "Annual Report", "FCC Filings", "FCC Orders", and "Supply Chain" (which is highlighted). The main content area has a large heading "Supply Chain" and two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph discusses FCC actions since November 2019 to protect national security and mentions the "Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019". The second paragraph mentions the "Supply Chain First Report and Order" and its rule (47 CFR Section 54.9) regarding the use of Universal Service Fund (USF) support.

About ▾ E-rate ▾ Rural Health Care ▾ Lifeline ▾ High Cost ▾ Service Providers ▾

USAC | About | Reports & Orders | **Supply Chain**

**Reports & Orders**

Annual Report

FCC Filings

FCC Orders

**Supply Chain**

## Supply Chain

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](http://www.fcc.gov/supplychain).

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.

# **RHC Connect – Submitting the FCC Form 462**

Best Practices for FY2024

# RHC Connect Updates as of November 2023

Form	Platform	Relevant Funding Years
FCC Forms 460 & 465	My Portal	Future development
- Letters of Agency (LOA)	My Portal	Future development
- Third Party Authorization (TPA)	My Portal	Future development
FCC Form 461	RHC Connect	FY2023 and forward
FCC Form 462	My Portal	FY 2021 and prior – Multi-year commitments
FCC Form 462	RHC Connect	FY2022 and forward
FCC Form 463	My Portal	FY 2021 and prior – Multi-year commitments
FCC Form 463	RHC Connect	FY2022 and forward
Post-commitment Change Requests	RHC Connect	FY2022 and forward
FCC Form 466	RHC Connect	FY2024 and forward
FCC Form 467 – Telecom Invoice	My Portal	Future development

# RHC Connect Updates (continued)

- All information from the FCC Forms 460 will be migrated to RHC Connect.
- Over time, all FCC forms for the HCF and Telecom programs will move to RHC Connect.
- Use the following resources to submit the FCC Form 462 in RHC Connect:
  - [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 462](#) webpage
  - [RHC Connect User Guide](#) – FCC Form 462
  - [Information Request tip sheet](#)

# Individual vs. Consortia Applications

- A consortium is two or more HCPs that choose to request support on a single application.
- In a consortium, a funding request for multiple HCPs may be listed under one FCC Form 462.
- In an individual application, a funding request is submitted for each approved HCP circuit location.
  - The circuit location on the supporting documentation should match the approved location found on the FCC Form 460.

# My Portal Landing Page

- Log into My Portal and click **Rural Health Care** then **RHC Connect**
- For all other forms that have not yet moved to RHC Connect, you will use **RHC My Portal**

Dashboard

*i* In accordance with the Supply Chain orders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 and the Telecom and High Cost & Lifeline - FCC Form 481. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional information, visit [this link](#).

Upcoming Dates 11/02 2022 <b>CCPP Office Hours</b> <hr/> 11/02 2022 <b>Webinar: New 499 Filer ID Basics</b>	<b>Rural Health Care</b> Service Providers USAC Customer Service Portal
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Dashboard

*i* In accordance with the Supply Chain orders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 and the Telecom and High Cost & Lifeline - FCC Form 481. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional information, visit [this link](#).

Upcoming Dates 11/02 2022 <b>CCPP Office Hours</b> <hr/> 11/02 2022 <b>Webinar: New 499 Filer ID Basics</b> <hr/> 11/09 2022 <b>HCF Program Funding Request Office Hours</b> <hr/> <a href="#">see full calendar</a>	<b>Rural Health Care</b> <div> <b>RHC Connect</b> - 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.         </div> <div> <b>RHC My Portal</b> - 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.         </div> <div> <b>Connected Care Pilot Program Annual Reports and Final Report</b> - Health care providers must use this form to complete, certify, and submit their required Connected Care Pilot Program Annual Reports and Final Report.         </div>
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Service Providers

# Dashboard

- Here you can start a new form, view the status of submitted and processed applications, resume working on a draft or delete a draft FCC Form 462.
- There's a countdown banner displaying the days remaining in the filing window.

The screenshot displays the RHC Connect Dashboard. At the top left, a blue navigation bar contains a 'DASHBOARD' link and a 'START A FORM' button, which is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of a healthcare worker wearing a mask, with the text 'RHC Connect' overlaid. To the left of the main content area is a circular clock showing '17:57' on 'Oct 27 2022'. The main content area features a yellow notification bar at the top with '(37) Unread Notifications'. Below this is a horizontal menu with 'Information Requests', 'My Forms' (highlighted in blue), and 'My Organizations'. A blue banner below the menu contains a red box around the text 'The Funding Year 2022 funding request filing window closes in 3 days.' with a red arrow pointing to it. Below the banner is a section titled 'My Forms' with a 'Form Type' dropdown set to 'Form 462' and a search bar. At the bottom is a table with columns: Site Name, Site Number, Application Number, Application Nickname, Form, Last Update, Status, and Actions. The 'Status' and 'Actions' columns for the first two rows are highlighted with a red box.

