



Funding Year 2021 Kickoff

Rural Health Care (RHC) Program



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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 from GoToWebinar
- All participants are muted by USAC presenters
- Submit questions at any time using the “Questions” box
- Slides attached to GoToWebinar Panel and posted to [RHC Learn](#)

Today's Presenters



Annabeth Wonch

*Senior Program Manager,
RHC Outreach*



Jennifer Contreras

Manager, RHC Outreach

Agenda

1. Program Update
2. FY2021 Overview
3. New for FY2021
 - Tools
4. Next Steps for Applicants
5. Best Practices
 - Managing Account Holders
 - ◇ Consultant Registration
 - Authorizations
 - Resources

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

- Identify important FY2021 Filing Window dates and deadlines
- Understand what you need to do to get ready for FY2021
- Learn where to find new tools and resources on the RHC website
- Mark your calendar with upcoming RHC Program training dates and bookmark website resources

Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
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
FRN	Funding Request Number
LOA	Letter of Agency (HCF Program Only)
TPA	Third Party Authorization

RHC Program Update

FY2021 Kickoff



Program Update

- FY2020 filing window period closed on June 30, 2020
 - No further funding requests (FCC Forms 462 and 466) will be accepted
- FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program
 - On [July 8, 2020](#) the FCC approved the final set of COVID-19 Telehealth Program funding applications and no further applications would be accepted or approved.
- Connected Care Pilot Program – [FCC Order 20-44](#)
 - Will provide up to \$100 million of support over a three-year period from the Universal Service Fund (USF) to help defray health care providers' costs of providing connected care services and/or equipment and to help assess how the USF can be used in the long-term to support telehealth.
 - More information coming soon!

Information Request Deadline Extension

- On March 26, 2020 the FCC released [Order DA 20-345](#), to help health care providers (HCPs) effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **The FCC extended the 14-day deadline** for applicants to respond to Information Requests from USAC issued on or before September 30, 2020.
- Account holders have an additional 28 days, allowing a response time of 42 days.
- This includes Information Requests related to:
 - Funding requests, appeals and waivers, invoices, audits, and other documentation submitted by the applicant.
 - Read a [summary](#) of the relief brought on by the Order.

Funding Year 2021 Overview

FY2021 Kickoff



RHC Program: Funding Year & Filing Window Periods

- **Funding Year**

- From July 1 to June 30 of the subsequent calendar year
- FY2021 = July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

- **Filing Window**

- A fixed period during which all qualifying funding requests (FCC Forms 462 and 466) that are received during a filing window period are treated as having been filed simultaneously for purposes of making funding commitment decisions.
- **FY2021 Filing Window Period will be January 4, 2021 – April 1, 2021**

Funding Year 2021 Calendar

Rural Health Care Program: **Funding Year 2021**

FY2021: JULY 1, 2021-JUNE 30, 2022



JULY 1, 2020: First Day to Submit Request for Services Forms **NEW!**

- **FCC Form 461** HCF Program
- **FCC Form 465** Telecom Program
- Request for services must be posted to USAC by March 2, 2021



