

FY2023 RHC Program Invoicing Best Practices

September 4, 2024



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 - 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



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Agenda

- Invoicing Overview and Program Updates
- Invoicing Process HCF Program for FY2023
 - Filing the FCC Form 463 RHC Account Holders
 - Filing the FCC Form 463 Service Providers
- Invoicing Process Telecom Program
 - Filing the FCC Form 467
 - Filing the Telecom Invoice Service Providers
- Disbursement Process
- Resources

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

- Understand the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) and Telecommunications (Telecom) Program invoicing process and deadlines
- Mark your calendars with upcoming invoice filing deadlines
- Identify the steps to submit the FCC Form 463 invoice for USAC review
- Identify resources to help you submit the FCC Form 463 invoice
- Identify the steps to submit the Telecom Program FCC Form 467 for USAC review
- For service providers, understand how to approve the FCC Form 463 and submit the Telecom invoice
- Understand the disbursement process

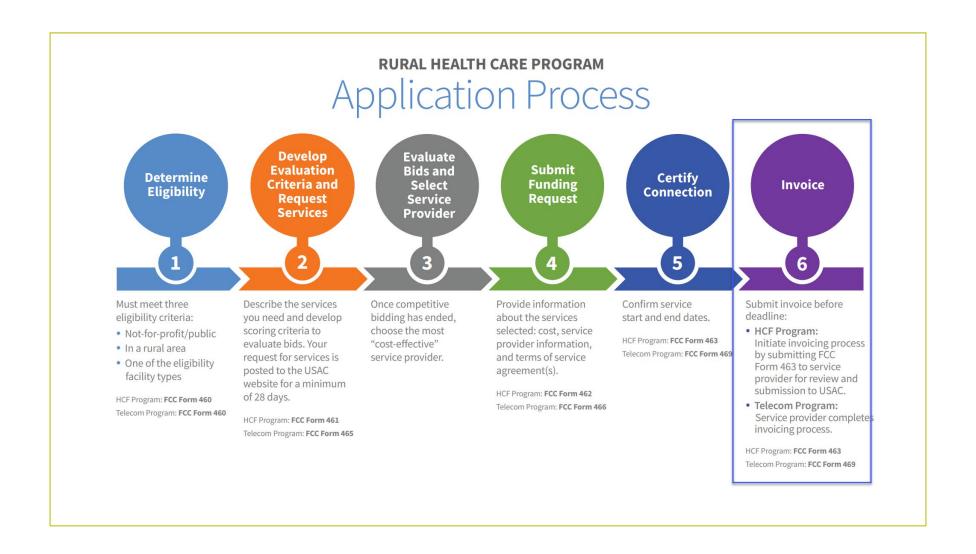
Glossary

Acronym	Definition
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HCF	Healthcare Connect Fund
FY	Funding Year
НСР	Health Care Provider (your site)
HCP Number	Number associated with your site
PAH	Primary Account Holder
FRN	Funding Request Number
FCL	Funding Commitment Letter
BAN	Billing Account Number
SPIN/498 ID	Service Provider Identification Number
FCCRN	FCC Registration Number (Referred to as FRN on FCC website)

Invoicing Overview and Program Updates

FY2023 RHC Program Invoicing Best Practices

Application Process



RHC Connect

- FCC Form 463 for approved FY2023 FRNs will be submitted in RHC Connect.
- FCC Forms 463 should be submitted in My Portal for all multi-year commitments for funding years prior to FY2022.
- The FCC Form 469 (the new Telecom invoicing form), will move to RHC Connect in late September.
- All Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP) forms will remain in My Portal.

Invoice Filing Deadlines

- The invoice filing deadline, per FCC Report and Order 19-78, is four months (120 days) from the service delivery deadline in both the HCF and Telecom Programs.
 - For more information, please see the <u>HCF invoice page</u> and <u>Telecom invoice</u> <u>page</u>.
 - Invoice filing deadlines can be found on our website by going to the Open Data platform and clicking on the <u>Rural Health Care Commitments and</u> <u>Disbursements (FCC Form 462/466/466A)</u> webpage.
 - The invoice filing deadline can be found in the last column of the searchable table when viewing data or in Column BE of the Excel spreadsheet.

FCC 23-110 Third Report and Order

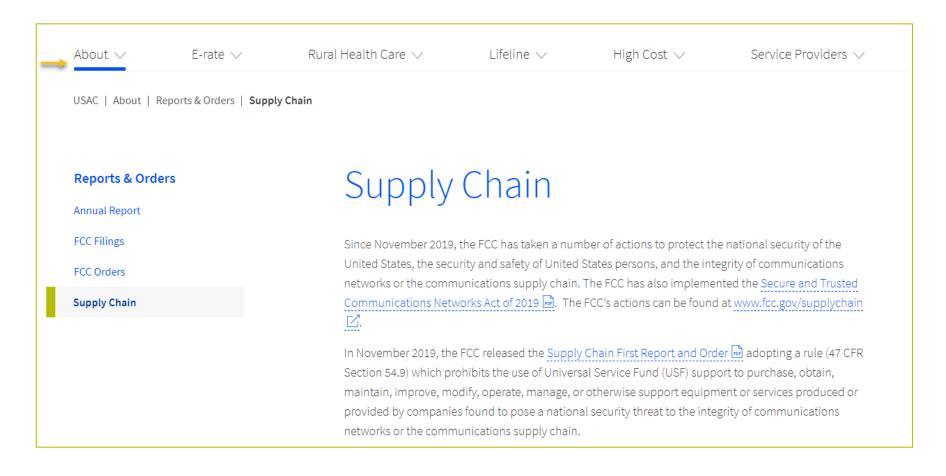
- On December 14, 2023, the FCC released <u>Order FCC 23-110</u>. This order improves RHC program administration and facilitates participation in the program by allowing health care providers that expect to become eligible during a funding year to complete the processes required to request funding, aligns program deadlines, simplifies rules for calculating urban rates, streamlines administrative processes, and frees up unused funding for other purposes. Changes to RHC program rules are as follows:
 - Permits health care providers to be granted conditional eligibility, thus allowing them to initiate competitive bidding and request funding while awaiting a final eligibility determination.
 - Provides health care providers more time to complete Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) changes by moving the SPIN change deadline to align with the invoice filing deadline (Beginning in FY2023).
 - Simplifies urban rate calculations by eliminating the seldom-used "standard urban distance" component of the rule for determining urban rates in the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program (Beginning in FY2025).
 - Allows health care providers to request changes to the dates covered by an evergreen contract post-commitment (Beginning in FY2024).
 - Adopts the FCC Form 460 for eligibility determinations in the Telecom Program, which will eliminate the need for Telecom Program participants to seek an eligibility determine every time they engage in competitive bidding.

Supply Chain Order

- As a reminder, when service providers login to <u>My Portal</u> and RHC Connect, they will see two new <u>supply chain</u> <u>certifications</u> included in the FCC Form 463 and Telecom Program invoice.
- The first certification affirms compliance with the <u>Section 54.9 prohibition</u> on USF for specified transactions with companies deemed to pose a national security threat. The second certification affirms compliance with <u>Section 54.10</u>, which prohibits the use of any Federal subsidies on any communications equipment and services on the <u>Covered List</u>.
- **FY2023 and FY2024 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 <u>service substitution</u>.
- **FY2025 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



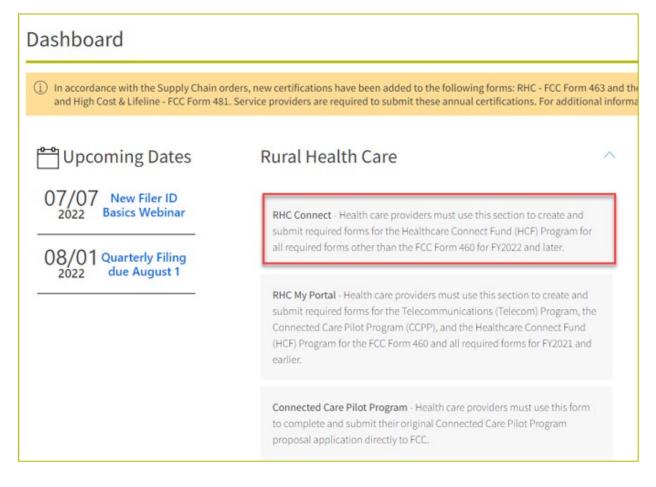
Questions?