Site Name	Site Number	Application Number	Application Nickname	Form	Last Update	Status	Actions
				Form 462	9/23/2022 4:17 PM EDT	Processed	
				Form 462	9/22/2022 8:04 PM EDT	Submitted	

# Start Form

- Click **FCC Form 462** then click **Next**.

**RHC Connect**

18:06  
Oct 27 2022

<

What type of Form would you like to file?

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.

FCC Form 463

Invoice USAC

Once you receive a bill from the service provider, you can create an invoice for the services received using the FCC Form 463.

→ **NEXT**

# Start Page

DASHBOARD

START A NEW FORM

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

Additional Documentation

Confidentiality

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 FRN #1

FY 2022

Priority 8

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

# Competitive Bidding

DASHBOARD

START A NEW FORM

SAVE DRAFT

Start PageCompetitive BiddingService Provider InformationExpense ItemsAdditional Documentation

## Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? ?

☐ Yes☐ No

Explanations

BACKEXIT

# Competitive Bidding (continued)

[DASHBOARD](#) [START A NEW FORM](#)

[SAVE DRAFT](#)

[Start Page](#) [Competitive Bidding](#) [Service Provider Information](#) [Expense Items](#) [Additional Documentation](#) [Confidentiality](#) [Certifications](#)

## Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? [?](#)

☐ Yes

☐ No

Explanations

If your site meets one of the competitive bidding exemptions below, you are not required to submit the FCC Form 461 and go through the competitive bidding process. You are exempt from competitive bidding if any of the following apply:

- Government Master Service Agreement (MSA):** You are seeking support for services and equipment purchased from master service agreements (MSAs) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on the applicant's behalf, and awarded pursuant to applicable federal, state, Tribal, or local competitive bidding requirements.
- Master Service Agreements (MSA) Approved Under the Rural Health Care Pilot Program or HCF Program:** You are opting into an existing MSA approved under the Rural Health Care Pilot program or the HCF program and seeking support for services and equipment purchased from the MSA, as long as the MSA was developed and negotiated in response to an RFP or request for services that specifically solicited proposals that included a mechanism for adding additional sites to the MSA.
- Evergreen Contract:** You have an existing contract already endorsed by USAC as evergreen.
- Schools and Libraries Program Master Contracts:** You are an eligible HCP in a consortium with participants in the Schools and Libraries (E-rate) program and are purchasing services and/or network equipment under a contract approved under the E-rate program as a master contract.
- Annual Undiscounted Cost of \$10,000 or Less:** If you are seeking support for \$10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year you may bypass the competitive bidding process.
  - For consortia applicants, this exemption is \$10,000 for all funding requests submitted for the consortium.
  - Note: If you select this option on your FCC Form 462, you will not be able to request a multi-year funding commitment.

[BACK](#) [EXIT](#)

# Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- Purchasing services from a government master service agreement (MSA) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity which 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 is
- Using a contract approved under the E-rate program.

# Competitive Bidding Exemptions (continued)

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



# Competitive Bidding Exemptions

SAVE DRAFT

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

Additional Documentation

Confidentiality

Certifications

Signature

## Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explanations

Select the exemption that the HCP is claiming

☐ Annual Undiscounted Cost of \$10,000 or less

☐ Government Master Services Agreement

☐ Pre-Approved Master Services Agreement

☒ Evergreen Contract

☐ E-rate Approved Contract

Contracts

Contract Name	Contract Document	Contract Sign Date	Contract End Date	Initial Contract Term
No items available				

ADD CONTRACT

EDIT

DELETE

BACK

 EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

# Competitive Bidding Exemptions (continued)

- Click **Yes**.
- Choose exemption type.
- Upload contract.
  - For evergreen contracts, select a contract from the drop-down menu.
- Enter the relevant contract information in the fields.
  - Use the drop-down calendar to enter dates.

Start Page Competitive Bidding Service Provider Information

### Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? \*

☒ Yes  
☐ No

Select the exemption that the HCP is claiming \*

☐ Annual Undiscounted Cost of \$10,000 or less  
☐ Government Master Services Agreement  
☐ Pre-Approved Master Services Agreement  
☒ Evergreen Contract  
☐ E-rate Approved Contract

**New Contract**

Select an Existing Contract \*

Select a contract already associated with this HCP ▼

Please select a contract.