JAN 4, 2021 - APR 1, 2021: Funding Request Filing Window Period

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

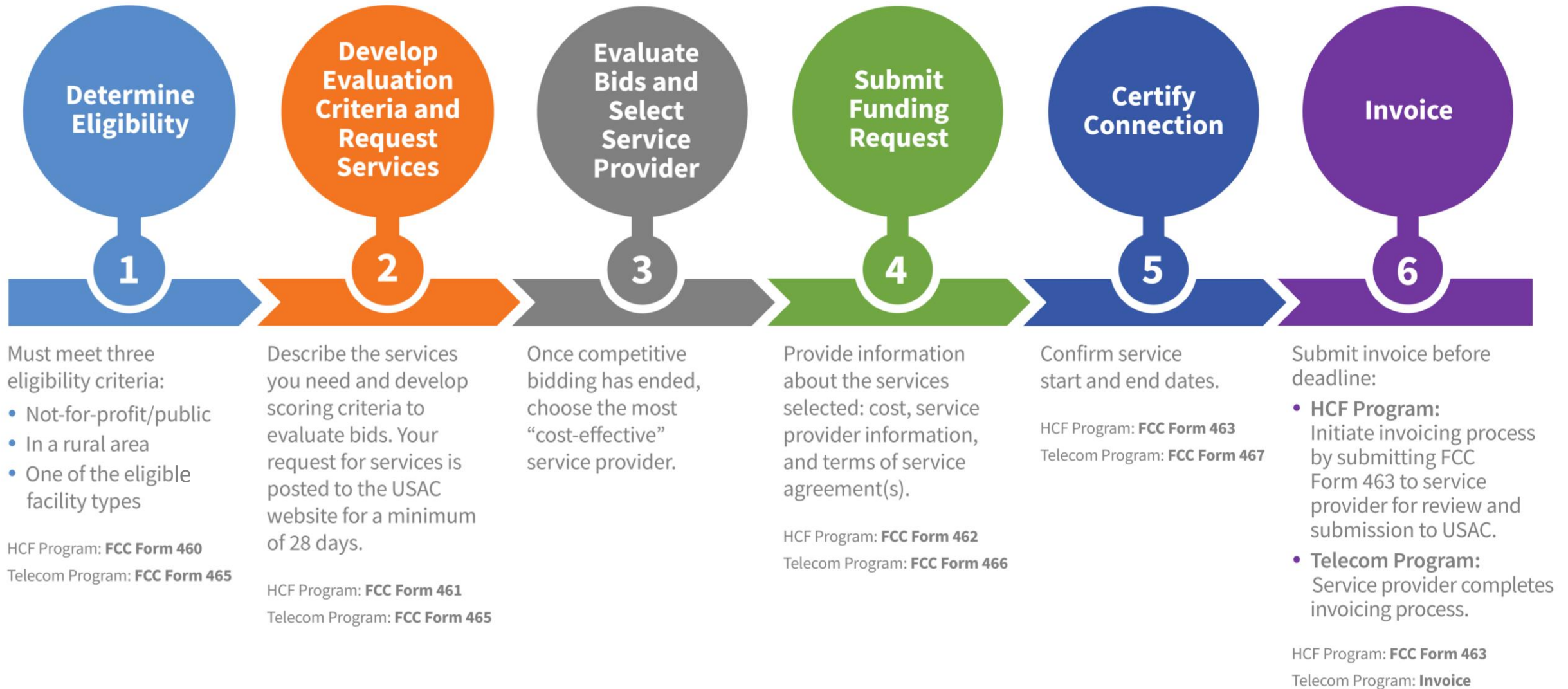


OCT 28, 2022: Invoicing Deadline

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

RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

Application Process



Upcoming Trainings

- Request for Services Webinars: Get ready for the start of the FY2021 filing window period by joining our Request for Services Best Practices webinar.
- We will focus on the FCC Forms 461 and 465 process and competitive bidding. Participants will be able to ask questions.
 - HCF Program – July 22, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET - [Register here](#)
 - Telecom Program – July 29, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET - [Register here](#)

New Resources

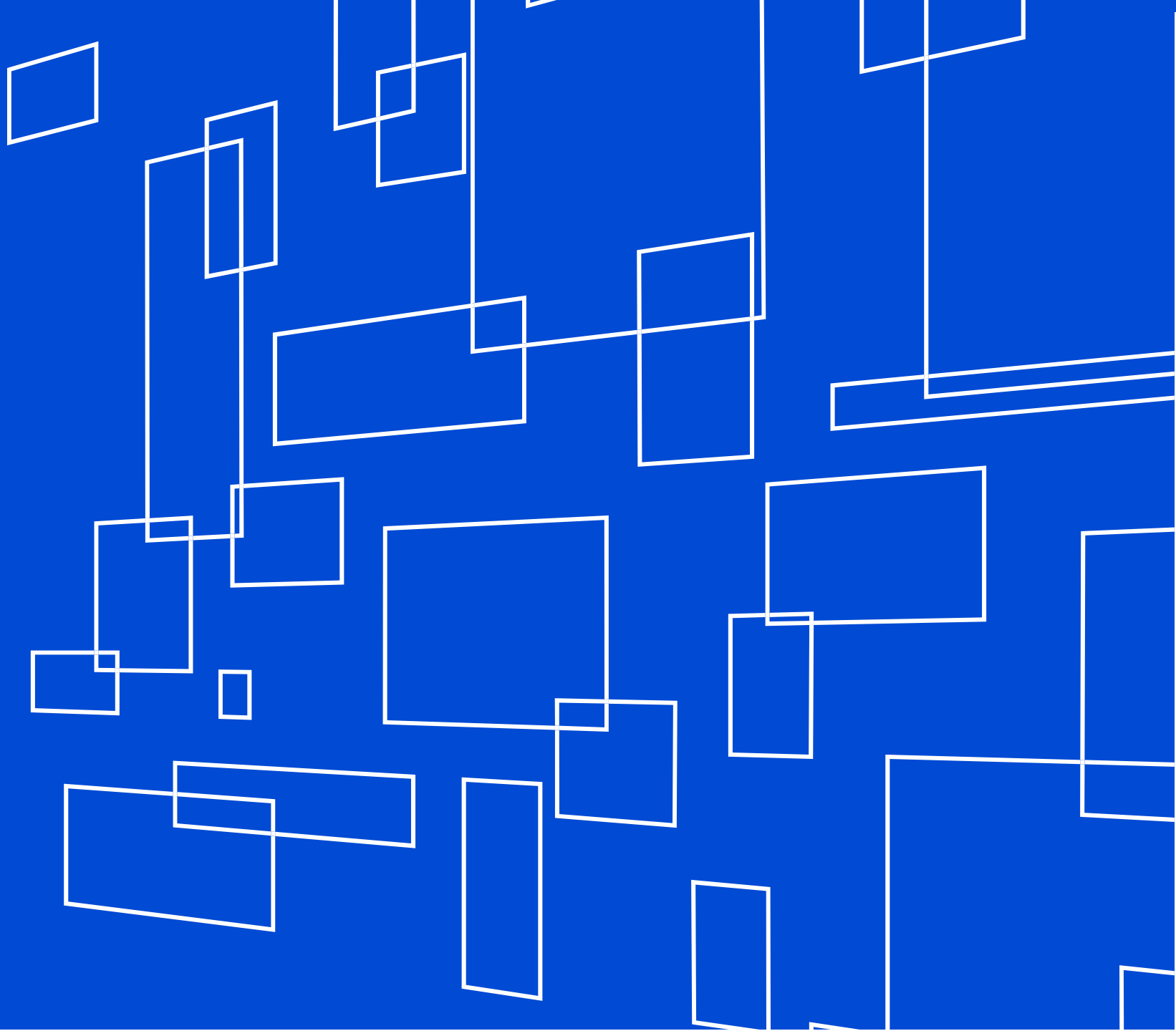
- New learning modules
 - RHC 101
 - HCF Program Eligibility Module
- [How to Find an Existing HCP in My Portal](#) video

New RHC Program Learning Modules Available Now!

- Take the courses
 - RHC 101
 - HCF Program Eligibility



Questions?



New for FY2021

FY2021 Kickoff



Tools for FY2021 Public Website

[About](#)
[E-rate](#)
[Rural Health Care](#)
[Lifeline](#)
[High Cost](#)
[Service Providers](#)

[USAC](#) | [Rural Health Care](#) | [Resources](#) | [Tools](#)

[Resources](#)
[My Portal](#)
[Forms](#)
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[Tools](#)
[FCC Resources](#)
[Rates Database](#)
[Rurality Tier Search Tool](#)
[Search Posted Services](#)

[Sample Documents](#)
[Announcements](#)
[Appeals & Audits](#)

Tools

Use the tools on this page to determine if you are in a rural area, locate current requests for services, view funding commitment information, and more!