Filing the FCC Form 463 - HCF Applicants

FY2023 RHC Program Invoicing Best Practices

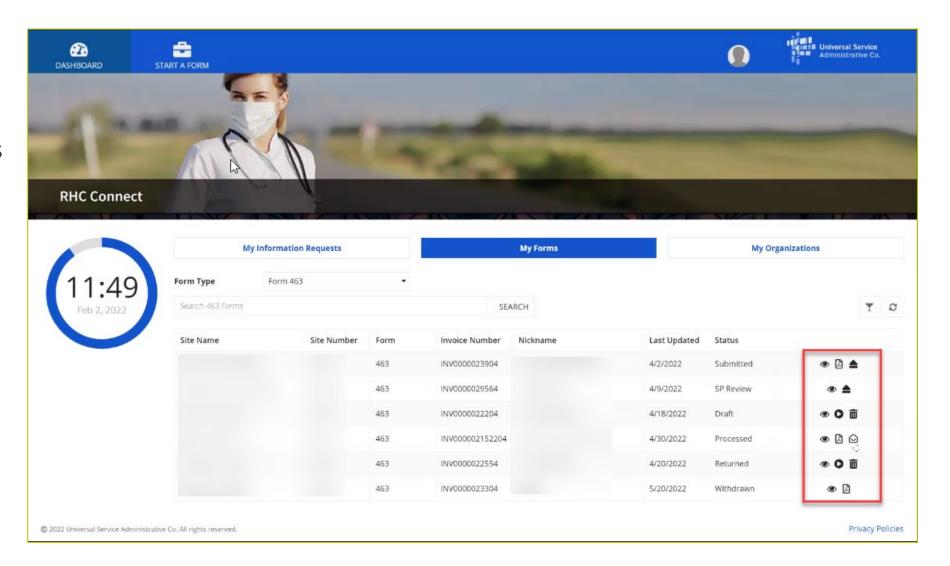
My Portal Landing Page

Log in to My Portal and click RHC Connect.



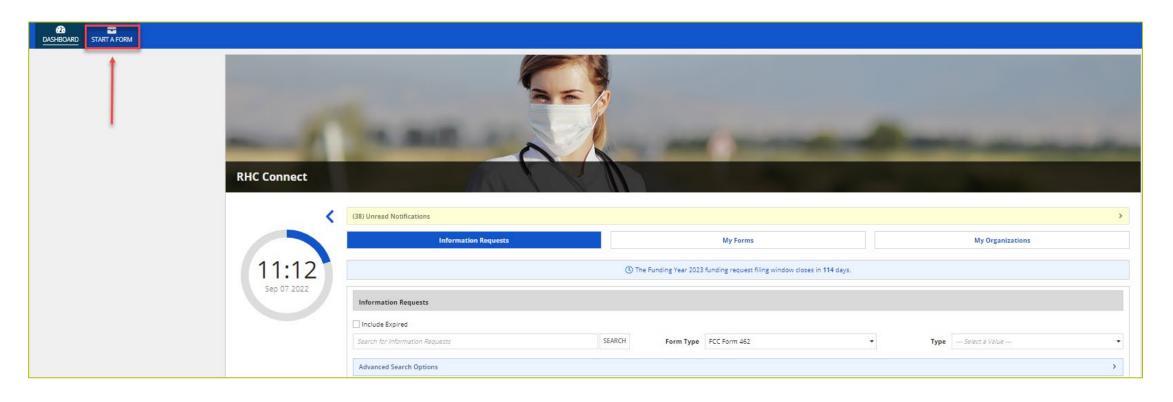
Dashboard

- On the My Forms tab, you can view the status of all forms.
- Click the icons to view, continue with a draft form, discard a form, view a PDF copy or view the email for a processed invoice.



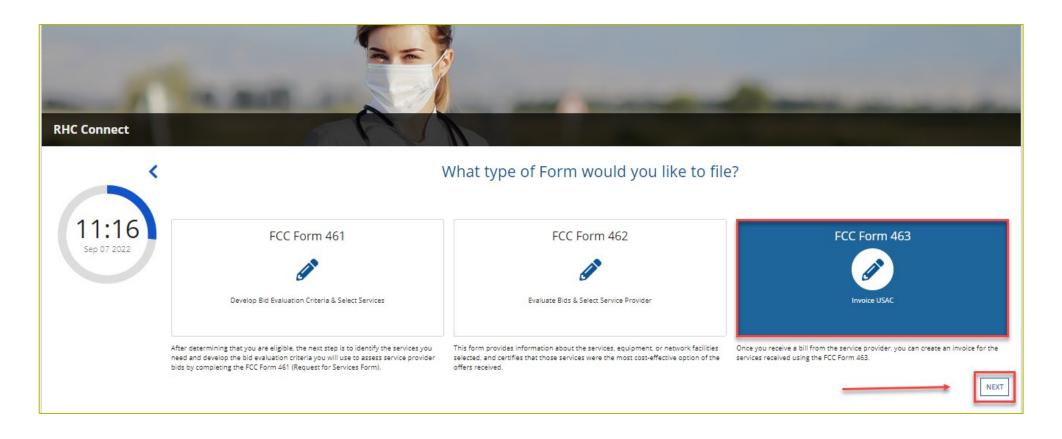
Dashboard (continued)

• Click START A FORM.



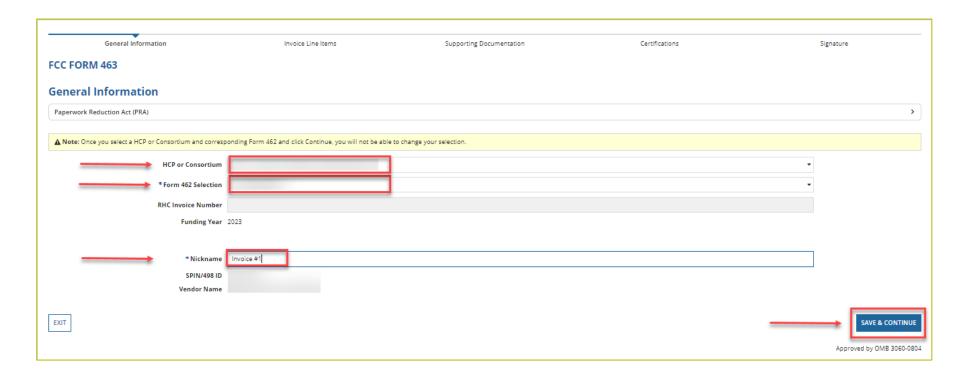
Starting a Form

Click the box titled FCC Form 463 and then click Next.



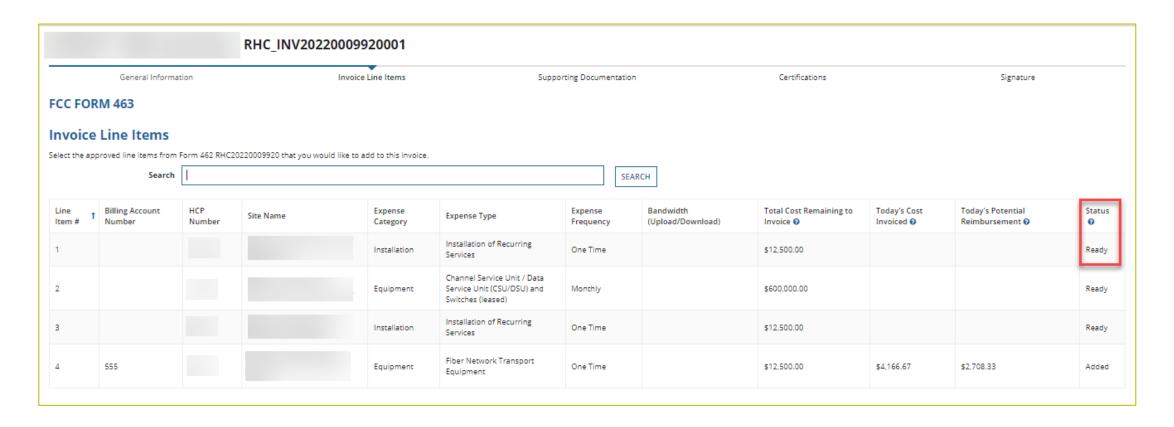
General Information

- Select the HCP or consortium from the dropdown menu and then select the FRN.
- Enter a **Nickname** for the FCC Form 463.
- Click Save & Continue.



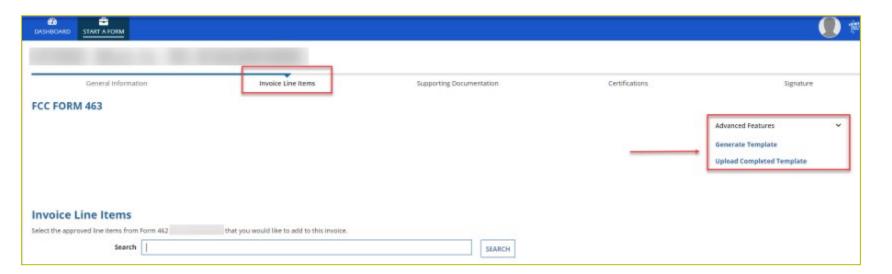
Invoice Line Items

• Click the **Ready** hyperlink under the **Status** column for the first line item.