Contract Sign Date  Contract End Date (Optional)

mm/dd/yyyy mm/dd/yyyy

Length of Initial Contract Term  Time Unit ▼

Number of Contract Extensions (Optional)

Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional)  Time Unit ▼

Start Page Competitive Bidding Service Provider Information

### Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? \*

☒ Yes  
☐ No

Select the exemption that the HCP is claiming \*

☐ Annual Undiscounted Cost of \$10,000 or less  
☐ Government Master Services Agreement  
☐ Pre-Approved Master Services Agreement  
☒ Evergreen Contract  
☐ E-rate Approved Contract

**New Contract**

Select an Existing Contract \*

Contract Sign Date  Contract End Date (Optional)

10/01/2021 09/30/2024

Length of Initial Contract Term  Months ▼

36

Number of Contract Extensions (Optional)

5

Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional)  Months ▼

5

# Competitive Bidding Exemptions (continued)

- Once the contract is selected, click **Save and Continue**.

SAVE DRAFT

Start Page Competitive Bidding Service Provider Information Expense Items Additional Documentation Confidentiality Certifications Signature

### Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? ⓘ \*

☒ Yes  
☐ No

Select the exemption that the HCP is claiming \*

☐ Annual Undiscounted Cost of \$10,000 or less  
☐ Government Master Services Agreement  
☐ Pre-Approved Master Services Agreement  
☒ Evergreen Contract  
☐ E-rate Approved Contract

	Contract Name	Contract Document	Contract Sign Date	Contract End Date	Initial Contract Term
<input type="checkbox"/>			10/1/2021	9/30/2024	36 Months

ADD CONTRACT EDIT DELETE

BACK EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

# Competitive Bidding Non-Exempt

- Click **No**.
- Choose related FCC Form 461 from drop-down menu.
  - All FCC Forms 461 for the HCP will be available.
- Enter number of bids received.
- You'll be required to upload copies of bids.

SAVE DRAFT

Start Page Competitive Bidding Service Provider Information

### Competitive Bidding

Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding? <sup>?</sup>

☐ Yes

☒ No

Related FCC Form 461 Application \*

Is the HCP continuing with the current service provider? \*

☐ Yes

☒ No

Number of Service Providers That Bid \*

3

#### Upload Bids

Document Type	Document	Uploaded On

[Add Documents](#)

Must Upload a file.

[BACK](#) [EXIT](#)

#### Upload Bids

Document Type	Document	Uploaded On
Bids		11/8/2021 9:26 AM EST

[Add Documents](#)

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

# Service Provider Information

- Select **498 ID/SPIN**.
- Click **Save and Continue**.

SAVE DRAFT

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

Additional Documentation

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Certifications

Signature

Service Provider Information

498 ID/SPIN

Service Provider Name

centurylink

SEARCH

CLEAR

498 ID/SPIN	Service Provider Name
<input type="checkbox"/> 143022618	CenturyLink CenturyTel Solutions, LLC
<input type="checkbox"/> 143001636	CenturyLink CenturyTel of Ooltewah-Collegdale, Inc.
<input type="checkbox"/> 143002667	CenturyLink CenturyTel of the Gem State (Nevada)
<input type="checkbox"/> 143002671	CenturyLink Central Telephone Co. of Nevada (FKA)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 143005231	CenturyLink Qwest Corporation

<< < 6 - 10 of 67 > >>

You have selected 143005231 - CenturyLink Qwest Corporation

BACK

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

# Expense Items – Summary Page

- Download NCW Template and save to your computer.
- Populate information and upload NCW to system.
- Any information entered manually will be overwritten by NCW document once it's uploaded.

[Start Page](#) [Competitive Bidding](#) [Service Provider Information](#) [Expense Items](#) [Additional Documentation](#) [Confidentiality](#) [Certifications](#) [Signature](#)

[Advanced Features](#)  
[Download NCW Template](#)  
[Upload NCW Document](#)

[ENTER A NEW EXPENSE ITEM](#)

### Expense Item Summary

#	↑	Site #	Site Name	Contract Number	Expense Type	Eligible Undiscounted Cost	Maxium Support Amount	Actions
1					Network Maintenance			<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>
2					Ethernet			<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>

# FCC Form 462 Submitted Without a Contract

- If a bill is uploaded without a contract, the reviewer will treat the form as a month-to-month funding request and confirm that the applicant is compliant with the competitive bidding rules.
- Only forms submitted with contracts are eligible for multi-year funding.
  - Forms submitted as month-to-month are eligible for up to one funding year of support.
- Applicants will need to competitively bid services each year if they do not submit a contract with their FCC Form 462.
- When submitting a funding request as month-to-month (without a contract), check the **month-to-month** box.