- [New Tools for FY2021](#)
- [Open Data](#)
- [Health Care Provider Search Tools](#)
- [Additional Search Tools](#)

New Tools for FY2021

Rurality Tier Search Tool

Enter your site's address to determine the rurality tier and if you are in a Medically Underserved Area/Population. In the case where demand exceeds available funding, USAC will prioritize funding based on the following rurality tiers and those areas in a Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P).

Rates Database (Telecom Program Only)

Use this tool to identify the urban and rural rate for your site and service when completing your FCC Form 466 (Funding Request Form).

What rates will you use?

- Rural rates: HCPs must use the lower of the rural rate available in USAC's database or the rate included in the service agreement that the HCP enters into with the service provider when requesting funding.
- Urban rates: HCPs must use the urban rate available in USAC's database.



Open Data

Rurality Tier Tool

- The RHC Program will made available the HCP rurality tier for each HCP site location.
- The rurality tier is used to calculate the “rural rate” for determining the amount of support for eligible telecommunications services to the site location for the RHC Telecom Program.
- It is also a factor in the prioritization of funding in the event eligible funding requests exceed the amount of available funding for a particular funding year.
- The rural definition has not changed, HCPs currently approved as “rural” will retain their rural status.
- [Available Now!](#)

Public Website

USAC | Rural Health Care | Resources | Tools | **Rurality Tier Search Tool**

Resources
My Portal
Forms
Tools 
 Tools
FCC Resources
Rates Database
Rurality Tier Search Tool
Search Posted Services
Sample Documents
Announcements
Appeals & Audits

Rurality Tier Search Tool

The RHC Program uses the definition of “rural area” under the Commission’s rules*. Each health care provider (HCP) site or location is considered an individual HCP for purposes of calculating support under the RHC Program. Each site must demonstrate that it is an eligible entity, even if participating in a consortium.

Beginning in FY2021, RHC will assign each HCP with a rurality tier based on the following criteria:

- **Extremely Rural:** areas entirely outside of a Core Based Statistical Area;
- **Rural:** areas within a Core Based Statistical Area that do not have an Urban Area with a population of 25,000 or greater;
- **Less Rural:** areas in a Core Based Statistical Area that contains an Urban Area with a population of 25,000 or greater, but are within a specific census tract that itself does not contain any part of a Place or Urban Area with a population of greater than 25,000; and,
- **Frontier** (for HCPs located in Alaska only): areas outside of a Core Based Statistical Area that are inaccessible by road as determined by the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs.


Each HCP will also be categorized based on whether they are in Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P) or not.


In the case where demand exceeds available funding, USAC will prioritize funding based on prioritization tier, which is a combination of rurality tier and MUA/P status. The following table shows the different prioritization tiers and can be found in 47 CFR 54.621 (b):

Health Care Provider (HCP) Site is Located in:	MUA/P	Not in MUA/P
Extremely Rural Tier	Priority 1	Priority 4
Rural Tier	Priority 2	Priority 5
Less Rural Tier	Priority 3	Priority 6
Non-Rural Area	Priority 7	Priority 8

With the Rurality Tier Search Tool you can:

Determine your rurality tier based on your address.

 **Get Started**

 Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Rural Health Care Program Tools

RHC Program Tools

Rurality Tier Search Tool

Rates Database

Rurality Tier Search Tool

Enter your address below and hit Search to display your rurality tier. For more information about rurality tiers and terms used in the search results, please visit [the Rurality Tier Search Tool homepage](#).

Address

Street Address


1234 Apple Street

Apt, Unit, etc (Optional)

City

Idyllwild

State

CA 

ZIP Code

92549

Search

Rates Database Tool

- Beginning for FY2021, USAC will make publicly available the urban and rural rates for each eligible service in each state on its website.
 - Rural Rate: The rural rate will be the median of all available rates identified for the same or functionally similar service offered within the rural tier applicable to the HCP's location within the state. The rural rate is determined using the rurality tier in which an HCP is located.
 - Urban Rate: The urban rate will be the median of all available rates identified by USAC for functionally similar services in all urbanized areas of the state where the HCP is located to the extent that urbanized area falls within the state
- [Available Now!](#)

Public Website

USAC | Rural Health Care | Resources | Tools | Rates Database

Resources
My Portal
Forms
Tools
Tools
FCC Resources
Rates Database
Rurality Tier Search Tool
Search Posted Services
Sample Documents
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Rates Database

In the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program, support is calculated as the difference between the rural rate and the urban rate. For more information on rural and urban rates, and the Telecom Program, please review our general program information here: [Telecommunications Program Page](#).

Beginning for FY2021, the rural and urban rates used to calculate the discount rate will be the median of available rates and calculated by the Rates Database. The median urban and rural rates for each eligible service in each state will be made available using the rates database, as well as all of the underlying data used to calculate those medians. This should be used if you intend to submit the Telecom Funding Request FCC Form(s) 466.

When submitting an FCC Form(s) 466, HCPs will enter the rate they are being charged for services, and the discount rate will be calculated based on whichever is lower – the rate charged or the median rural rate from the Rates Database.

With the Rates Database You Can:

Calculate the median rate for the service(s) you are seeking, based on various criteria:

- Location: The state where your facility is located.
- Rurality Tier: The tier where your facility is located. The options are Frontier, Extremely Rural, Rural, Less Rural, or Non-Rural.
- Bandwidth (MB): The speed of the service you are purchasing. This should be a numeric value in megabytes (MB). For example, if you are purchasing 1 GB service, you should enter 1,000 in this field. If you are purchasing voice services, this field will not be factored into the calculation, so please enter 0.
- Best Efforts/Dedicated Service: (need to add description/definition)
- Category of Service: This is the broad category of the service you are purchasing – either Voice or Data.
- Service Type: This is the specific type of service you are purchasing. This field is tied to the Category of Service, so if you select Data for Category, only data services will be available for the Service Type. This field is optional.

