Telecom Program Request for Services Best Practices for FY2021

Submitting the FCC Form 465



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 <u>RHC Learn</u>

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MEET OUR PRESENTERS



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- 1. Overview
 - FCC Order 19-78
- 2. Competitive Bidding
 - Evaluation Criteria
 - Competitive Bidding Exemptions
 - Site and Service Substitutions
 - Requests for Proposal
- 3. Search Posted Services
- 4. Submitting the FCC Form 465
- 5. Best Practices & Resources

Agenda

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

- Complete and submit an FCC Form 465 in My Portal
 - Submit your request for services to meet the FY2021 filing window deadline
 - Create bid evaluation criteria
 - Abide by competitive bidding rules
 - Identify applicable competitive bidding exemptions
- Locate current requests for services and other important resources on the USAC website

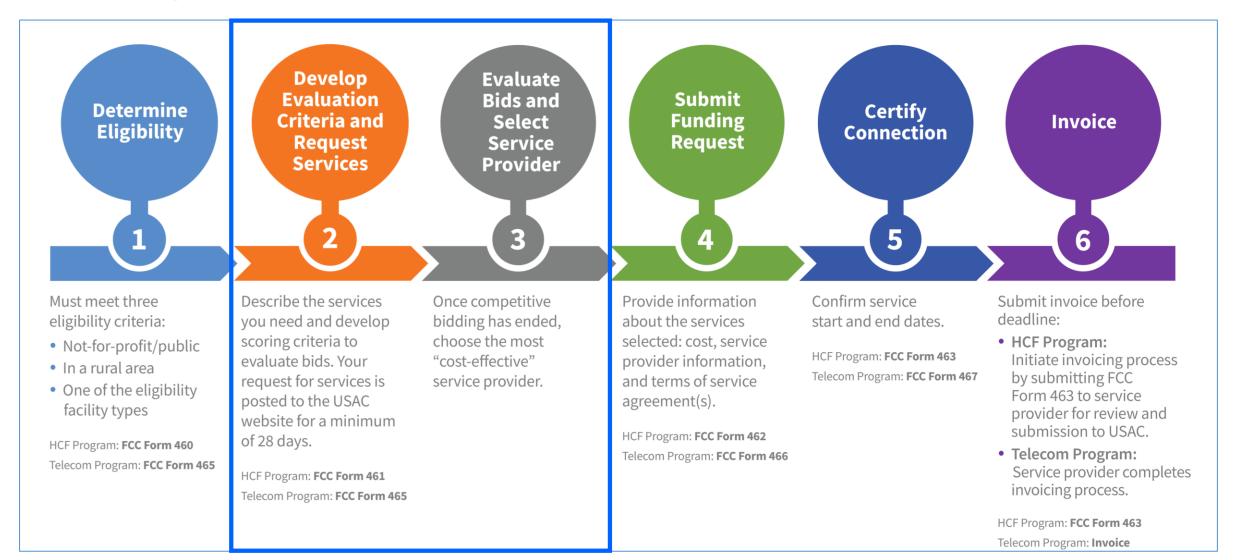
Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FY	Funding Year
НСР	Health Care Provider (your site)
HCP Number	Number associated with your site
PAH	Primary Account Holder
ACSD	Allowable Contract Selection Date

Overview

Request for Services Best Practices

RHC Program Application Process



What is a Request for Services?

- You (the HCP) will complete the FCC Form 465 to let service providers know what types of telecommunications services you are looking for.
 - Telecommunications (Telecom) Program FCC Form 465 is the "Description of Services Requested and Certification Form"
- Service providers use the information on the FCC Form 465 to create a bid to provide those services.
- The FCC Form 465 acts as both eligibility determination and request for services.

What is a Request for Services?

- Once a Request for Services is posted, service providers have a minimum of 28 days to send their bids to the applicant
 - The 28 day competitive bidding process begins the next full business day after the FCC Form 465 is publicly posted.
 - The HCP and service provider may not enter into an agreement to purchase services until the 28 days is over.
 - After the 28 days is complete, the HCP and service provider are welcome to sign a contract, this day is called the **Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD)**.

