

HCF Program Funding Request Office Hours

February 08, 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.
- Use the “**Raise Your Hand**” button to be unmuted and ask a question to the team!



Meet Our Team



Simone Andrews

Senior Communications Specialist |
RHC Outreach



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Advisor of Program Management |
RHC Outreach

Agenda

- Introduction
- Program Updates
- Submitting Forms in RHC Connect
- Best Practices
- Resources

Introduction – Office Hours

- Subject matter experts are available to answer live questions from program participants.
- Today's presentation will focus on the HCF Program.
- Send FRN or HCP-specific questions to the RHC Customer Service Center at RHC-Assist@usac.org.
- Raise your hand or ask your question in the questions box.
- Please note, recordings of Office Hours webinars are not posted to the USAC website.
- You can download a PDF copy of the slide deck from the handout section on the GoToWebinar dashboard.

Program Updates

HCF Program Funding Request Office Hours

Reminder: FCC Report and Order 19-78

- [FCC Report and Order 19-78](#) webpage summarizes the Report and Order's major changes and includes the following resources:
 - [FCC Report and Order 19-78](#)
 - [Public Notice DA 19-1253](#)
 - [FCC Report and Order 19-78 Tip Sheet](#)
 - Webinar [recording](#) and [slides](#)

FCC Order 22-1063 – Hurricane Ian Relief Order

- On October 4, 2022, the FCC issued Order [DA 22-1063](#) waiving certain RHC rules and deadlines to assist participants and providers located in the areas affected by Hurricane Ian. This Order applies to HCPs and service providers located in the state of Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina. This Order takes the following actions:
 - Grants a 60-day extension to the deadline for appeals and request for waiver for all requests from September 18, 2022 through March 3, 2023;
 - Waives the 14-day Information Request response 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 issued on or after September 4, 2022 (affected health care providers and service providers have until March 3, 2023 to respond);
 - Waives the invoicing deadline for FY2021 funding requests and grants an automatic 120-day extension; and
 - Waives the September 30, 2022 deadline for Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) program annual reports (HCF program participants have until March 3, 2023 to submit annual reports).

FCC 23-6: Order on Reconsideration, Second Report and Order, Order, and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

- On January 26, 2023, the FCC released an Order on Reconsideration, Second Report and Order, Order, and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking strengthening the procedures for RHC. These actions resolve petitions for reconsideration on issues from [FCC Report and Order 19-78](#), adopt proposals from the February 2022 Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and propose and seek comment on further reforms to RHC program rules. These actions include:
 - Rule Changes
 - Potential Future Rule Changes

FCC 23-6: Rule Changes

Rates determination in the Telecom Program:

- Eliminates rules requiring use of the Rates Database to determine urban and rural rates.
- Waivers allowing the use of previously approved rates for all urban and rural rates will remain in place for FY2023.
- Beginning in FY2024, 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 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 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 rate.
 - Similarly, if there are no comparable urban rates within 30 percent of the speed of the requested service, health care providers may use the rate for a higher bandwidth service that is otherwise similar to the requested service to justify an urban rate.
 - Affirms the decisions in FCC Order 19-78 that a non-telecommunications service that is functionally similar to a service requested in the Telecom Program should be considered similar to it when calculating rates and that services with advertised speeds 30 percent above or below the speed of the requested service be considered functionally similar to the requested service.

FCC 23-6: Rule Changes (continued)

Invoicing in the Telecom Program:

- Eliminates the use of the Health Care Provider Support Schedule (HSS) and moves invoice submission until after services have been provided.

Internal cap on upfront costs and multi-year commitments in the HCF Program:

- Limits the application of the internal cap on upfront costs and multi-year commitments in the HCF Program to when the total support available for the funding year is exceeded.
- When the internal cap applies, funding requests for upfront costs and the first year of multi-year commitments will be prioritized over the second and third year of multi-year commitments.

FCC 23-6: Potential Future Rule Changes

The Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposes:

- Adjustments to the methods used to determine rural rates using the service provider's own rates or competitor's rates, a new process for determining cost-based rural rates, and changes to the process for determining urban rates.
- Allowing a conditional approval of eligibility to allow entities that will soon become eligible to participate in the RHC program to begin competitive bidding and file a Request for Services.
- Moving the Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) change deadline to align with the invoice deadline.

The Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks comment on:

- Reinstating the cap on satellite services in the Telecom Program.
- Funding in the HCF Program for equipment used for Telecom Program supported connections.
- Whether there should be a process for changing the dates of evergreen contracts after a funding commitment is issued.
- Revisions to data collected in the Telecom Program.

Reminder: Information Requests

- 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 14th day would be the last time to respond to the Information Request.
- Information Requests not responded to within 14 calendar days **will result in a denial** of that form.
- An extension request must be received prior to the original 14-day Information Request deadline.

FY2023 Funding Request Reviews

- RHC may begin funding request reviews before the funding request window closes.
- **No final decisions will be made prior to the close of the filing window.**
- This means that you may receive an Information Request before April 3, 2023.
- For FY2023 FCC Forms 462, an auto-generated email will be sent with instructions to respond through RHC Connect.
 - **HCPs should respond through RHC Connect only.**
 - The auto-generated email comes from an unattended mailbox so please only respond through RHC Connect.

Reminder: Invoicing Deadlines

- New invoicing guidelines adopted in FCC [Report and Order 19-78](#) became effective beginning with FY2020 applicants.
- The invoicing deadline will be four months (120 days) from the service delivery deadline in both the HCF and Telecom Programs, October 28 of a given funding year.
- **New!** Please use the new [RHC Invoicing Deadline Tool](#) in the Open Data section of the USAC website to look up your invoicing deadline.
- For more information please see the [HCF invoice page](#) and [Telecom invoice page](#).

Supply Chain Order

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

The first certification affirms compliance with the [Section 54.9 prohibition](#) on USF support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by the covered companies deemed to pose a national security threat to the integrity of the communications network or communications supply chain. The second certification affirms compliance with [Section 54.10](#), which prohibits the use of any Federal subsidies on any communications equipment and services on the [Covered List](#), which includes those offered by Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, Dahua Technology Company, AO Kaspersky Lab, China Mobile International USA Inc., China Telecom (Americas) Corp. and their affiliates and subsidiaries.

- **FY2022 Applicants:** If you requested services or equipment provided or that contain components of products produced by any of the listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries in FY2022, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a [service substitution](#) prior to invoicing in order to ensure complete program compliance.
- **FY2023 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, there is a navigation bar with links: About, E-rate, Rural Health Care, Lifeline, High Cost, and Service Providers. Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads: USAC | About | Reports & Orders | **Supply Chain**. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with the following items: Reports & Orders, Annual Report, FCC Filings, FCC Orders, and **Supply Chain** (which is highlighted with a green bar). The main content area features the title "Supply Chain" in a large blue font. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text: "Since November 2019, the FCC has taken a number of actions to protect the national security of the United States, the security and safety of United States persons, and the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. The FCC has also implemented the [Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019](#). The FCC's actions can be found at www.fcc.gov/supplychain." Below this paragraph, there is another paragraph: "In November 2019, the FCC released the [Supply Chain First Report and Order](#) adopting a rule (47 CFR Section 54.9) which prohibits the use of Universal Service Fund (USF) support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by companies found to pose a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain."

RHC Connect – Submitting the FCC Form 462

HCF Program Funding Request Office Hours

RHC Connect Updates

- Forms 461, 462 and 463 should be submitted in RHC Connect for FY2022 and FY2023.
- 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](#)
 - [Information Request tip sheet](#)

My Portal Landing Page

- Log in to My Portal and click “**RHC Connect**” to begin.

The screenshot displays the 'Dashboard' of the My Portal. At the top, there is a yellow banner with an information icon and text: 'In accordance with the Supply Chain orders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 and the and High Cost & Lifeline - FCC Form 481. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional informa'. Below the banner, the dashboard is divided into two main sections. On the left, 'Upcoming Dates' features a calendar icon and two entries: '07/07 2022 New Filer ID Basics Webinar' and '08/01 2022 Quarterly Filing due August 1'. On the right, 'Rural Health Care' has an upward arrow icon. It contains three highlighted boxes. The top box, outlined in red, is titled 'RHC Connect' and states: '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.' The middle box is titled 'RHC My Portal' and states: '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.' The bottom box is titled 'Connected Care Pilot Program' and states: 'Health care providers must use this form to complete and submit their original Connected Care Pilot Program proposal application directly to FCC.'