# Expense Items – Contract Status

- For consortia applicants, select a member site from drop-down menu.
- Select **No** for submission without contract (month-to-month).

The screenshot displays the 'Expense Items' section of a web application. At the top, a navigation bar includes links for 'Start Page', 'Competitive Bidding', 'Service Provider Information', 'Expense Items' (which is the active tab), 'Additional Documentation', 'Confidentiality', and 'Certification'. Below the navigation bar, the 'Expense Items' title is followed by 'Expense Item 1 of 1' and two lines of cost information: 'Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$0.00' and 'Maximum Support Amount \$0.00'.

On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with a green arrow icon next to the 'Contract Status' header. Below this header, a list of options is shown, each with a radio button: 'Expense Information', 'Expense Type', 'Bandwidth', 'Service Level Agreement', 'Circuit Information', 'Financial Information', and 'HCP Contribution Source'. The 'Contract Status' option is currently selected.

On the right side, the 'Expense Item Site' dropdown menu is highlighted with a red box. Below it, the question 'Does the HCP have a Contract with the Service Provider?' is displayed with a blue information icon. Two radio button options are provided: 'Yes' and 'No (process this item as month-to-month)'. The 'No' option is selected, indicated by a blue dot. A red arrow points from the 'Contract Status' sidebar menu to the 'Does the HCP have a Contract with the Service Provider?' question.

At the bottom of the form, the following summary text is displayed: 'Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$0.00' and 'Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$0.00'. Below this text are two buttons: 'BACK' and 'EXIT'.

# FCC Form 462 Submitted With a Contract

- To have a contract reviewed for evergreen status, click the **Select a Contract** button on the Expense Items Tab.
  - This will generate a contract ID that USAC uses for the evergreen review process.
- Contracts uploaded using the **Other Documentation** button will not be reviewed for evergreen status.
- Notification of evergreen status is reflected in the FCL.

# Expense Items – Contract Status (continued)

- Select **Yes** for submission with contract.
- Select an existing contract or upload a new contract.
- Enter information about the contract.

Start Page Competitive Bidding Service Provider Information **Expense Items** Additional Documentation Confidentiality

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$0.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$0.00

> **Contract Status**

- ☐ Expense Information
- ☐ Expense Type
- ☐ Bandwidth
- ☐ Service Level Agreement
- ☐ Circuit Information
- ☐ Financial Information
- ☐ HCP Contribution Source

Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$0.00  
Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$0.00

Expense Item Site  
[Dropdown menu]

Does the HCP have a Contract with the Service Provider?

☒ Yes  
☐ No (process this item as month-to-month)

**Select an Existing Contract** **Contract Nickname** **Upload a New Contract**

*Select a contract already associated ...* OR [Text field] **UPLOAD** Drop file here

**Contract Start Date** **Initial Contract End Date**

**Length of Initial Contract Term**

**Time Unit**

**Number of Contract Extensions (Optional)**

**Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional)**

**Time Unit**

**Contract Sign Date** **Install Date**

## Expense Items – Contract Status (continued)

- Enter the **Contract Start Date**, **Initial Contract End Date**, **Contract Sign Date**, and **Install Date**.
- Reviewers will read the contract to confirm all information entered.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Expense Item Site". It includes a dropdown menu for site selection, a question about HCP contracts with "Yes" and "No" radio buttons, and two options for contract selection: "Select an Existing Contract" and "Upload a New Contract". The "OR" label is between these two options. Below these are fields for "Contract Start Date" (11/01/2021), "Initial Contract End Date" (10/31/2024), "Length of Initial Contract Term" (3 Years), "Number of Contract Extensions (Optional)" (5), and "Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional)" (5 Years). At the bottom are "Contract Sign Date" (11/01/2021) and "Install Date" (11/01/2021). Red boxes highlight the "Select an Existing Contract", "Upload a New Contract", "Contract Start Date", "Initial Contract End Date", "Contract Sign Date", and "Install Date" fields.

Expense Item Site

Does the HCP have a Contract with the Service Provider?

☒ Yes  
☐ No (process this item as month-to-month)

Select an Existing Contract OR Contract Nickname Upload a New Contract

Contract Start Date: 11/01/2021

Initial Contract End Date: 10/31/2024

Length of Initial Contract Term: 3 Years

Number of Contract Extensions (Optional): 5

Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional): 5 Years

Contract Sign Date: 11/01/2021

Install Date: 11/01/2021

# Expense Items – Expense Information

- Enter **Expected Broadband Service Start Date**.