Report and Order 19-78 – Changes to Request for Services

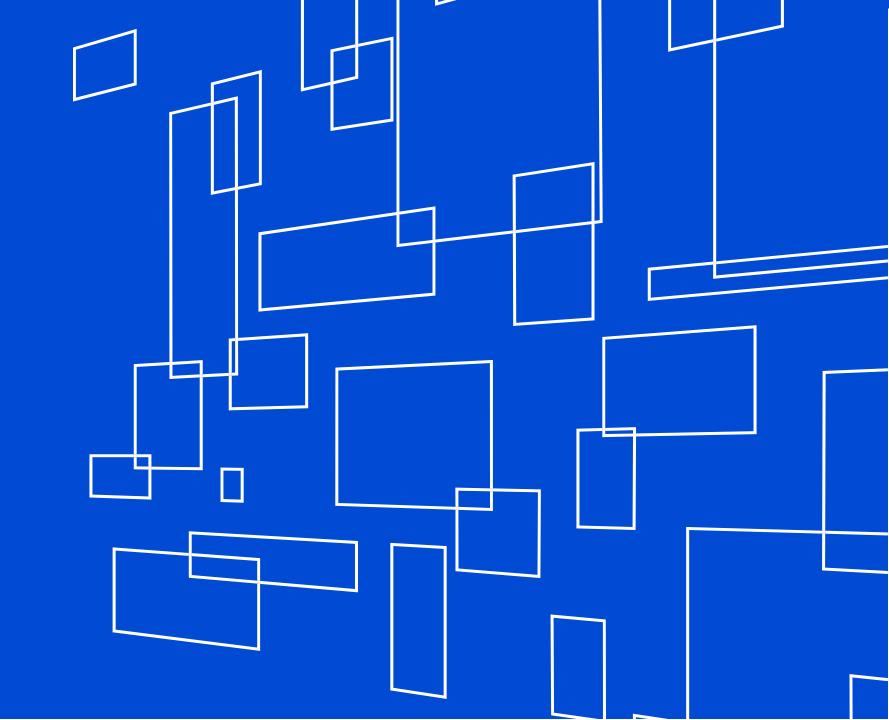
Starting in FY2021, HCPs must:

- 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 bid evaluation 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.

Funding Year 2021 Calendar



Questions?



Competitive Bidding

Request for Services Best Practices

Competitive Bidding

- The purpose of competitive bidding is to allow all service providers an equal opportunity to understand your service requirements and offer the most cost-effective solution to address those needs.
- RHC Program rules and FCC Orders require that the competitive bidding process be "fair and open."

Competitive Bidding

- Service providers who plan to bid cannot also assist with the preparation of the FCC Form 465, help you choose a winning bidder or participate in the vendor selection process in any way.
- All potential bidders and service providers must have access to the same information about the service needs and must be treated in the same manner.
- All applicants and service providers must comply with any applicable state, Tribal, or local procurement laws.

Bid Evaluation Criteria

- The bid evaluation criteria is a list of weighted standards included in your Request for Services that you will use to determine the most cost-effective bid.
- Each criterion is given a certain weight, and the sum of these weights must equal 100.
- The bid evaluation criteria should address your needs as indicated on the FCC Form 465, and be based on the FCC's definition of "cost-effective." (47 CFR 54.622(c)).

Example of Evaluation Criteria

elect criteria (and weights assigned to e	ach) that will be used to evaluate bids recei	ved as a result of this request for services.	
Criteria	Description (if 'Other')	Minimum Requirement	Weight (%)
Cost			50%
One vendor solution			30%
Technical Support		Must have single point of contact	20%

What is a Competitive Bidding Exemption?

- In some cases, the service needs or contract conditions allow you to be exempt from competitive bidding.
- With a competitive bidding exemption, you will not have to undergo the competitive bidding process, and do not need to create evaluation criteria or collect bids from service providers.
- A competitive bidding exemption will allow you to skip the FCC Form 465 (for the purposes of competitive bidding) and proceed directly to submitting a funding request.

Competitive Bidding Exemptions

- Under the Telecom Program, you must meet one of the following criteria to be exempt from submitting the FCC Form 465 and participating in the competitive bidding process:
 - purchasing services from a master service agreement (MSA) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on behalf of you and others, which was awarded pursuant to applicable competitive bidding requirements;
 - requesting support using contracts previously endorsed by USAC (MSA under the Pilot Program or the HCF Program);
 - have an active multi-year contract designated as "evergreen" for the RHC Program (exemption applies for the life of the contract); or is
 - using a consortium contract negotiated and approved under the Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program.
- If you do not meet any of the exemptions above you must competitively bid for services and submit the FCC Form 465.

Evergreen Contracts

- You are not required to file an FCC Form 465 or competitively bid for the life of a multiyear contract designated as <u>evergreen</u>.
- Your contract may be designated as "evergreen" if the contract meets all of the following requirements:
 - Both parties are identified
 - Contract specifies the service type, bandwidth, and quantity
 - Contract is signed and dated by the HCP or consortium leader after the Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD)
 - Contract specifies the term and cost of service(s)
 - Contract includes the physical addresses of the HCP(s) purchasing from the contract
- USAC must have designated the contract evergreen prior to submission of the funding request.