Dashboard

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

Upcoming Dates

07/07 2022 New Filer ID Basics Webinar

08/01 2022 Quarterly Filing due August 1

Rural Health Care

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

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

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

Dashboard

- Here you can start a new form, resume working on a draft or delete a draft FCC Form 461 or 462 for FY2023.
- There's a countdown banner displaying the days remaining in the filing window.

The screenshot displays the RHC Connect dashboard. At the top, a blue navigation bar contains 'DASHBOARD' and 'START A FORM' (highlighted with a red box and an arrow). Below this is a banner for 'RHC Connect' featuring a woman in a medical mask. A yellow notification bar indicates '(151) Unread Notifications'. The main content area has three tabs: 'Information Requests', 'My Forms' (highlighted with a red box), and 'My Organizations'. A blue banner below the tabs states: 'The Funding Year 2023 funding request filing window closes in 10 days.' On the left, a circular clock shows '11:02 Dec 29 2022'. Under the 'My Forms' tab, there is a 'Form Type' dropdown menu set to 'Form 462' (highlighted with a red box) and a search bar. Below this is a table of form submissions. The table has columns: Site Name, Site Number, Application Number, Application Nickname, Form, Last Update, Status, and Actions. The 'Status' and 'Actions' columns for the last three rows are highlighted with a red box.

Site Name	Site Number	Application Number	Application Nickname	Form	Last Update	Status	Actions
				Form 462	12/29/2022 10:57 AM EST	Draft	
				Form 462	12/9/2022 2:59 PM EST	Submitted	
				Form 462	12/8/2022 1:45 PM EST	Submitted	
				Form 462	9/1/2022 10:37 AM EDT	Submitted	
				Form 462	9/1/2022 10:29 AM EDT	Processed	
				Form 462	10/26/2022 1:42 PM EDT	Draft	

Start a New Form

- Select FCC Form 462, then click “Next”.


RHC Connect

10:23
Dec 29 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

START A FORM

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

Additional Documentation

Confidentiality

Certifications

Signature

Start

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA)

FCC NOTICE REQUIRED BY THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

Part 54 of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) rules authorize the FCC to collect the information requested in this form. Responses to the questions herein are required to obtain the benefits sought by this form. Failure to provide all requested information will delay processing or result in the form being returned without action. Information requested by this form will be available for public inspection. The information provided will be used to determine whether approving this request is in the public interest.

We have estimated that each response to this collection of information will take 2 hours. Our estimate includes the time to read the instructions, look through existing records, gather and maintain the required data, and actually complete and review the form or response. If you have any comments on this estimate, or on how we can improve the collection and reduce the burden it causes you, please write the Federal Communications Commission, AMD-PER, Paperwork Reduction Project (3060-0804), Washington, DC 20554. We will also accept your comments via the Internet if you send them to pra@fcc.gov. Please DO NOT SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO THIS ADDRESS.

Remember - you are not required to respond to a collection of information sponsored by the Federal government, and the government may not conduct or sponsor this collection, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number or if we fail to provide you with this notice. This collection has been assigned an OMB control number of 3060-0804.

THE FOREGOING NOTICE IS REQUIRED BY THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995, P.L. 104-13, OCTOBER 1, 1995, 44 U.S.C. § 3507

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

Health Care Provider (HCP) Information

HCP or Consortium

FCC Registration Number

Address

State

Application Basics

Application Nickname

Funding Year

Application Number

Funding Priority

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

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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

SAVE DRAFT

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

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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)