[Start Page](#) [Competitive Bidding](#) [Service Provider Information](#) **Expense Items** [Additional Documentation](#) [Confidentiality](#) [Ce](#)

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$N/A  
Maximum Support Amount \$N/A

✓ Contract Status

> **Expense Information**

☐ Expense Type

☐ Bandwidth

☐ Service Level Agreement

☐ Circuit Information

☐ Financial Information


☐ HCP Contribution Source

Is this a newly installed circuit?

☒ Yes  
☐ No


Billing Account Number (Optional)

**Expected Broadband Service Start Date**

07/01/2022 

**ⓘ You have chosen the funding year start date. Please make sure that this is the date when you actually expect to begin this service or have already started this service.**

Installation Date

mm/dd/yyyy 

Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$N/A  
Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$N/A

[BACK](#) [EXIT](#)

# Expense Items – Expense Type

- Choose **Expense Category** and **Expense Type** from the drop-down menus.
- Provide a brief explanation of the eligible expense.

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

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Confidentiality

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$N/A  
Maximum Support Amount \$N/A

✔ Contract Status

✔ Expense Information

> Expense Type

☐ Bandwidth

☐ Service Level Agreement

☐ Circuit Information

☐ Financial Information

☐ HCP Contribution Source

Expense Category

Data

Expense Type

Ethernet

Explanation of Eligible Expense (Optional)

Ethernet circuit between service provider and eligible HCP

# Expense Items – Bandwidth

- Enter bandwidth speeds.

[Start Page](#) [Competitive Bidding](#) [Service Provider Information](#) [Expense Items](#) [Additional Documentation](#)

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$48,480.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$31,512.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

> **Bandwidth**

☐ Service Level Agreement

☐ Circuit Information

☐ Financial Information

☐ HCP Contribution Source

**Download Speed**

**Upload Speed**

# Expense Items – Bandwidth (continued)

- For equipment, installation, construction, and network management services, bandwidth does not have to be entered if not applicable.
- For all other services, bandwidth is required.

The screenshot displays a web application interface for 'Expense Items'. At the top, a navigation bar includes links for 'Start Page', 'Competitive Bidding', 'Service Provider Information', 'Expense Items' (which is the active tab), 'Additional Documentation', and 'Confidentiality'. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'Expense Items', followed by 'Expense Item 1 of 1'. Summary statistics show 'Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$N/A' and 'Maximum Support Amount \$N/A'. A left-hand sidebar contains a list of sections: 'Contract Status' (checked), 'Expense Information' (checked), 'Expense Type' (checked), 'Bandwidth' (highlighted with a green arrow), 'Service Level Agreement', 'Circuit Information', 'Financial Information', and 'HCP Contribution Source'. The main content area shows the 'Bandwidth' section, which is highlighted with a red rectangular box. This section contains two dropdown menus: 'Download Speed' and 'Upload Speed'. Each dropdown has a text input field and a '---Select---' dropdown arrow. Below each input field is the instruction 'Leave blank if bandwidth is not applicable'. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'BACK' and 'EXIT'. Summary statistics at the bottom of the page repeat the 'Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$N/A' and 'Maximum Support Amount: \$N/A'.

# Expense Items – Service Level Agreement (SLA)

- If **No** is selected, fields will not appear.
- If **Yes** is selected, enter the information about the SLA.

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$48,480.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$31,512.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

✓ Bandwidth

> **Service Level Agreement**

○ Circuit Information

Is there a service level agreement (SLA) with the service provider for this expense item? (Optional)

☒ Yes  
☐ No

What is the SLA for Latency? (Optional)

What is the SLA for Jitter? (Optional)

What is the SLA for Packet Loss? (Optional)

What is the SLA for Packet Reliability? (Optional)

# Expense Items – Circuit Information

- Address of HCP on the expense item will pre-populate based on information in the FCC Form 460.

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$48,480.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$31,512.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

✓ Bandwidth

✓ Service Level Agreement

➤ **Circuit Information**

○ Financial Information

○ HCP Contribution Source

Circuit ID (Optional)

Where is the site's location on the circuit?

☒ The circuit starts at the site location

☐ The circuit ends at the site location

Circuit Start Location

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

CO

ZIP Code

# Expense Items – Circuit Information (continued)

- If the HCP is an Administrative Office or Data Center, the location on the other end of the circuit is required.
- For all other entity types, addresses are suggested but not required to advance to the next page.