Get Started



RHC Program Tools

[Rurality Tier Search Tool](#)**[Rates Database](#)**

Rates Database

Populate each of the fields below and then click Calculate to see the median rate. The available drop-down options for Service Type, which is an optional field, depend on the Category of Service selected – Data or Voice. If you are looking for voice rates, input 0 for Bandwidth. For more information about median rates, terms used, and using this tool, visit [the Rates Database homepage](#).

Location

Select a state

**Rurality Tier**

Select tier

**Category of Service**

Select category

**Bandwidth (MB)**

Enter bandwidth

XXXX.XXX

Best Efforts/Dedicated Service

Select

**Service Type (Optional)**

Select type

[Clear All](#)[Calculate](#)

Report and Order 19-78 Changes to Competitive Bidding

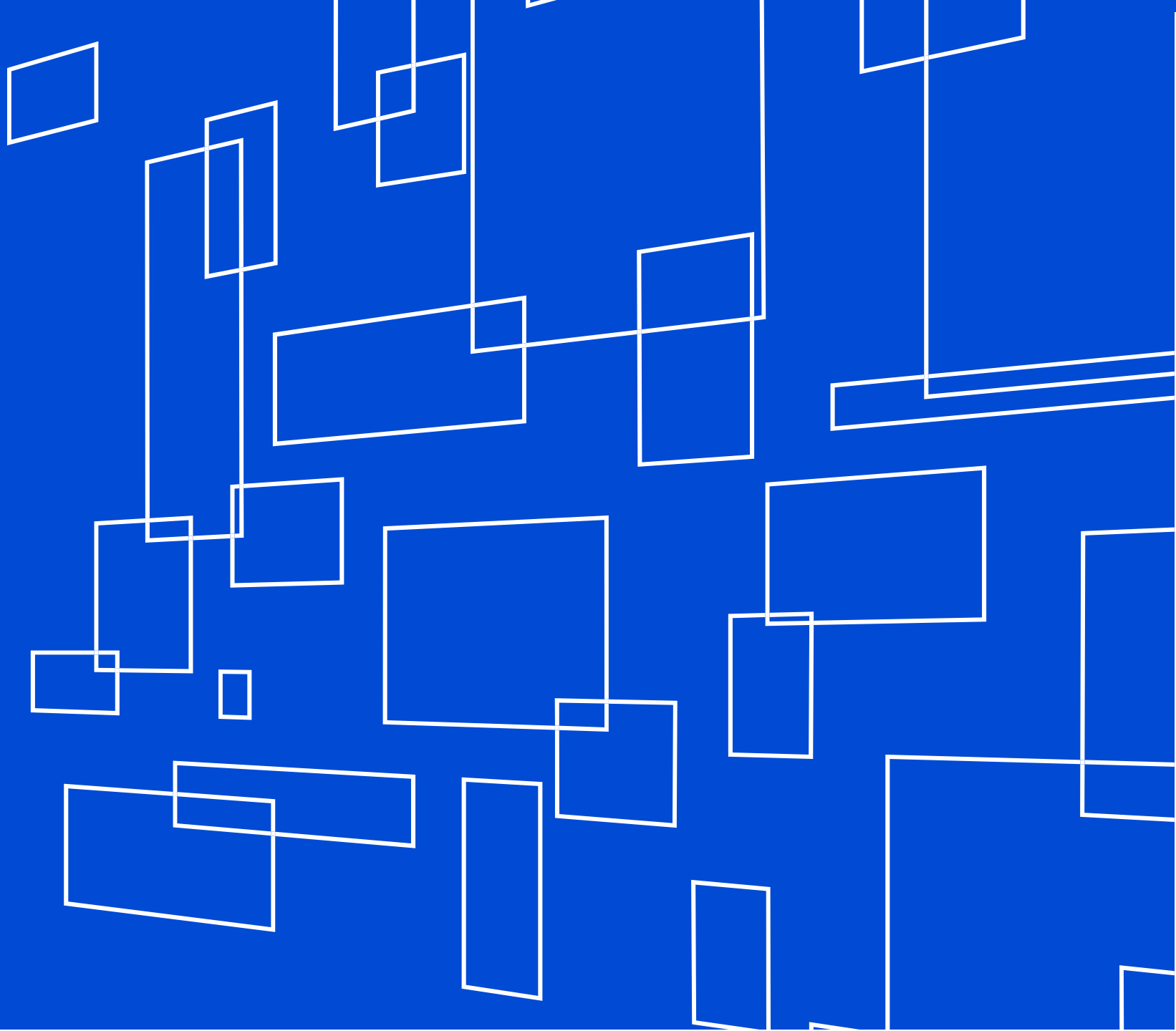
Starting in FY2021, HCPs must:

- Specify on their bid evaluation worksheet and/or scoring matrix the requested services for which they seek bids and their minimum requirements for the specified criteria.
- Identify disqualification factors, if any, that it will use to remove bids or bidders from further consideration.
- Submit declaration of assistance with competitive bidding forms.
- All changes to My Portal will be covered in the upcoming Request for Services webinars

“Supply Chain” Order (FCC 19-121) - New SP Certification

- In November 2019, FCC issued the *Protecting the Communications Supply Chain Order* prohibiting the use of Universal Service Funds to maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, upgrade, or otherwise support telecommunication’s equipment and services from companies deemed to pose a security threat to the nation’s communications infrastructure (i.e. covered companies).
- On June 30, 2020 the FCC designated **Huawei** and **ZTE** as covered companies. Additional companies may be designated in future.
- Starting in FY2021, **SPs will be required to certify on FCC Forms 463 (HCF) and the Telecom invoice that any USF funds received in FY2021 will not be used for Huawei or ZTE equipment** as stipulated in the first bullet.
- HCPs must keep in mind this restriction when preparing RFPs and conducting competitive bidding evaluations. Bidders proposing equipment from covered companies must be disqualified.

Questions?