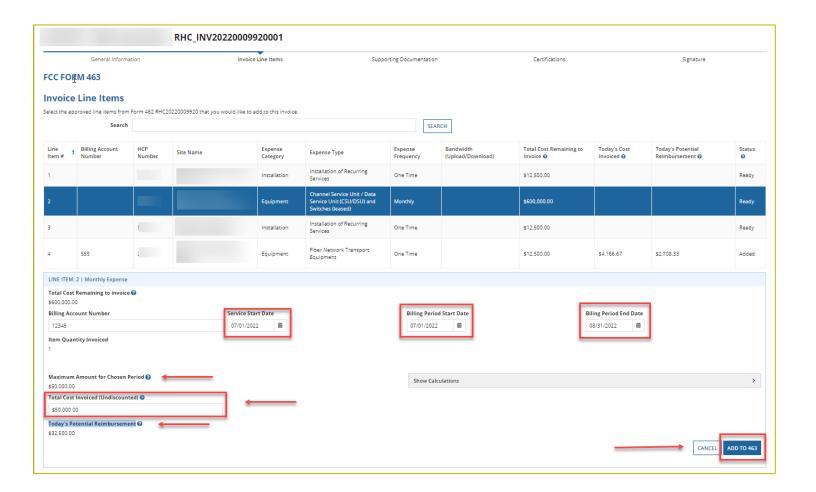
Invoice Line Items (continued)

- To use an Excel template to enter the information, navigate to the Invoice Line Items tab.
- Under Advanced Features, on the right side of the screen, click Generate Template.
- Open Excel spreadsheet and save it on your computer.
- Enter all information and click Upload Completed Template.



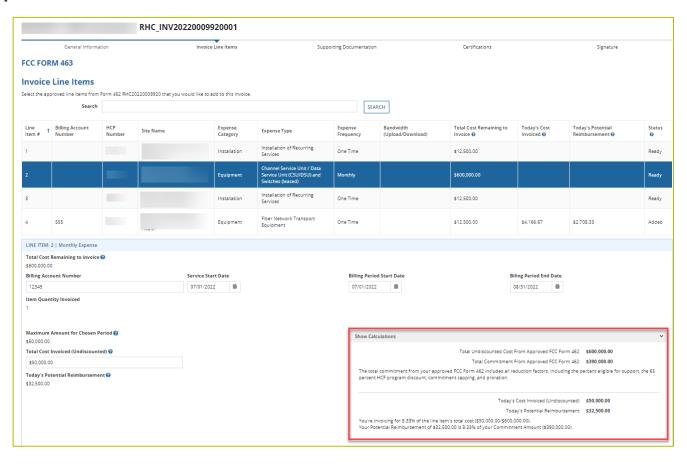
Invoice Line Items (continued)

- If this is the first FCC Form 463 submission, enter the Service
 Start Date using the drop-down calendar.
- Enter the Billing Period Start
 Date and the Billing Period End
 Date.
- Enter Total Cost Invoiced (Undiscounted) and click Add to 463.



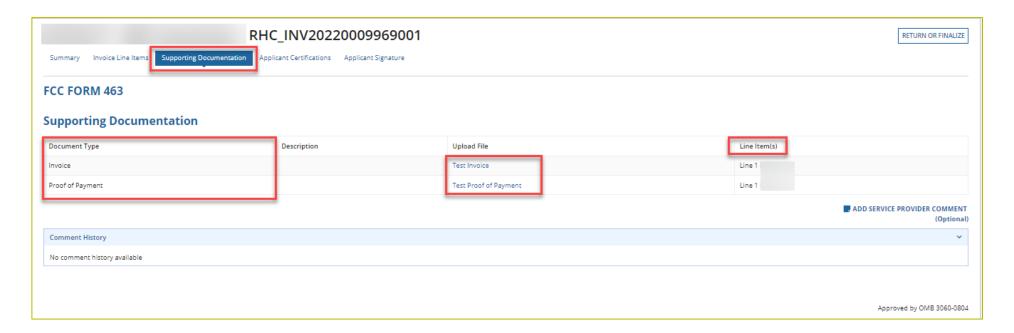
Invoice Line Items (continued)

- Click Show Calculations to show the calculation based on entered information.
- Follow prior steps to add each line item to the FCC Form 463.



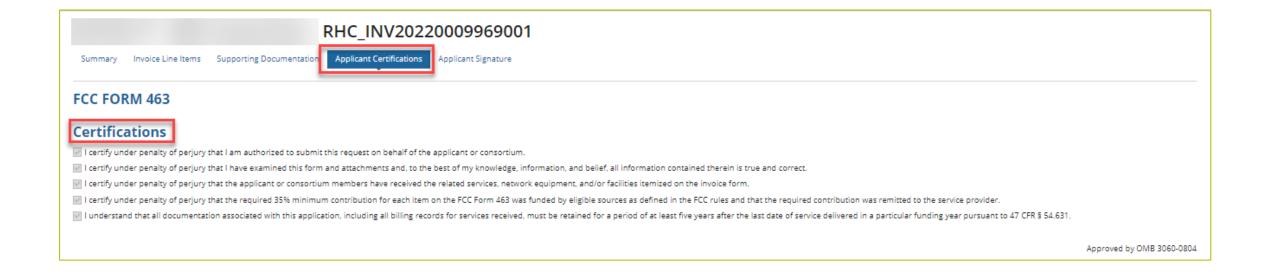
Supporting Documentation

- Use the **Upload** button to upload supporting documentation including, at minimum, a vendor invoice and a proof of payment document.
- Click Add Documents and use the upload button for each document.
- Select the associated line item (s) from the drop-down menu.
- Click Save & Continue.



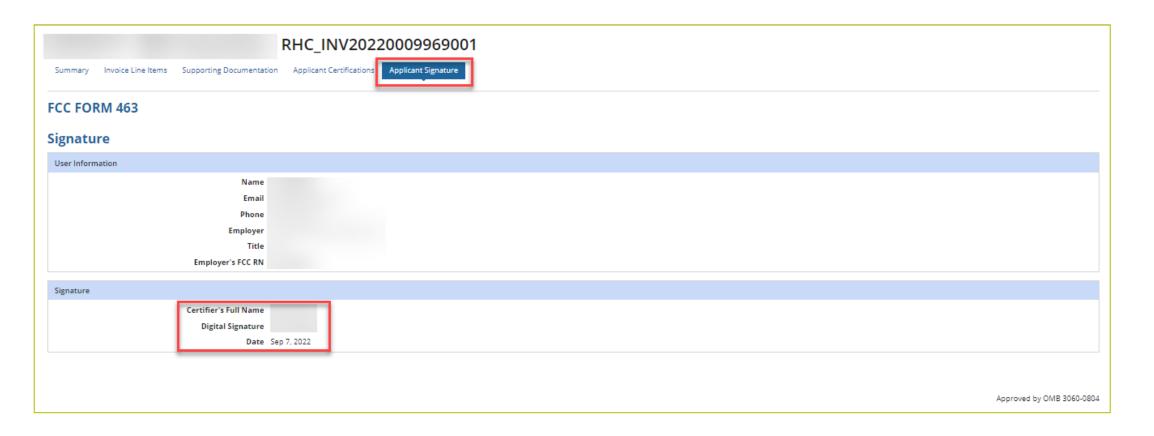
Certifications

- Read and click all certifications.
- You will be unable to move forward until all certifications are clicked.
- Click Save & Continue.



Signature

• Type your full name into the **Digital Signature** field and then click **Certify & Submit.**



Best Practices for Creating the FCC Form 463

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

Commonly Asked Questions

- The total amount of funds invoiced is less than what is listed on the FCL. I divided the total amount by 12 months, which is one year of funding. How do I invoice for the full amount?
 - USAC calculates the monthly recurring rate based on full months as they vary in the numbers of days, as opposed to the 365/366 days in a year.
 - For instance, January has 31 days and April has 30 days.
 - If you invoice for all committed funding dates consecutively, then you will receive the full committed funding amount as listed on your FCL.

USAC Monthly Recurring Cost Calculation Example

- Entered billing dates of (September 24, 2023 October 23, 2023)
 - Individual day calculations are different for September and October
- Line item 1 = \$100.00 monthly
- September (30 days): 100 / 30 = \$3.33 per day
 - \$3.33 x 7 days (September 24 30) = \$23.31
- October (31 days): 100 / 31 = \$3.23 per day
 - \$3.23 x 23 days (October 1 23) = \$74.29
- Total amount for billing period = \$97.60 not \$100.00

Commonly Asked Questions (continued)

- Why is the service start date greyed out?
 - When you file the first FCC Form 463 for an FRN, you are prompted you to enter a
 date into the service start date field.
 - Once USAC approves an FCC Form 463 with a service start date, neither USAC nor the account holder can modify that date at a later time.

Commonly Asked Questions (continued)

- Why is USAC requesting supporting documentation for my FCC Form 463?
 - Per <u>FCC Report and Order 19-78</u>, USAC must ensure that an invoice accurately reflects the services an HCP is receiving and the support due to the service provider.
 - RHC is requesting supporting documentation to verify the services that were submitted on the FCC Form 463 and confirm eligibility for payment for the requested billing period.
 - This validation ensures that HCPs receive accurate funding for approved services and eliminates the risk of fraud, waste, and abuse of program funds.