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$N/A  
Maximum Support Amount \$N/A

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

✓ Bandwidth

✓ Service Level Agreement

> **Circuit Information**

○ Financial Information

○ HCP Contribution Source

Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$N/A  
Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$N/A

Circuit ID (Optional)

Where is the site's location on the circuit?  
☒ The circuit starts at the site location  
☐ The circuit ends at the site location

Circuit Start Location

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

CO

ZIP Code

Circuit End Location

☐ Location is a Member Site  
☒ Location is the Service Provider  
☐ Location is not a Member Site or Service Provider

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Choose a State

ZIP Code

59

# Expense Items – Financial Information

Expense Item 1 of 1

Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$0.00

Maximum Support Amount \$0.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

✓ Bandwidth

✓ Service Level Agreement

✓ Circuit Information

> **Financial Information**

☐ HCP Contribution Source

Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$N/A

Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$N/A

Does this expense item represent multiple items or circuits? ⓘ

☐ Yes

☒ No

Multi-year Funding Request

☐ Yes

☒ No

How often is this item expensed?

Monthly

How many expense periods will there be total?

12

Undiscounted Cost Per Expense Period (Excluding Taxes and Fees)

\$1,000.00

Taxes and Fees per Expense Period

\$50.00

Is this entire expense eligible for support? ⓘ

☐ Yes

☒ No

Percent Eligible for Support

90

Explanation

Ten locations use this service but one site is ineligible for funding.

70/1000

Upload Documentation to Support Your Explanation ⓘ

UPLOAD

Drop file here

# Expense Items – Multiple items

- Enter quantity of items, for example number of routers or PRI lines.

## Expense Items

Expense Item 2 of 2  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$0.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$0.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

Does this expense item represent multiple items or circuits? [?](#)

☒ Yes  
☐ No

Quantity of Items

# Expense Items – HCP Contribution Source

- Check all that apply.

[Start Page](#) [Competitive Bidding](#) [Service Provider Information](#) [Expense Items](#) [Additional Documentation](#) [Confidentiality](#)

## Expense Items

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$12,600.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$8,190.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

✓ Bandwidth

✓ Service Level Agreement

✓ Circuit Information

✓ Financial Information

> **HCP Contribution Source**

**How will the HCP cover their costs including the required 35% that are not covered by HCF support? (select all that apply)**

☐ The HCP will cover the difference

☐ State grants, funding, or appropriations

☐ Federal funding, grants, loans, or appropriations

☐ Tribal government funding

☐ Other grant funding including private grants

Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost:  
\$12,600.00  
Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$8,190.00

[BACK](#) [EXIT](#)

# Expense Items – Summary

Expense Item Summary

ENTER A NEW EXPENSE ITEM

#	↑	Site #	Site Name	Contract Number	Expense Type	Eligible Undiscounted Cost	Maxium Support Amount	Actions
1					Ethernet	\$24,240.00	\$15,756.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>

Show 

5

 records/page

Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$24,240.00

Total Maximum Support \$15,756.00

BACK

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

Approved by OMB 3060-0804

If you have questions please contact our Help Desk at (800) 453-1546 or RHC-Assist@usac.org 8:00 a.m. — 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday for assistance.

# Additional Documentation

- For consortia, a viable source letter must be uploaded before moving forward.

SAVE DRAFT

Start PageCompetitive BiddingService Provider InformationExpense ItemsAdditional DocumentationConfidentialityCertificationsSignature

Additional Documentation

Use this tab to upload additional documentation that is relevant to the application. Ensure that all bandwidths, costs, service locations, and expense types are supported with documentation.

Service provider documentation required to confirm expenses

Document Type	Document	Uploaded On
No items available		
<div><div>Add Documents</div><div>Must upload a file of document type Viable Source Letter</div></div>		

Note: If a document is uploaded that gives an error message for an empty document, the error message may persist even after replacing the empty document with a valid document. Please select **save and continue**.

BACK

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

Approved by OMB 3060-0804

If you have questions please contact our Help Desk at (800) 453-1546 or RHC-Assist@usac.org 8:00 a.m. — 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday for assistance.

# Confidentiality

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

Confidentiality

Is the HCP requesting confidential treatment and non-disclosure of commercial and financial information?\*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Explanation

BACK

EXIT

# Certifications

- All certifications must be clicked to proceed.