Next Steps for Applicants

FY2021 Kickoff



Next Steps for New Applicants:

- Complete your FCC Form 460 to determine eligibility
- You can submit your FCC Form 460 at any time during the funding year.
 - Watch the [RHC 101 Learning Module](#)
 - Watch the [HCF Eligibility LearningModule](#)
 - Watch the [How to Find an Existing HCP in My Portal](#) video
- Ensure you have the necessary authorizations completed.
- Register for the Request for Services Webinars
 - HCF Program – July 22, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET - [Register here](#)
 - Telecom Program – July 29, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET - [Register here](#)
 - Review [competitive bidding resources](#)

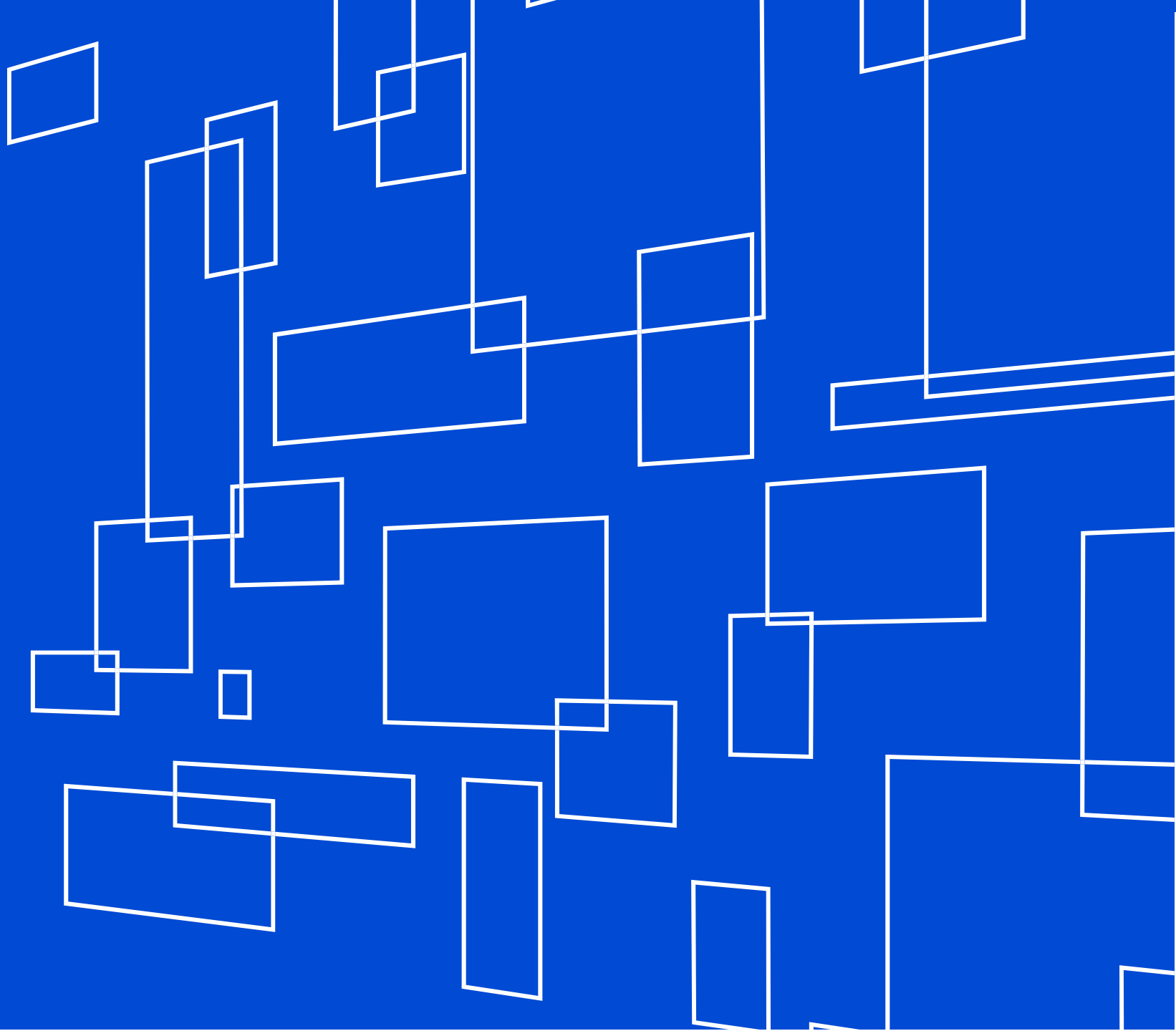
New Applicants: Eligibility Best Practice

- When submitting an FCC Form 460, we recommend that applicants upload supporting documentation necessary to validate form data to the “Supporting Documentation” section.
- This includes any documentation that is relevant to the required fields of the FCC Form 460:
 - Hospital licenses, with the address clearly posted, to verify a non-profit hospital
 - A recent bill or lease, with the address clearly posted, to verify the HCP address provided on the FCC Form 460
 - Public tax documents to verify the Non-Profit Tax ID (EIN)
 - Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) accreditation to verify a community health center

Next Steps for Current Applicants

- Ensure authorizations are up to date through FY2021
- Submit FCC Form 461 or 465 for competitive bidding
- Register for the Request for Services Webinars
 - HCF Program – July 22, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET – [Register here](#)
 - Telecom Program – July 29, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET – [Register here](#)
 - Review [competitive bidding resources](#)

Questions?



Managing Account Holders

FY2021 Kickoff



Three Types of Account Holders

1. Primary Account Holder (PAH)

- Must work for the legal entity of the HCP
- Responsible for the accuracy of information submitted to USAC
- Can only be one individual
- Mandatory for every HCP

2. Secondary Account Holder

- Must work for the legal entity of the HCP
- Responsible for the accuracy of information submitted to USAC
- “Back up” for PAH
- Can have multiple secondary account holders for one HCP

3. Tertiary

- Hired by HCP to file forms on behalf of the HCP (e.g., consultants)
- Must have a valid Third Party Authorization (TPA)

- Download guidance for updating account holders: [HCF Program](#), [Telecom Program](#)

Consultant Registration Process

- Once the HCP provides the consultant's or outside expert's contact information to USAC, USAC will issue a unique registration number for that consultant or outside expert.
- The consultant's or outside expert's assigned registration number will be linked to the HCP's organization.