- If “Yes” is selected, choose the exemption type.
- Upload contract.
 - For Evergreen contracts, select a contract from the drop-down menu.
 - Evergreen exemption can only be selected if the contract was approved as Evergreen on a prior funding year funding requests.
- Enter the relevant contract information in the fields.
- Use the drop-down calendar to enter dates.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Competitive Bidding" with a breadcrumb trail: "Start Page" > "Competitive Bidding" > "Service Provider Information". The form is divided into sections. The first section, "Competitive Bidding", asks "Is the HCP requesting that this application be exempt from competitive bidding?" with radio buttons for "Yes" (selected) and "No". Below this is a section "Select the exemption that the HCP is claiming*" with radio buttons for "Annual Undiscounted Cost of \$10,000 or less", "Government Master Services Agreement", "Pre-Approved Master Services Agreement", "Evergreen Contract" (selected), and "E-rate Approved Contract". The next section, "New Contract", contains a "Select an Existing Contract*" dropdown menu. Below this are two date pickers: "Contract Sign Date" (10/01/2021) and "Contract End Date (Optional)" (09/30/2024). The "Length of Initial Contract Term" is set to 36 Months. The "Number of Contract Extensions (Optional)" is set to 5. The "Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional)" is set to 5 Months. At the bottom of the form are "CANCEL", "BACK", and "EXIT" buttons.

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

36 Months

Number of Contract Extensions (Optional)

5

Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (Optional)

5 Months

CANCEL

BACK EXIT

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” if the HCP is not exempt from competitive bidding.
- Choose the related FCC Form 461 from drop-down menu.
 - All FCC Forms 461 for the HCP will be available.
- Enter the number of bids received.
- Copies of all bids received must be uploaded.

SAVE DRAFT

Start Page Competitive Bidding Service Provider Information

Competitive Bidding

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

☐ 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

[Add Documents](#)

Must Upload a file.

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

Upload Bids

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

[Add Documents](#)

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

Service Provider Information

- Select 498 ID/SPIN.
- Click “Save and Continue”.

Start Page

Competitive Bidding

Service Provider Information

Expense Items

Additional Documentation

Confidentiality

Certifications

Signature

Service Provider Information

498 ID/SPIN

Service Provider Name

centurylink

SEARCH

CLEAR

498 ID/SPIN	Service Provider Name
143003913	CenturyLink Coastal Long Distance Services, Inc.
143001613	CenturyLink CenturyTel of North Mississippi, Inc.
143002125	CenturyLink CenturyTel of Minnesota, Inc.
143001361	CenturyLink United Telephone Co. of New Jersey
143002131	CenturyLink - Embarq Minnesota, Inc (FKA Embarq)

« < 1 - 5 of 83 > »

You have selected 143002131 - CenturyLink - Embarq Minnesota, Inc (FKA Embarq)

BACK

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

Expense Items – Summary Page

- Download the NCW Template and save.
- Populate all information and upload the NCW to RHC Connect.
- Any information entered manually will be overwritten by the 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			Edit Delete
2					Ethernet			Edit Delete

Using the NCW Template

- Do not disturb the formatting.
 - When using “copy” and “paste” to enter data, be sure to paste using a “text” or “values” format.
 - If any data is entered manually prior to uploading the NCW, that data will be overwritten when the NCW is uploaded.
 - If after uploading the NCW data isn’t saved or you’re directed back to the summary page, the formatting has been changed.
 - Download a new NCW template and try again.

Line Number	Contract Status														Expense Information				Expense Type					Bandwidth				Service Level Agreement									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH			
	Site Number	Site Name	Is there a contract with the service provider?	Contract ID	Contract Nickname	Contract Start Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Initial Contract End Date (optional) (yyyy-mm-dd)	Contract Sign Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Install Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Number of Contract Extensions (optional)	Length of Initial Contract Term	Time unit of Length of Initial contract term	Total Combined Length of Optional Extensions (optional)	Time Unit of Extensions (optional)	Is this a newly installed circuit?	Billing Account Number (optional)	Expected Service Start Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Installation Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Category of Expense	Expense Type	Explanation of Expense (optional)	Total Number of Fiber Strands (optional)	Total Number of Fiber Strands Eligible to Support (optional)	Upload Speed	Upload Speed Unit	Download Speed	Download Speed Unit	Is there a service level agreement (SLA) with the service provider for this expense item? (Optional)	SLA for Latency	SLA for Jitter	SLA for Packet Loss	SLA for Packet Reliability	Circuit ID (optional)	Where is the site's location on the circuit?		Is the Member Site, Service Provider Site or Neither?	HCP Number
1			Yes												No				Data	Dark Fiber				1.00	Mbps	1.00	Mbps	Yes	<8 ms	<10 MS	<0.001	0.9999		Circuit Start Location			
2			Yes												No				Data	Ethernet				500.00	Mbps	500.00	Mbps	Yes	<8 ms	<10 MS	<0.001	0.9999		Circuit Start Location			
3			Yes												No				Data	Dark Fiber				1.00	Gbps	1.00	Gbps	Yes	<8 ms	<10 MS	<0.001	0.9999		Circuit Start Location			
4			Yes												No				Data	Ethernet				100.00	Mbps	100.00	Mbps	Yes	<8 ms	<10 MS	<0.001	0.9999		Circuit Start Location			
5			Yes												No				Data	Ethernet				50.00	Mbps	50.00	Mbps	Yes	<8 ms	<10 MS	<0.001	0.9999		Circuit Start Location			