Supporting Documentation - Best Practices

When responding to Information Requests, please submit the following documentation:

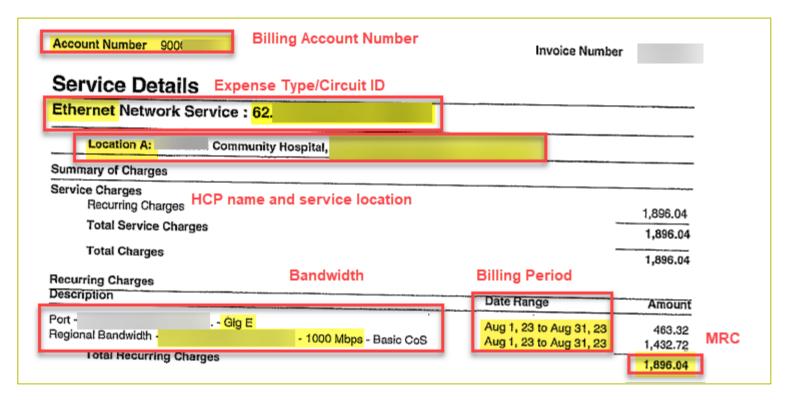
- Copies of billing documentation for the referenced billing period with the following information highlighted:
 - HCP Name
 - Circuit Location(s)
 - Billing Account Number (BAN)
 - Bandwidth
 - Circuit ID
 - Service Type
 - Monthly Recurring Charges (MRC)

Supporting Documentation – Best Practices (continued)

- Proof of payment for the requested billing period, e.g., check, bank statement, or a printout from the accounts payable system. Proof of payment must show 35% of the MRC has been paid.
 - In the absence of payment or if no payment was made as a result of **credits** on an account, please provide an explanation of what action resulted from the credits.
- If these details can't be identified on an invoice or proof of payment document, please provide the contract or service agreement.
- Supporting documents must be submitted by the deadline on the Information Request.
- Requests for deadline extensions must be submitted prior to the original deadline.

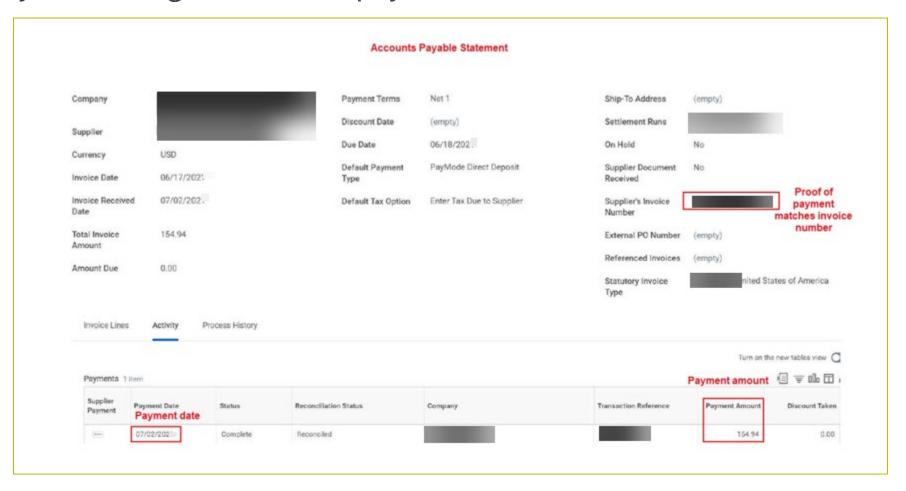
Supporting Documentation - Examples

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



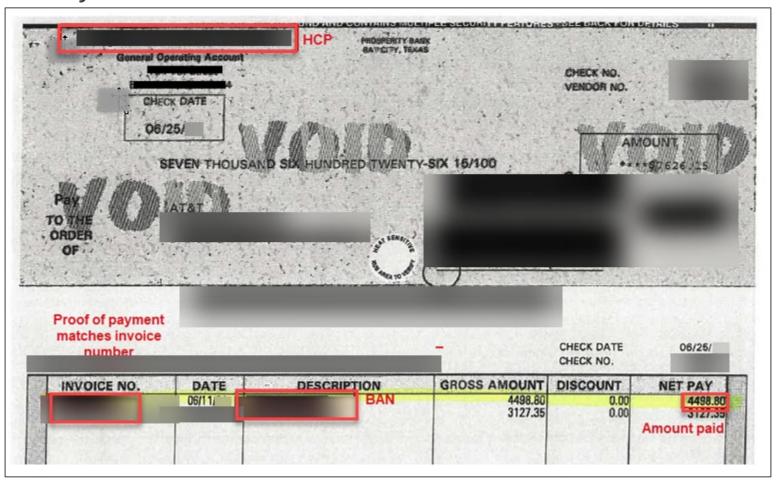
Supporting Documentation – Examples (continued)

Proof of payment using an accounts payable statement.



Supporting Documentation – Examples (continued)

Proof of payment by check.



Supporting Documentation

- If supporting documentation is found to be insufficient or does not confirm approved services, a reviewer will send an Information Request.
- If a discrepancy is discovered, the invoice may be returned for corrections or denied.
 - Discrepancies can occur when the service approved on the FCC Form 462 is not the same service as what is in use and being billed by the service provider.
 - Example: The bandwidth for an expense increased from 25 Mbps to 50 Mbps,
 even if there is no change to the monthly recurring charge.
- Any pending issues about services must be resolved prior to submitting an invoice to USAC.
 - If an HCP is in dispute with its service provider, an invoice should not be submitted to USAC until the dispute has been resolved.

Information Request Reminders

- Forms with missing or incomplete information or documentation cannot be processed.
- If USAC requires information that cannot be located on the submitted supporting documentation, you will receive an Information Request.
- All account holders will receive all Information Requests.
- Account holders have 14 calendar days to answer the Information Request.
 - 11:59 p.m. ET on the 14th day would be the last time to respond to the Information Request.
- Forms are denied if Information Requests are not answered within 14 calendar days.

Questions?

Filing the FCC Form 463 – HCF Service Providers

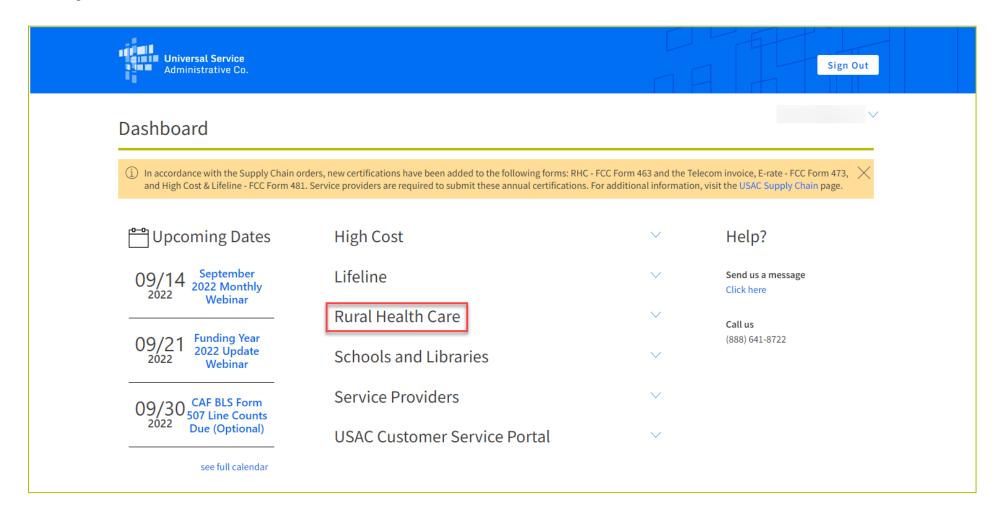
FY2023 RHC Program Invoicing Best Practices

Service Provider Review

- An email notification will be sent stating that there's an invoice available for review.
- Log in to RHC Connect.
- Carefully review form for accuracy.
 - Confirm billing period and invoiced amount.
 - If inaccurate, return invoice to HCP.
- Certify and sign the FCC Form 463.

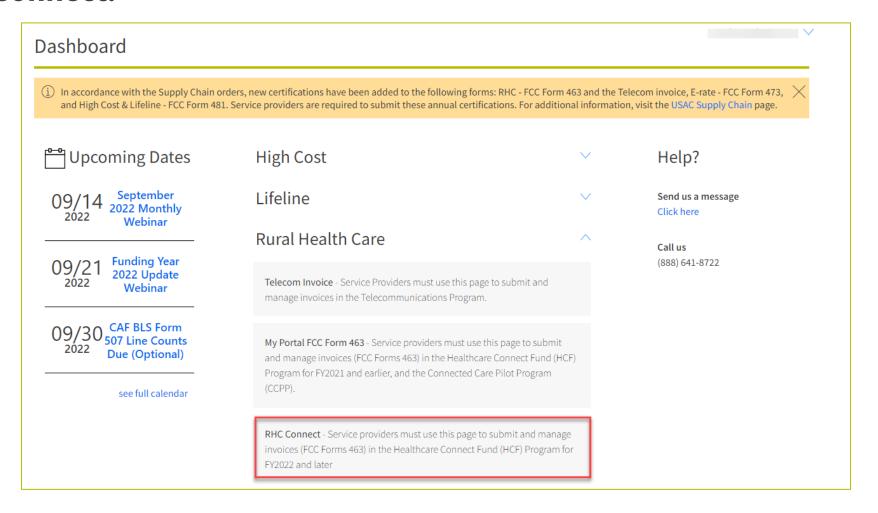
My Portal Landing Page

Log in to My Portal and click Rural Health Care.