Primary Account Holder – HCF Program

- In HCF, the primary account holder has the ability to manage other account holders in the Account Holders tab of My Portal.

[Create New Form 460](#)

My HCPs **Account Holders**

Add New Account Holder

Account Holder	Account Holder Name	Status	Action
_____	_____	Active	Remove

Primary Account Holder – HCF Program

First Name: *

!

Middle Initial :

Last Name: *

!

Phone: *

!

Ext :

Fax :

Email (Username): *

!

Retype Email (Username): *

!

Address 1: *

!

Address 2:

City: *

!

State: *

Select State... ▼

!

County: *

Select County... ▼

!

Zip: *

!

- At least one HCP must be assigned to the new applicant.
- Invalid Zip Code.
- Invalid Phone Number. Valid formats are 1234567890 | (123) 456-7890.

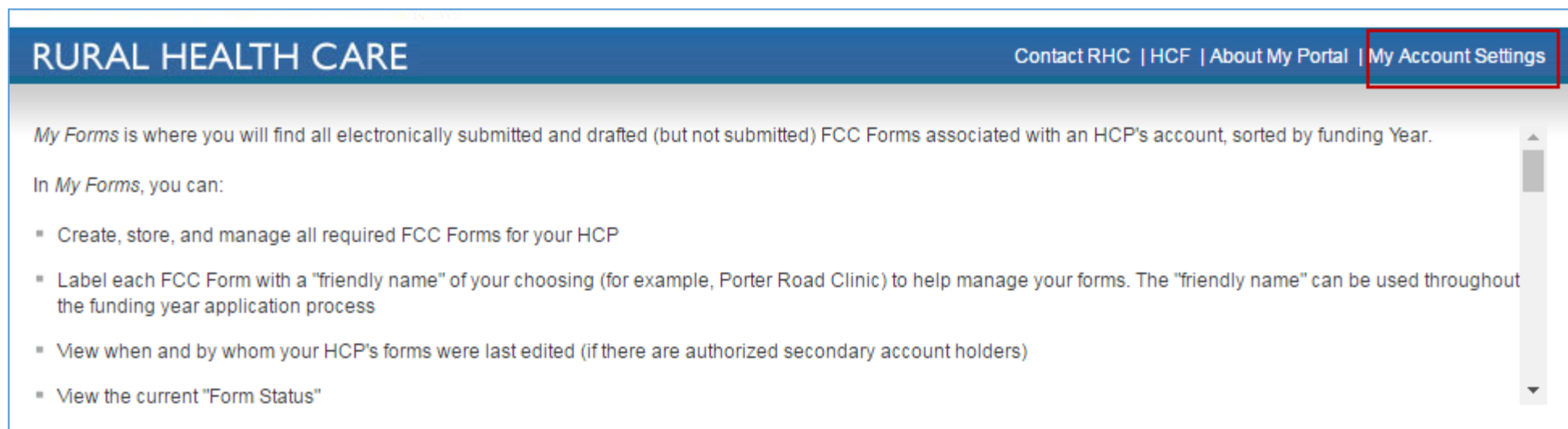
HCPs for this applicant

HCP#	HCP Name	Role	
10753	Red Spring State	No role ▼	✓
10757	...	No role	✓
		Secondary	✓
		Tertiary	✓
10758	Palmer Hospital Corporation (Clark Park Village / Hospital)	Draft	✓

Add Account Holder

Primary Account Holder – Telecom Program

- In Telecom, the primary account holder has the ability to add/remove other account holders in My Account Settings of My Portal.



Primary Account Holder – Telecom Program

MY HCPS
MY ACCOUNT SETTINGS
INFORMATION REQUESTS

Add Secondary Account Holder

First Name:
Middle Initial:
Last Name:
Title:
Employer:
Phone:
Email (Username):
Retype Email (Username):
Role:
Employer FCCRN:

Address 1:
Address 2:
City:
State:
Zip:
Ext:
Fax:

Back to My Account Settings

Unassigned HCPs

Search by HCP #
Search by HCP Name

	Address	Rights
187547	Alaska Hospital Corporation (Cedar Park Valley Hospital)	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Access <input type="checkbox"/> Partial Access

««
«
»
»»

Submit Request

Consultant Account Holder Rights

- Consultants must have tertiary rights in the HCF Program.
- Consultants must have secondary rights in the Telecom Program.
- Consultants gain account holder rights through a Third Party Authorization (TPA)
 - The TPA can be uploaded to an FCC Form 460 or 465 before submission, or added by the primary account holder in My Portal.
 - Information and a sample template for the TPA can be found on our [website](#).

Documents Available in My Portal

HCF	Telecom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted and approved FCC Forms 460, 461, 462, 463 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted and approved FCC Forms 465, 466, 467
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCF Funding Commitment Letters (FCL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telecom Funding Commitment Letters (FCL)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAH Account Holder Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAH Account Holder Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network Cost Worksheet (NCW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of submitted contracts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of automated emails from USAC (form approvals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting documentation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of automated emails from USAC (info requests, form approvals)