Expense Items – Contract Status

- For consortia applicants, choose a member site for each expense 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' (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 cost information: 'Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost \$0.00' and 'Maximum Support Amount \$0.00'.

A sidebar on the left lists various sections under the heading 'Contract Status':

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

The main content area features a red-bordered box around the 'Expense Item Site' dropdown menu, which currently shows '---Select---'. Below this, a question is posed: 'Does the HCP have a Contract with the Service Provider?'. 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 to the 'Expense Item Site' dropdown.

At the bottom of the form, summary text reads: 'Sum of All Expense Item Total Eligible Undiscounted Cost: \$0.00' and 'Sum of All Expense Item Maximum Support Amount: \$0.00'. Two buttons, 'BACK' and 'EXIT', are located at the bottom left.

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 contract start date, initial contract end date, contract sign date and installation date for confirmation in review.

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
UPLOAD Drop file here

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 the “Expected Broadband Service Start Date” and “Installation Date”.

Start Page

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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

ⓘ 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

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

- Enter “Expense Category” and “Expense Type” and an optional explanation of the eligible expense.

Start Page

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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.

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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

Mbps

Upload Speed

Mbps

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.

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

Download Speed

Leave blank if bandwidth is not applicable

Upload Speed

Leave blank if bandwidth is not applicable

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 – 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 the HCP on 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 Off-Site Administrative Office or Data Center, the location on the other end of the circuit is required.

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

43

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

- The quantity of items should match the quantity on the documentation.

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 – Financial Information (Continued)

- 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	Edit Delete

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

- Consortia applicants are required, at minimum, to upload a Viable Source Letter before continuing.

Start Page

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Certifications

Signature

▲ 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	Description	Document	Uploaded On	↑
No items available				

UPLOAD DOCUMENT(S)

Must upload a file of document type Viable Source Letter

BACK

EXIT

SAVE & CONTINUE

Additional Documentation (continued)

- To upload more than 10 documents, follow the instructions in the blue banner.

The screenshot displays the 'Additional Documentation' page within a web application. At the top, a navigation bar includes links for 'Start Page', 'Competitive Bidding', 'Service Provider Information', 'Expense Items', 'Additional Documentation' (which is highlighted with a blue arrow), 'Confidentiality', 'Certifications', and 'Signature'.

Below the navigation bar, the page title 'Additional Documentation' is shown. A yellow banner contains the message: 'Service provider documentation required to confirm expenses'.

A table with the following headers is present: 'Document Type', 'Document', and 'Uploaded On'. The table body is empty, displaying 'No items available'.

Below the table, there is a link 'Add Document'.

The 'Bulk Upload' section includes an 'UPLOAD' button and a dashed box with the text 'Drop files here'.

A blue banner with a red border contains the following text: 'Note: 10 files can be uploaded at a time (up to 100 total). Click **Next** on this screen once the 10 document limit has been reached; you may then click **UPLOAD DOCUMENT(S)** again to add another batch of files.' A red arrow points to the right from the end of this banner.

At the bottom left, there are 'BACK' and 'EXIT' buttons. At the bottom right, there is a 'NEXT' button.

The footer text reads: 'Approved by OMB 3060-0804'.