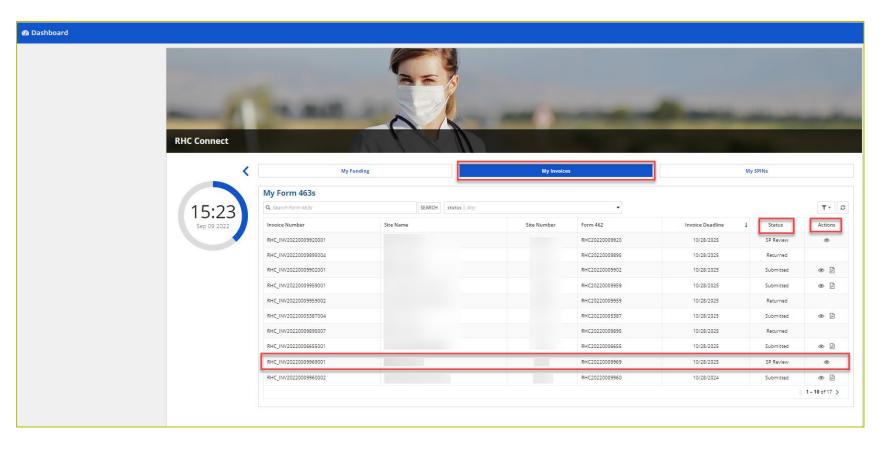
My Portal Landing Page (continued)

Click RHC Connect.



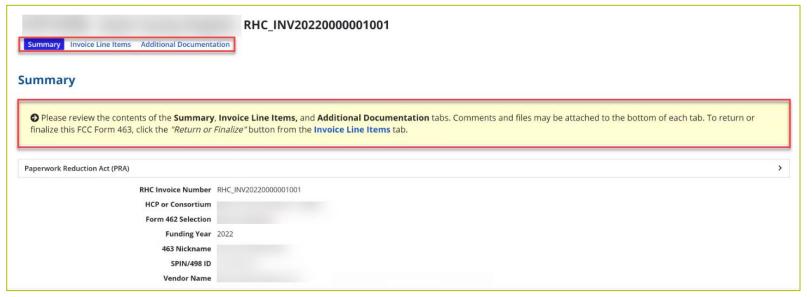
Dashboard

- Click the My Invoices tab and locate invoice.
- Under **Actions** column, click on **view** icon.



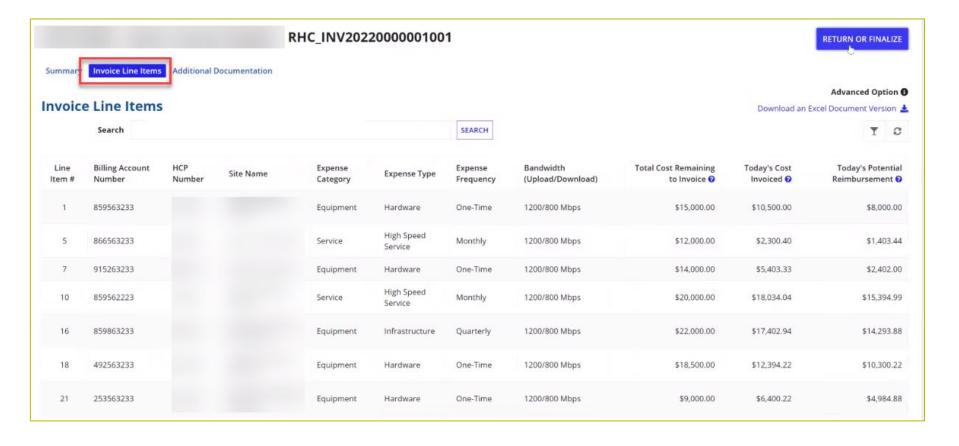
Summary Section – General Information

- Review information in the Summary section.
- Navigate to each section by clicking the hyperlinks at the top of the page.
- Please note the instructions in the yellow box.
- Click Add service provider comment at the bottom of each tab if you want to add a comment or upload a document.



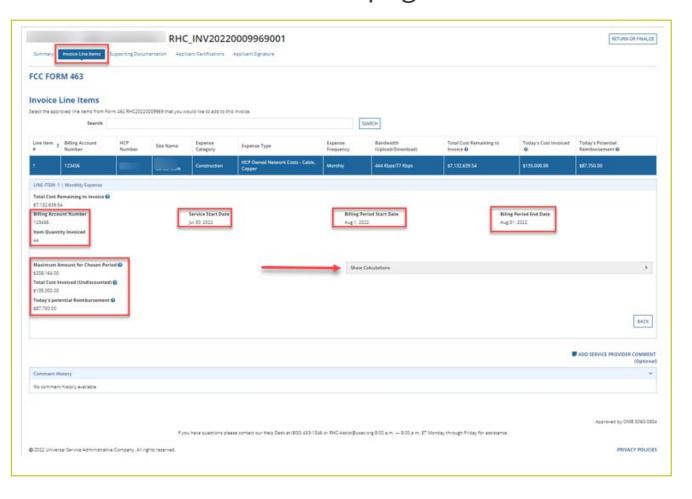
Invoice Line Items

- All expense items are displayed in the Invoice Line Items section.
- An overview of each line item is displayed on this page.
- Click on each line item to review all of the data entered by the applicant.

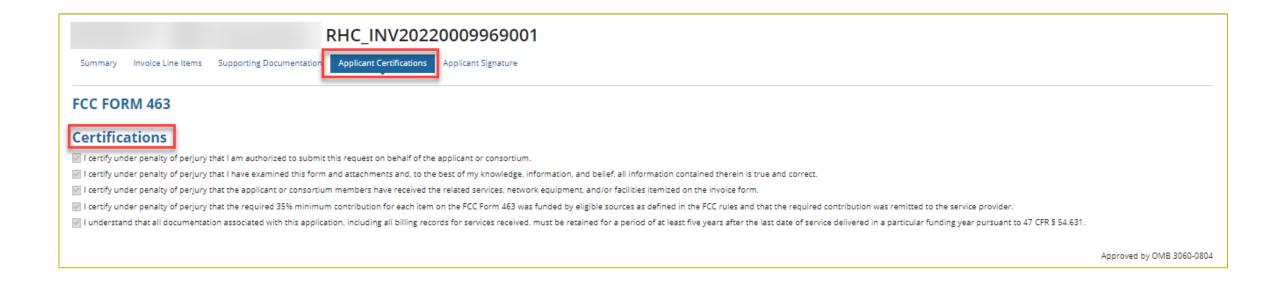


Invoice Line Items (continued)

Review all of the information entered on this page.



Applicant Certifications

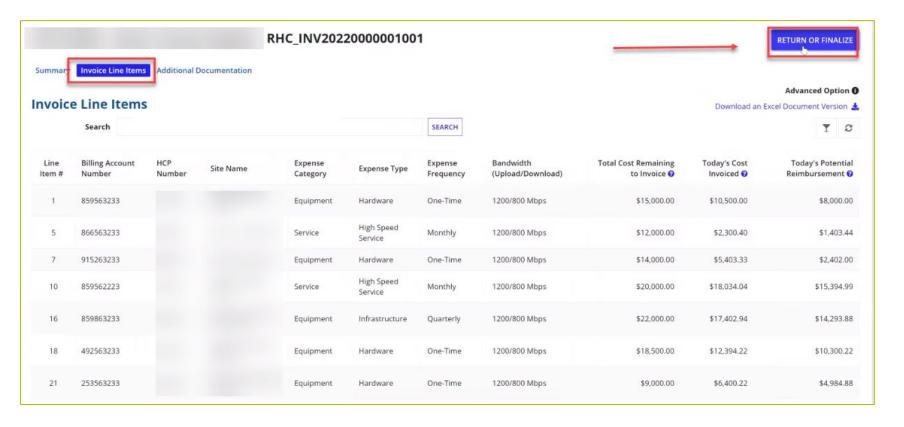


Applicant Signature



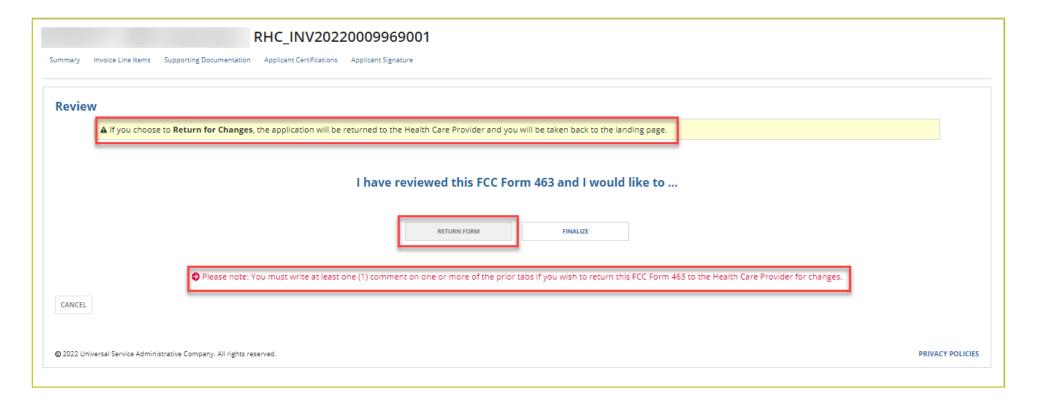
Finalizing the FCC Form 463

- Navigate back to the Invoice Line Items page.
- Click the Return or Finalize button.