Start Page

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Certifications

Signature

### Certifications

☐ I certify under penalty of perjury that I am authorized to submit this request on behalf of the applicant 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 of fact contained therein are true.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BACK

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

# Signature

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

The screenshot shows a web application interface for the 'Signature' step. At the top is a navigation bar with links: Start Page, Competitive Bidding, Service Provider Information, Expense Items, Additional Documentation, Confidentiality, Certifications, and Signature (which is highlighted with a dropdown arrow). Below the navigation bar is the title 'Signature'. The main content area is divided into two sections. The first section, 'Current User Information', contains a table with the following fields: Name, Email, Phone, Employer, Title, and Employer's FCC RN. The second section, 'Signature', contains three fields: 'Certifier's Full Name' (a text input field), '\* Digital Signature' (a text input field with a vertical cursor), and 'Date' (a date input field showing '10/21/2021' with a calendar icon). At the bottom of the page, there are three buttons: 'BACK', 'EXIT', and 'CERTIFY & SUBMIT' (which is highlighted with a red border).

Current User Information	
Name	
Email	
Phone	
Employer	
Title	
Employer's FCC RN	

Signature	
Certifier's Full Name	
* Digital Signature	
Date	10/21/2021

BACK EXIT CERTIFY & SUBMIT

## After Submitting

- You will receive an email letting you know that your form has been received.
  - If you do not receive an email, please go back into RHC Connect and be sure that you signed and submitted the form.
- A reviewer will reach out if additional information is needed.
- No funding decisions will be issued until after the close of the filing window period.
- Once your funding request has been approved, you will receive a funding commitment letter (FCL) that will include all corresponding information to your funding request including evergreen contract endorsement.

# Information Requests

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

# Best Practices – Off-Site Data Centers and Administrative Offices (47 CFR §54.615)

- **Provide the end location for all expense items** associated with off-site data centers and administrative offices as these entity types are only eligible for funding based on the following eligible connections:
  - Eligible HCP and off-site data center or off-site administrative office
  - Two off-site data centers
  - Two off-site administrative offices
  - Off-site data center and off-site administrative office
  - Off-site data center or off-site administrative office and the public internet or another network
- Be sure to keep the FCC Form 460 for the data center or administrative offices **updated with all sites** that are using that data center or administrative office (FCC Form 460 Block 1, Line 2 A & B).
- You will select one of three choices for the other end of the circuit:
  - Location is a member site
  - Location is a service provider
  - Location is not a member site or service provider

# Expense Items – Circuit Information – Data Centers and Administrative Offices

- If **Location is a Member Site** is selected, choose the member HCP from the drop-down menu.
- Member sites in the drop-down menu reflect the sites listed on the FCC Form 460 for the off-site data center or administrative office.

**Expense Items**

Expense Item 1 of 1  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$N/A  
Maximum Support Amount \$N/A

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

✓ Expense Type

✓ Bandwidth

✓ Service Level Agreement

> **Circuit Information**

○ Financial Information

○ HCP Contribution Source

Circuit ID (Optional)

Where is the site's location on the circuit?

☒ The circuit starts at the site location

☐ The circuit ends at the site location

Circuit Start Location

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

CO

ZIP Code

Circuit End Location

☐ Location is a Member Site

☒ Location is the Service Provider

☐ Location is not a Member Site or Service Provider

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Choose a State

ZIP Code

Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$N/A  
Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$N/A

# Reminder - Funding Caps & Funding Limitations

- **\$10,000 Exemption** (47 CFR § 54.622(i)(5) Competitive bidding requirement and exemptions)
  - Applicants do not have to go through the competitive bidding process if they are requesting \$10,000 or less in undiscounted costs in aggregate for one funding year.
  - For consortium applicants, this exemption is for requested funding for the entire consortium.
- **Submitting an FCC Form 461 without an RFP** (47 CFR §54.622(e)(5)(i) Competitive bidding requirement and exemptions)
  - Consortia applicants who submit an FCC Form 461 without an RFP are limited to \$100,000 per funding year (or over funding years if seeking a multi-year commitment) in program support.

## Reminder - Funding Caps & Funding Limitations (continued)

- **Large non-rural hospitals** (47 CFR § 54.607(c) Eligible recipients)
  - Eligible non-rural hospitals with 400 or more licensed patient beds may receive no more than \$30,000 per year in HCF support for eligible recurring charges and no more than \$70,000 in HCF support for eligible nonrecurring charges every five years.
- **Upfront Costs** (47 CFR § 54.616 Upfront payments)
  - Only consortium applicants are eligible for this expense type.
  - Upfront expenses include all non-recurring charges for services, equipment or facilities, other than reasonable and customary installation charges of up to \$5,000.
  - If a consortium makes a request for support for upfront payments that exceeds, on average, \$50,000 per eligible site in the consortium, support must be pro-rated over at least three years and the upfront cost must be part of a multi-year contract.
  - Supported services with associated bandwidth speeds <1.5 Mbps are ineligible for funding.