Confidentiality

Start Page	Competitive Bidding	Service Provider Information	Expense Items
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Confidentiality

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

☐ Yes

☐ No

Explanation

BACK

EXIT

Certifications

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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 in 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 downward 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 two buttons: 'BACK' and 'EXIT' on the left, and 'CERTIFY & SUBMIT' on the right, which is highlighted with a red rectangular border.

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

Signature	
Certifier's Full Name	<input type="text"/>
* Digital Signature	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text" value="10/21/2021"/>

BACK EXIT CERTIFY & SUBMIT

Questions?

Best Practices

HCF Program Funding Request Office Hours

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 service including the winning bid, all bids that were rejected and any bids that were disqualified and why.
- ☐ A copy of the bidding evaluation matrix.
- ☐ A list of people who evaluated bids including title, role, and their relationship to the applicant.
- ☐ Internal documents related to the selection of the service provider (if applicable).
- ☐ Copies of any correspondence with service providers prior to and during the competitive bidding process (if applicable).
- ☐ A copy of any new contract signed for your services.
- ☐ Award letter to winning vendor (if applicable).
- ☐ Contact information for the service provider and all responsible account holders.
- ☐ The start and end location of your services.
- ☐ Viable source letter (35% contribution).

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

Best Practices – Competitive Bidding

- Begin your competitive bidding process early.
 - Bidding period opened on July 1, 2022 for FY2023.
- Once the ACSD has passed and you've chosen a service provider, include them when you reply to Information Requests via email.
- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.
- All bid correspondence should be handled via email for audit purposes.
- HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a minimum of five years.

Best Practices – FCC Form 462 (Funding Request)

- Do not enter into an agreement with a service provider until after the ACSD has passed.
- Include all required documentation when submitting your FCC Form 462.
- Include a cover letter if needed to clarify information entered into the FCC Form 462.
- If submitting funding requests for equipment, data center or administrative offices or network expenses, tip sheets can be found on the [Step 4: Submit Funding Requests](#) webpage under the Additional Resources section.
- Be sure to actually sign, certify and submit all FCC Forms 462 before 11:59 p.m. ET on April 3, 2023 (Drafts are not considered submitted).
- HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a minimum of five years.

Virtual Site Visits and Success Stories

- **Virtual Site Visits:** A great opportunity to expose RHC staff to the people and the communities that benefit from the RHC programs and to deepen the relationship between RHC staff and applicants.
- **Success Stories:** We will begin collecting stories of first-hand experiences showing how applicants are using their funding to improve access to healthcare in rural communities.
- If you're interested in either of these opportunities, send an email directly to [Blythe Albert](#) with “Virtual Site Visit” or “Success Story” in the subject line.

Resources

HCF Program Funding Request Office Hours

Upcoming Trainings

Please join the RHC Outreach team for the following webinars:

- Telecom Office Hours Webinar:
 - When: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 from 2-3 p.m. ET - [Register](#)
- RHC Program Office Hours webinars will be hosted throughout the filing window.
 - Check the RHC [Upcoming Dates](#) webpage for dates and details.

Online Resources

- [RHC Learn](#)
- [Step 4: Submit Funding Request](#) webpage
- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 462](#) webpage
- [Competitive Bidding Exemptions](#)
- [Consortia Majority Rural Compliance Tip Sheet](#)
- [Request for Proposals \(RFPs\)](#)
- [Network Plans](#)
- [Funding Limitations Tip Sheet](#)
- [Off-site Data Centers and Admin Offices Tip Sheet](#)
- [Equipment Tip Sheet](#)

Online Resources - RHC Connect

- [Welcome to RHC Connect - FCC Form 461](#) webpage
 - [RHC Connect User Guide](#)
 - [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 461](#) self-paced video training guide
- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 462](#) webpage
 - [RHC Connect User Guide](#)
 - [RHC Connect - FCC Form 462](#) self-paced video training guide
- [Welcome to RHC Connect – FCC Form 463](#) webpage
 - [RHC Connect Form User Guide](#)
 - Coming soon! RHC Connect – FCC Form 463 self-paced video training guide
- [Information Request Tip Sheet](#)

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

The 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	Contact a service provider or other account holder on someone else's behalf
Provide helpful resources and best practices for forms	Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal
Assist with My Portal	Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

Questions?



Universal Service
Administrative Co.