Return to HCP

- If there is incorrect information entered in the FCC Form 463, return the form to the HCP.
- You must leave comments for the HCP, directing them to the incorrect information.
- The Return Form button will not be activated until at least one comment is entered.



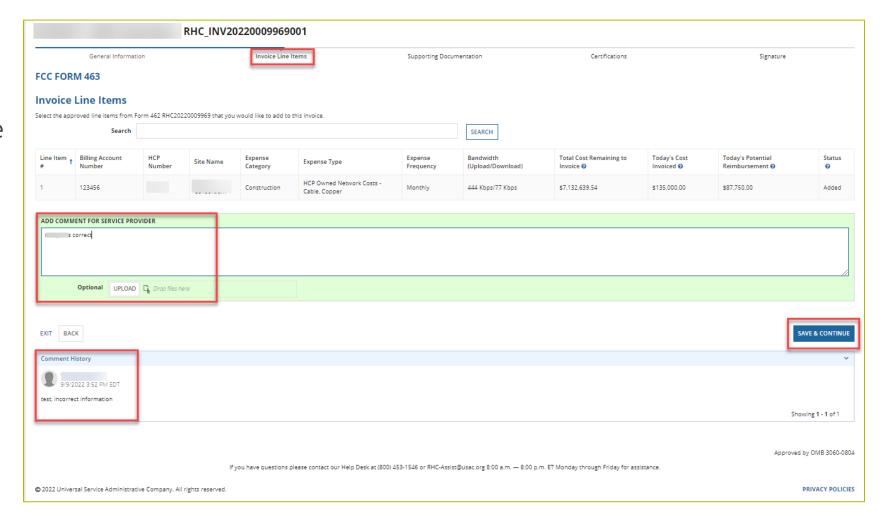
Return to HCP (continued)

• This message is displayed once the invoice is returned to the HCP.



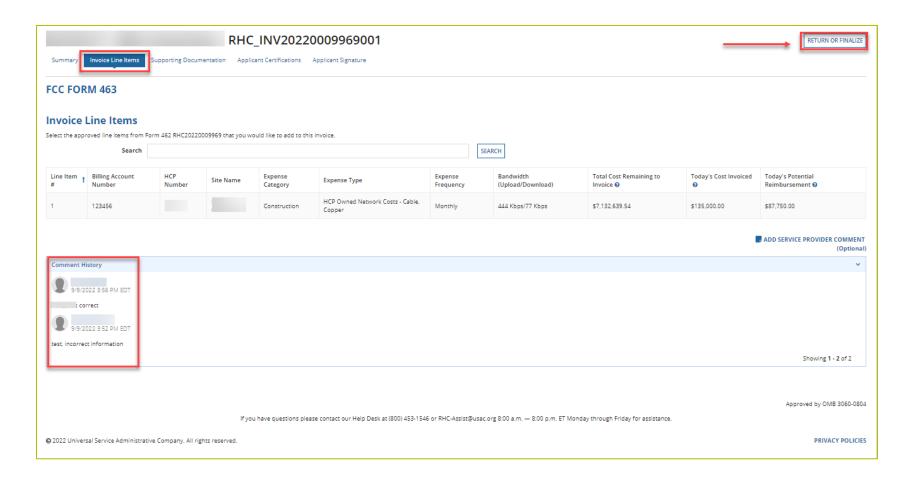
Return to HCP (continued)

- When the HCP account holder logs back into RHC Connect, the service provider's comments will be displayed.
- The HCP can leave comments or make corrections.
- HCPs will be required to recertify the FCC Form 463 before submitting it.
- Once the HCP submits the Form 463, the service provider will be notified.



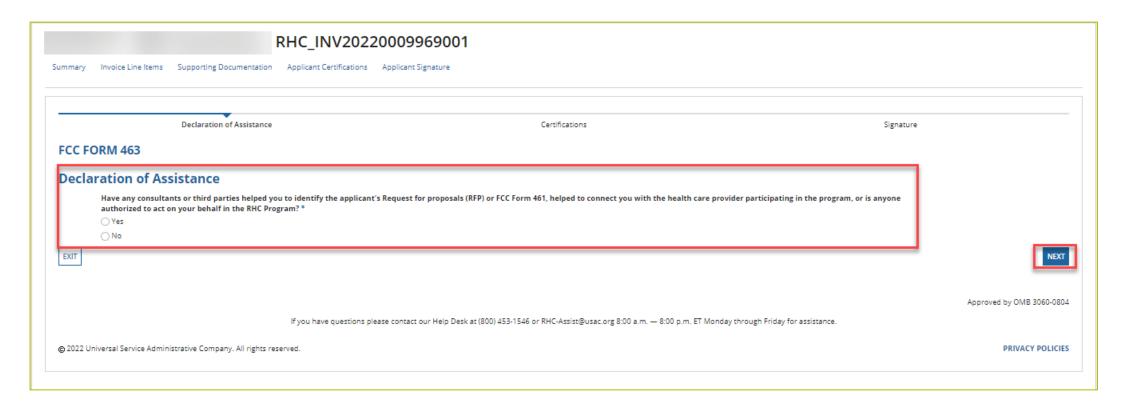
Finalize Service Provider Review

- Log into RHC Connect to review the corrections.
- All comments are recorded and are displayed under the Comment History section.
- Click Return or Finalize.

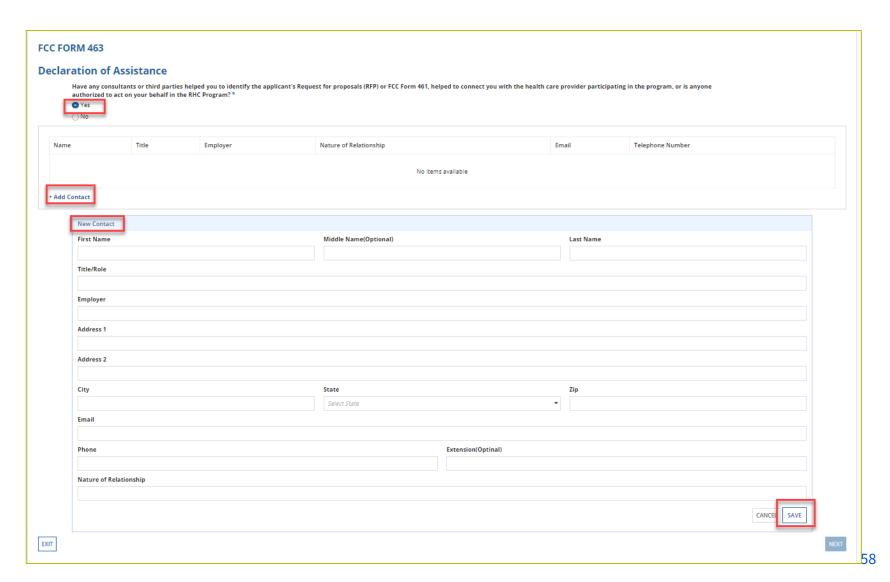


Declaration of Assistance

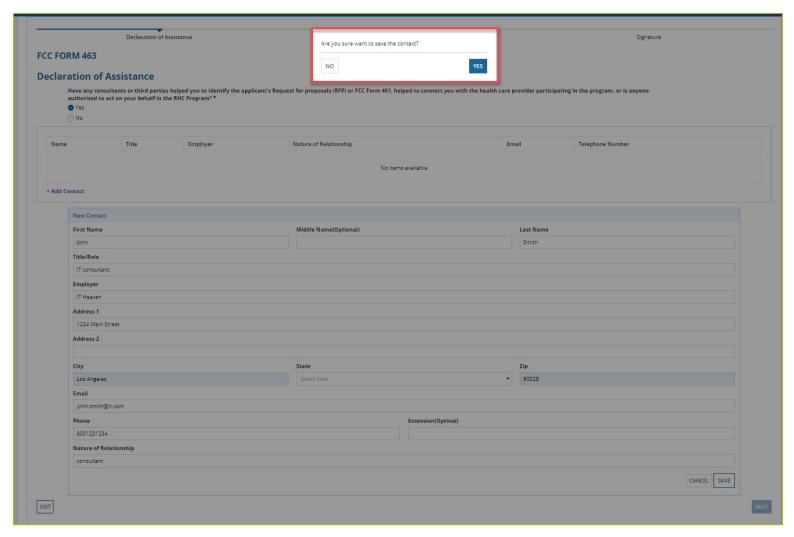
- Click the correct radio button to indicate whether any third parties were involved during the competitive bidding process.
- Then click Next.