# Best Practices – Equipment (47 CFR § 54.613 Eligible Equipment)

- “(a) Both individual and consortium applicants may receive support for network equipment necessary to make functional an eligible service that is supported under the Healthcare Connect Fund.”
  - Equipment must be broken out into line items based on where the equipment will actually reside and must correspond to an FRN with a supported circuit.
  - A **network diagram** helps confirm where the equipment is located both at the HCP location and where the service is handed off from the service provider.
  - You must **provide the FRN with the corresponding broadband circuit**. If we cannot confirm that there is a corresponding circuit funded under HCF, we cannot approve funding for the equipment.

## Best Practices – Equipment (continued)

- Components of a piece of equipment should be broken out by part on the invoice or contract so that we can determine if any ineligible components are part of the bundle.
  - Example: Funding would not be approved for a power cord by itself if the router is ineligible.
- Clearly identify on the documentation what constitutes an “item” e.g., router, switch, etc. and list the quantity in this section of the FCC Form 462.

**Expense Items**

Expense Item 2 of 2  
Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$0.00  
Maximum Support Amount \$0.00

✓ Contract Status

✓ Expense Information

Does this expense item represent multiple items or circuits? ⓘ

☒ Yes  
☐ No

**Quantity of Items**

Enter a value.

## Best Practices – Equipment (continued)

- Use a separate line for a service contract or warranty such as “SmartNet” that accompanies a particular piece of equipment and clearly identify it on the corresponding documentation.
- Please use the drop-down menu selections to describe the equipment as accurately as possible, e.g., warranty, router (HCP owned), switch (HCP owned), firewall (HCP owned), etc.

## Best Practices – Equipment for Consortia (47 CFR § 54.613 Eligible Equipment)

- “(b) Consortium applicants may also receive support for network equipment necessary to manage, control, or maintain an eligible service or a dedicated health care broadband network. Support for network equipment is not available for networks that are not dedicated to health care.”
  - A **network diagram** helps confirm where the equipment is situated on the network.
  - Equipment must be **broken out into line items** based on where the equipment will actually reside.
  - Since this type of equipment is only eligible for consortia applicants, all members participating on the network should be **registered with an FCC Form 460** and the circuits that this equipment manages should be **filed as a consortium** and not as an individual applicant.
  - **Do not bundle multiple units** on one line item; please clearly identify on the documentation what constitutes an “item” and list the quantity in the FCC Form 462.
  - Please **use the drop-down menu** selections to describe the equipment as accurately as possible.
  - For these types of expenses, the applicant **must clearly demonstrate that the requested equipment performs the function** explicit in the rule, e.g., that it manages, controls or maintains a supported network.

## Best Practices – Networks (Primarily Consortium Applicants)

- All sites participating on the network should be **registered through an FCC Form 460**.
- The documentation submitted must be associated with the HCP listed on the NCW of the FCC Form 462.
- You must clearly demonstrate through supporting documentation that the **expense listed is for the benefit of the HCP** on the line item.
- It is your responsibility to provide **clear narratives, network diagrams, and documentation** to adequately describe the network.
- Network diagrams are helpful in providing a snapshot of the network; documentation such as **contracts, invoices, and/or service orders** must confirm the diagram.
- **All supporting documentation must come from the service provider.**

## Best Practices: Communicating with Your Service Provider

- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.
- Communicate with your service provider when you reply to Information Requests.
- HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a period of at least five years.

# Questions?

# **Important Dates and Resources**

Best Practices for FY2024

# Milestones for FY2024: HCF Program 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 these dates (except for the FCC Form 462 filing window deadline of April 1) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.

# Milestones for FY2024: HCF Program 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 these dates (except for the FCC Form 462 filing window deadline of April 1) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.

# Online Resources

- [RHC Learn](#)
- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 462](#)
- [RHC Connect User Guide](#) – FCC Form 462
- [Information Request tip sheet](#)
- [Consortia Majority Rural Compliance Tip Sheet](#)
- [Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#)
- [Request for Proposals \(RFPs\)](#)
- [Network Plans](#)

To view all FCC Orders, please visit the [FCC Orders and Resources](#) webpage.

# RHC Program Customer Service Center



Email: [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto: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 and RHC Connect
Assist with My Portal and RHC Connect	Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

# Questions?

**Thank You!**



**Universal Service**  
Administrative Co.