Authorizations

FY2021 Kickoff



Authorizations

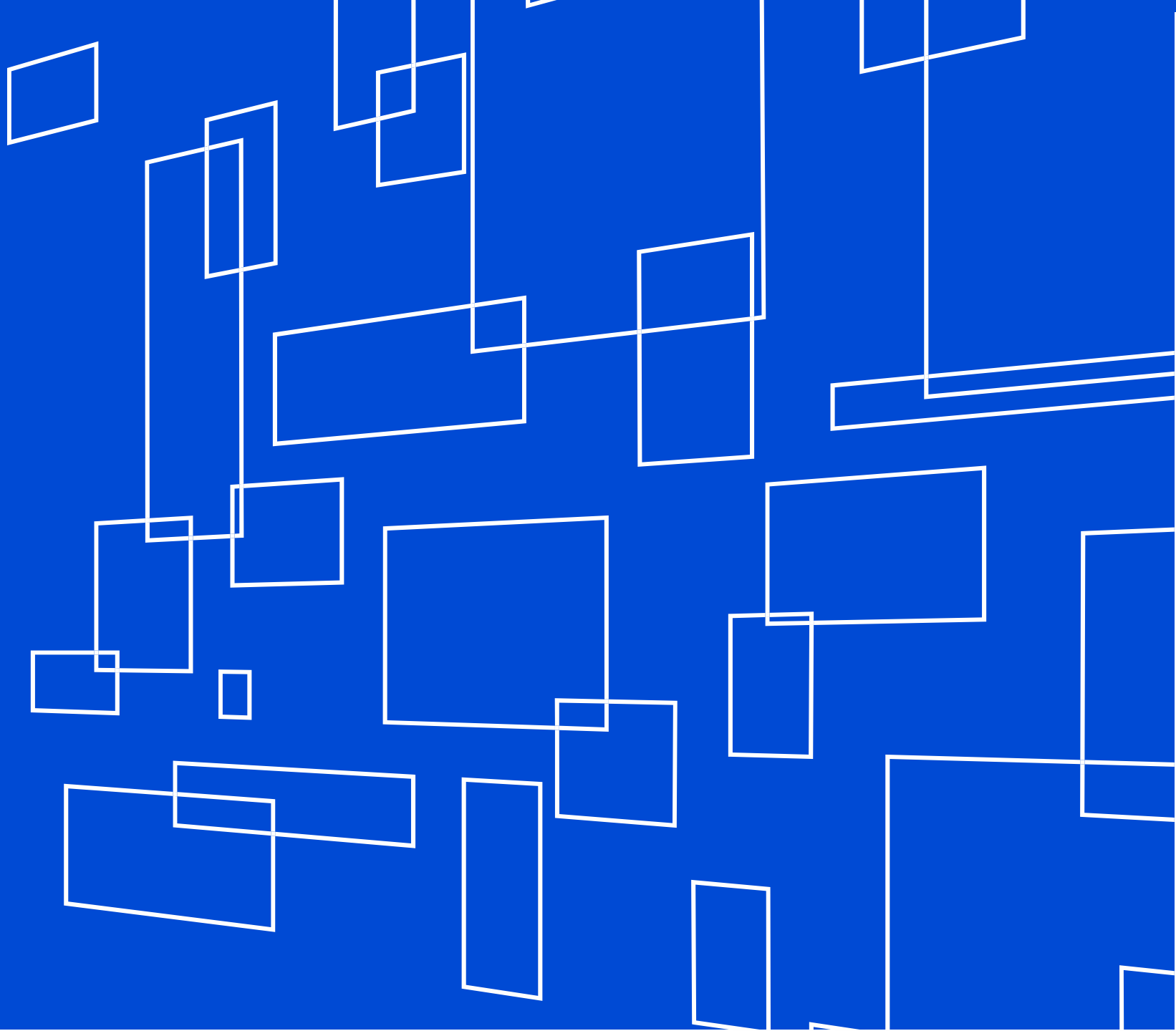


- **Letter of Agency (LOA):** Provides written authorization to the consortium project coordinator to act on behalf of each participating member HCP within the consortium. This is mandatory for HCP member sites not owned and operated by the consortium.
- **Letter of Exemption (LOE):** Provides written authorization to the consortium project coordinator to file forms for sites that are owned and operated by the consortium lead entity or Consortium Leader.
- **Third Party Authorization (TPA):** Provides written authorization to a third party/consultant to complete and submit forms on behalf of an HCP.

Authorizations for FY2021

- In order to be considered eligible for funding in FY2021, [Letters of Agency \(LOA\)](#) and [Third Party Authorizations \(TPA\)](#) must be up to date through FY2021, at a minimum.
- Before submitting a form, please check to ensure authorization documents are up to date.
 - FCC Forms 462 and 466 submitted with expired LOAs or TPAs will result in applicants receiving Information Requests.
- Download a [Sample TPA](#) or [Sample LOA](#).
- For more information about submitting LOAs, please see the [submission guide](#).

Questions?



Resources

FY2021 Kickoff

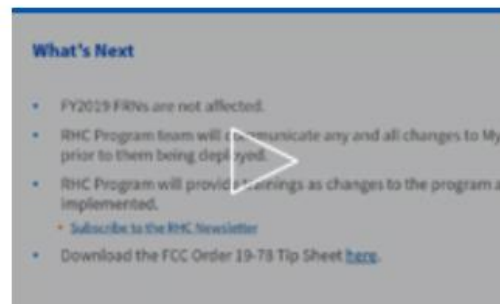
RHC Program Open Data

- Two RHC Program Data Sets Available:
 - [Commitments and Disbursements](#) - Includes commitment and disbursement information for approved and committed applications. (FCC Forms 462 and 466)
 - [Requests for Services](#) - Look up request for services (FCC Forms 461 and 465) information for both the HCF and Telecom Programs. Please keep in mind that this information is updated daily, so if your request for services was approved today, it will appear in the Open Dataset tomorrow.
- [Video guides](#) available to assist in sorting data and filtering information.
- Watch the [RHC Program Data Visualization Demo](#).
- If you have questions on how to use this tool, email opendata@usac.org.