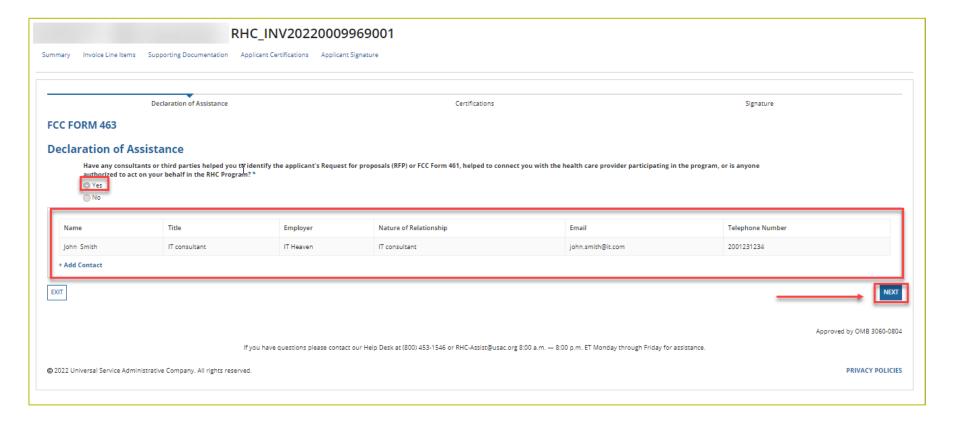
- If Yes, click the Add
 Contact hyperlink and
 enter information about
 the third-party assistance.
- Once all fields are complete, click Save to continue.



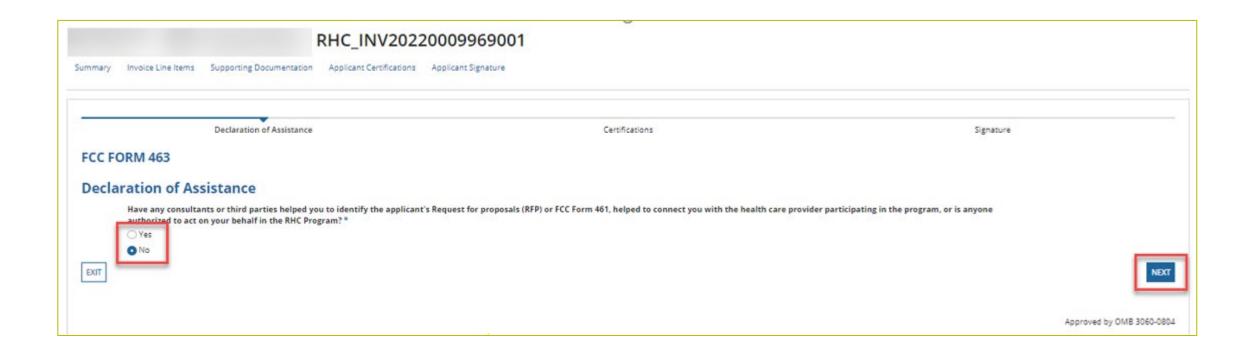
- A pop-up window will appear asking if you are sure you want to save the contact information.
- Click **Yes** to save the information.



- Once the information is saved, it will be displayed on the screen.
- Click Next to continue.



• If you click **No**, click **Next** to continue.



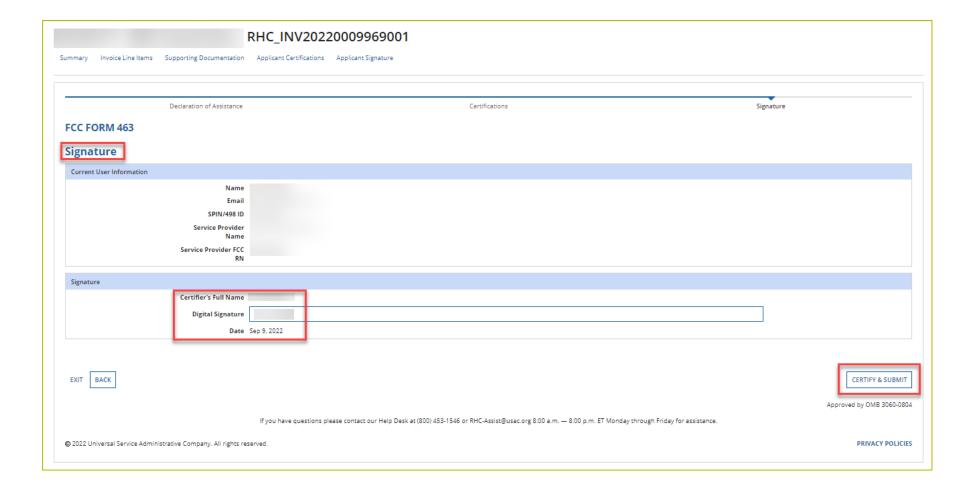
Certifications

- Read and click all certifications.
- Forms cannot advance until all certifications are clicked.
- Click Save & Continue.



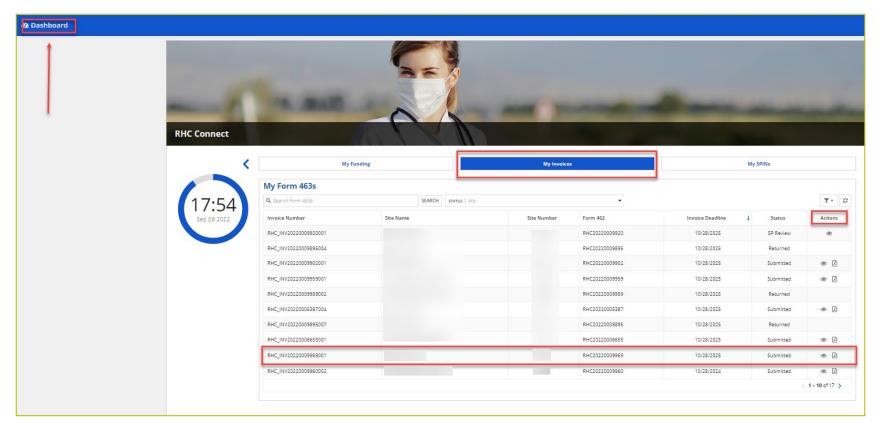
Signature

- Your signature is your full name as it appears in RHC Connect.
- Click Certify & Submit.



After Submitting

- Navigate back to the Dashboard and the invoice will appear as Submitted under the Status column.
- Under the Actions column, you can view the submitted FCC Form 463 or download a PDF copy of the form.



What to Expect After Submitting to USAC

- An invoice is not considered submitted until approved by the service provider and received by USAC.
- With no Information Requests, the review generally takes less than 10 days.
- If an Information Request is sent, it will come from rhcadmin@usac.org.
 - Respond to the Information Request in RHC Connect.
 - Email notifications sent from RHC Connect are from an unattended mailbox.
 - Use the <u>Information Request tip sheet</u> on the USAC website as a resource.
- Approval will be held until response is received and reviewed.
- Email notification of invoice approval will be sent from rhcadmin@usac.org to all account holders.

Post-Commitment Changes in RHC Connect

- The following operations are now available in RHC Connect for FY2022 and forward for the HCF Program:
 - SPIN changes, both correctional and operational
 - Site and service substitutions
 - Invoice filing deadline extension
 - Service delivery deadline extension for non-recurring costs in HCF
- These post-commitment operations are available in My Portal for funding commitments for FY2021 and prior funding years for HCF, Telecom and CCPP FRNs.
- <u>Post-Commitment Actions</u> webpage

Questions?

Invoicing Process - Telecom Program

Invoicing Best Practices – HCF and Telecom Programs

Submitting the FCC Form 467 – Telecom Program

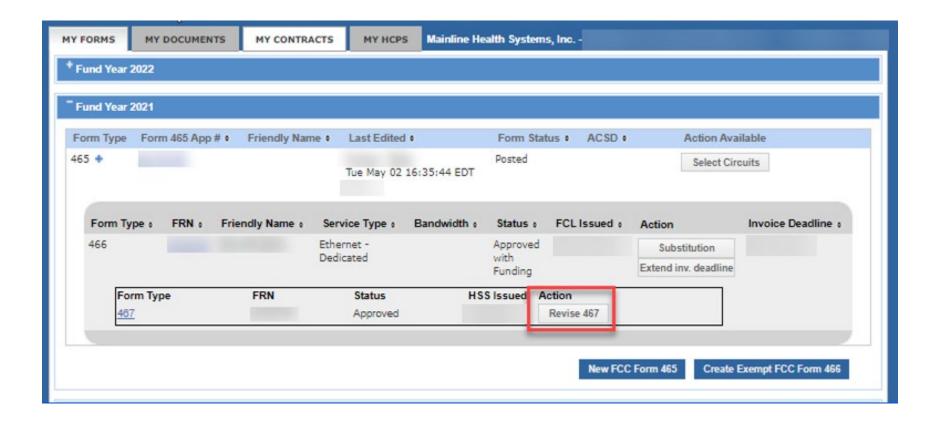
- When the FCC Form 466 is approved, USAC issues a Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) and sends a link to the FCC Form 467 (Connection Certification).
- USAC emails a copy of the FCL to all account holders and the service provider. The FCL includes the estimated support amount based on the duration of the expected service.
- Review the FCL to ensure the Billing Account Number (BAN) is correct, confirm the actual start and actual
 end dates of service, and confirm that all other information is accurate.
- If the FCL is correct and the selected services have begun, submit the FCC Form 467.
 - The FCC Form 467 informs USAC that services have started.
 - An FCC Form 467 must be submitted for each approved FCC Form 466.
- Funds will not be disbursed until USAC has received and approved the FCC Form 467 and the Telecom invoice has been submitted and approved.

HCP Support Schedule (HSS)

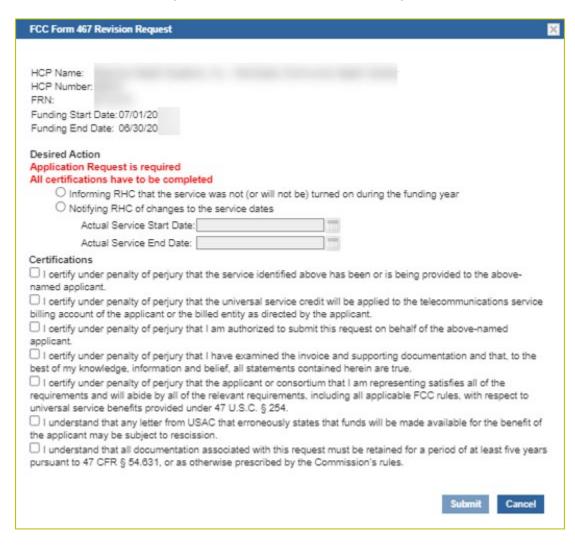
- Once the FCC Form 467 is submitted, USAC will send all account holders and the service provider an HCP Support Schedule (HSS).
 - Once the HSS is received, the service provider can begin the invoicing process.
- There is no form name or number for the Telecom Program invoice.
- Review the HSS to ensure all the information is correct.
- If you have any questions about the information on the HSS, email RHC-Assist@usac.org with the FRN number in the subject line.
- If services were delayed or not turned on, it is the responsibility of the account holder to submit an FCC Form 467 revision in My Portal.
- After reviewing the HSS for accuracy, the service provider will credit the HCPs account.
- The service provider will log in to My Portal and submit an online invoice.

Note: For FY2024, the FCC Form 467 and the HSS will be eliminated. The FCC Form 469 will be used to invoice for the Telecom Program.

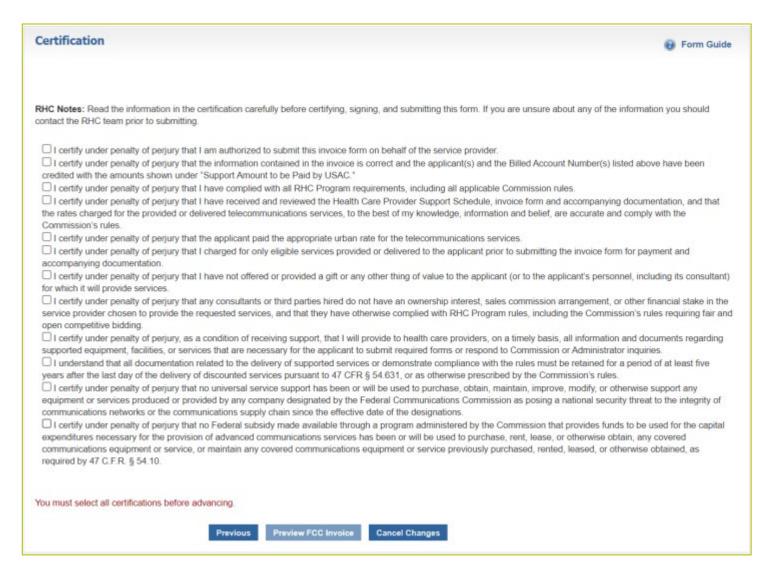
FCC Form 467 Revision



FCC Form 467 Revision(continued)



Telecom Invoice Certifications - Service Provider



Supporting Documentation - Best Practices

When responding to Information Requests, please submit the following documentation:

- Copies of billing documentation for the referenced billing period with the following information highlighted:
 - HCP Name
 - Circuit Location(s)
 - Billing Account Number (BAN)
 - Bandwidth
 - Circuit ID
 - Service Type
 - Monthly Recurring Charges (MRC)

Supporting Documentation - Best Practices (continued)

- Proof of payment for the requested billing period, e.g., check, bank statement, or a
 printout from the accounts payable system.
 - In the absence of payment or if no payment was made as a result of credits on an account, please provide an explanation of what action resulted from the credits.
- If these details can't be identified on an invoice or proof of payment document, please provide the contract or service agreement.
- Supporting documents must be submitted by the deadline on the Information Request.
- Requests for deadline extensions must be submitted prior to the original deadline.

Telecom Program Invoicing

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

Disbursement Process

FY2023 RHC Program Invoicing
Best Practices

Disbursement Process

- All account holders and service provider will receive email notification from <u>rhcadmin@usac.org</u> once the FCC Form 463 or Telecom invoice is approved.
- Funds are disbursed to the service provider on the sixth and 21st of each month, barring weekends and holidays.
 - For clerical errors, please notify USAC before the disbursement date.
- Record-keeping
 - HCPs and service providers are required to maintain records of billing and invoices for at least five years.

Red Light Status and Voluntary Netting

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

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

See Instruction Section III.O

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

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

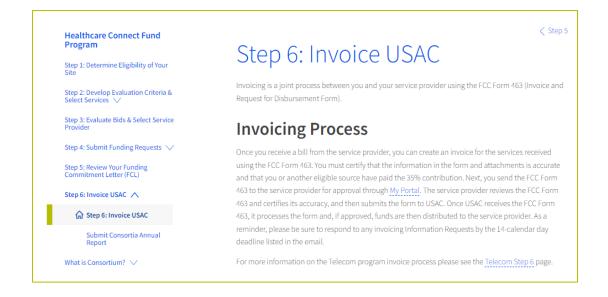
Resources

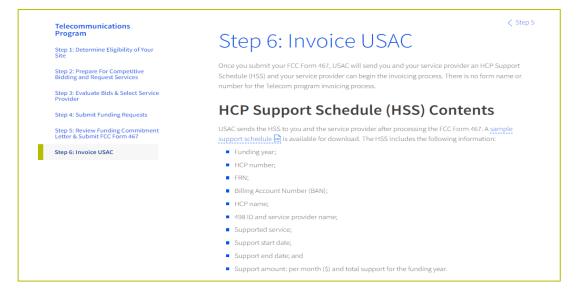
FY2023 RHC Program Invoicing Best Practices

Invoicing Webpages

HCF Program - <u>Step 6: Invoice USAC</u>.

Telecom Program - <u>Step 6: Invoice USAC</u>.





RHC Program Customer Service Center



Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org

- Include in your email
 - HCP Number
 - FRN Number

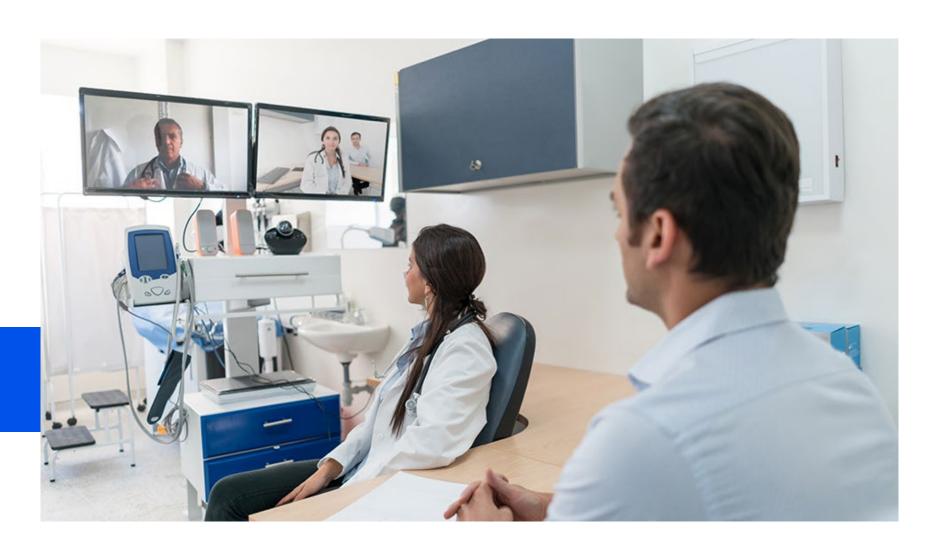


- Phone: **(800) 453-1546**
 - Hours are 8 a.m. 8 p.m. ET
 - Monday- Friday

RHC Customer Service Center

The RHC Customer Service Center CAN	The RHC Customer Service Center CANNOT
Answer general questions regarding both programs	Determine eligibility of a specific site or service before an official form submission
Provide account holder information for an HCP	Review a form or document for accuracy before an official submission
Provide clarity regarding FCC Report and Order 19-78 and other FCC Orders	Contact a service provider or other account holder on someone else's behalf
Provide helpful resources and best practices for forms	Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal
Assist with My Portal and RHC Connect	Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

Questions?



Thank You!