Training & Resources

- [Webinars](#)
- [RHC Monthly Newsletter](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Online Training Modules](#)
- [Handouts](#)

Most Recent Webinar



Telecom Program Funding Request Best Practices for FY2020

January 16, 2020 | 49:23 minutes

Materials:


[Webinar Slides](#) 

Previous Trainings

HCF Program Funding Request Best Practices for FY2020

January 14, 2020 | 60:51 minutes

[Watch](#)

[Webinar Slides](#) 

Request for Services Best Practices for FY2020

December 18, 2019 | 55:57 minutes

[Watch](#)

[Webinar Slides](#) 

HCF Program Invoicing Best Practices

November 14, 2019 | 46:01 minutes

[Watch](#)

[Webinar Slides](#) 

FY2020 Kickoff

November 07, 2019 | 56:54 minutes

[Watch](#)

[Webinar Slides](#) 

RHC Learn

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Learn

Welcome to RHC Learn! Here you will find all the handouts, training videos, and webinar recordings that will assist you in applying to the RHC Program. All events and resources are offered free of charge.

Have feedback about our FY2020 Training and Resources? Provide your feedback [here](#).

Upcoming Events

- FY2021 Kickoff Webinar – Tuesday, June 15, 2:00 p.m. ET – [Register here](#)!
- HCF Program FCC Form 461 Best Practices – July 22, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET – [Register here](#)!
- Telecom Program FCC Form 465 Best Practices – July 29, 2020, 2:00 p.m. ET – [Register here](#)!

RHC Program General Information

- [RHC Program Brochure](#)
- [RHC Program Application Process Overview](#)
- [Report and Order 19-78 Changes Tip Sheet](#)
- [Information for FY2019 and FY2020 Applicants](#)

RHC Program Help Desk

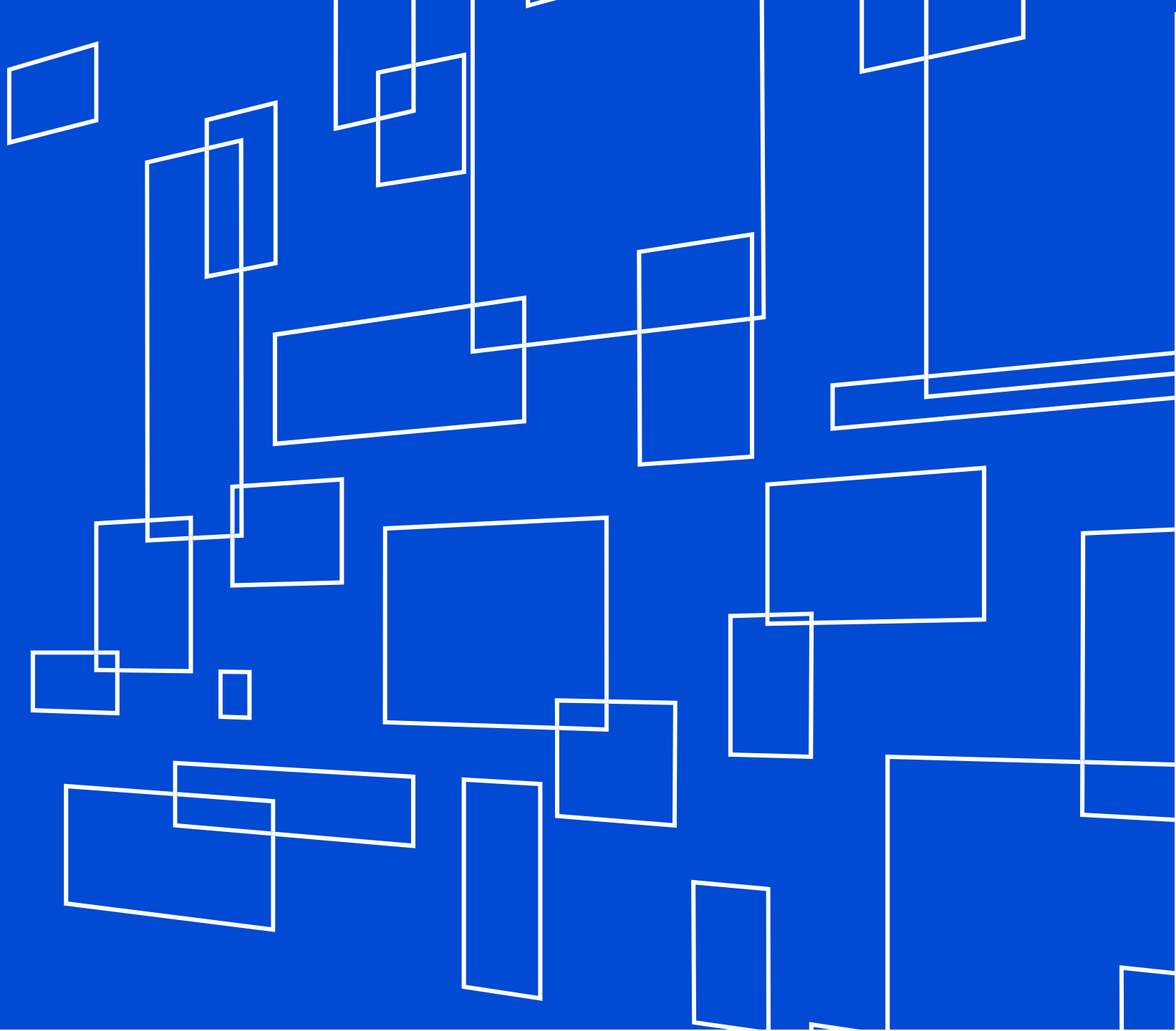
- Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org
 - Email at any time to request a one-on-one appointment to learn more about the application process or ask specific questions.
- Include in your email
 - HCP Number
 - FRN Number
- Phone: **(800) 453-1546**
 - Hours are 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET



The Help Desk

The Help Desk CAN	The Help Desk CANNOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answer general questions regarding both programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine the eligibility of a specific site or service before an official form submission
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide account holder information for an HCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review a form or document for accuracy before an official form submission
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide clarity regarding FCC Reports and Orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact a service provider or account holder on someone else's behalf
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide helpful resources and best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist with My Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

Questions?



Thank You for Joining Us Today!

- RHC Help Desk
 - Call (800) 453-1546
 - ◇ 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET
 - Email RHC-Assist@usac.org



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