Site and Service Substitutions

- Starting in FY2021, Telecom Program applicants can submit site and service substitutions.
- Site and service substitutions allow you to reallocate un-invoiced committed funds to substitute the services, modify the services, or provide the requested services to other eligible sites.
- Substitutions allow the flexibility for an HCP with an approved funding commitment to spend all of the committed funds, even though USAC-supported services or the service location may change over the course of the commitment.
- Approved commitments must have scalability language included in their Request for Services documentation and in any contract obtained through the competitive bidding process.
- Applicants with month-to-month approved funding commitments may not utilize site and service substitutions as they did not apply with a contract.
- Site and service substitutions must be submitted by the service delivery deadline.

Site and Service Substitutions

- Telecom applicants may request a site or service substitution if:
 - The substitution is provided for in the contract, within the change clause, or constitutes a minor modification;
 - The site is an eligible health care provider and the service is an eligible service under the Telecom Program;
 - The substitution does not violate any contract provision or state, Tribal, or local procurement laws; and
 - The requested change is within the scope of the controlling Request for Services, including any applicable RFP used in the competitive bidding process.

Requests for Proposal

- A <u>request for proposal</u> (RFP) is a comprehensive bidding solicitation that describes your business priorities and functional requirements in sufficient detail to ensure an effective and fair and open competitive bidding process.
- Per FCC Order 19-78 (§ 54.622 (5)(e)(i)), you are required to submit an RFP if:
 - (A) it is required under applicable State, Tribal, or local procurement rules or regulations;
 - (B) you want to provide a more detailed description of the services you are requesting.

Requests for Proposal

- If you plan to issue an <u>RFP</u>, it must be submitted with the FCC Form 465 for USAC review and approval, and it should include, at a minimum:
 - A description of the service needs and a defined scope of the project and network costs (if applicable);
 - The number of days during which bids will be accepted (28 days or more);
 - Clearly delineated deliverables; and
 - The bid evaluation criteria, including the weight assigned to each criterion.
 - The RFP should align with everything entered into the FCC Form 465 and provide more details.

Service Providers and Competitive Bidding

- Service providers are prohibited from preparing, signing, or submitting an applicant's FCC Form 465 or any other competitive bidding documents.
- Service providers are prohibited from being involved in developing the bid evaluation criteria, or participating in the vendor selection process in any way.
- If it is determined that a service provider helped an HCP with its request for services and was subsequently chosen to provide services, the HCP will have committed a competitive bidding violation, and the funding request will be denied or any funding payments will be subject to rescission.

Search Posted Services

Request for Services Best Practices

Search Posted Services

About	E-rate	Rural Health Care	Lifeline	High Cost	Service Providers
Getting Starte	d	Telecommunications	Addition	al Program	Learn
		Program	Guidanc	e	
Commitment	Info	Determine Eligibility of Your	ECC Papa	rt and Order 19-78	Webinars
		Site	РСС Керо		Videos
Service Provid	lers		Funding Y	/ear Overview	
		Prepare For Competitive	Authoriza	tions	Sample Documents
Healthcare Co		Bidding & Request Services	Authoriza	uons	Documents
Fund Program	1	Evaluate Bids & Select	Evergreen	Contracts	Newsletter
Determine Eligib	ility of Your	Service Provider	Desurren	t Retention	FAO-
Site		Submit Funding Requests	Documen	IL RELEILION	FAQs
Develop Evolution	ine Criterie 8	Submit i unung requests	FCC Order	rs and Resources	Contact Us
Develop Evaluat Select Services	ion Criteria &	Review Funding			contact 05
Select Selvices		Commitment Letter (FCL)	Resource	es	
Evaluate Bids & S		Invoice USAC	My Portal		
Service Provider			Myronar		
Submit Funding	Requests		Forms		
			Tools		
Review Your Fun Commitment Le	-				
Communent Le			Upcoming	g Dates	
Invoice USAC			Announce	ements	
What is a Conso	tio?		Announce	annan co	
what is a consol	lud?		Appeals &	Audits	

Search Posted Services

Additional Search Tools

Funding Commitments Search - HCF Program (2013 and later)	This commitments search tool provides HCF Program funding commitment information.
Funding Commitments - Telecom Program (2012 and Later)	This commitments search tool provides Telecom Program funding commitment information starting in FY2012.
Funding Commitments - Telecom Program (2011 and Earlier) 🖸	The automated search of commitments (ASC) allows users to search the RHC Program database for funding commitment information since the inception of the RHC Program through FY2011.
HCF Program - Search Posted Services	This tool allows service providers to view service request information posted by consortia and individual health care providers applying for funding through the Healthcare Connect Fund Program.
Telecom Program - Search Posted Services	This tool allows service providers to view service request information posted by consortia and individual health care providers applying for funding through the Telecom Program.

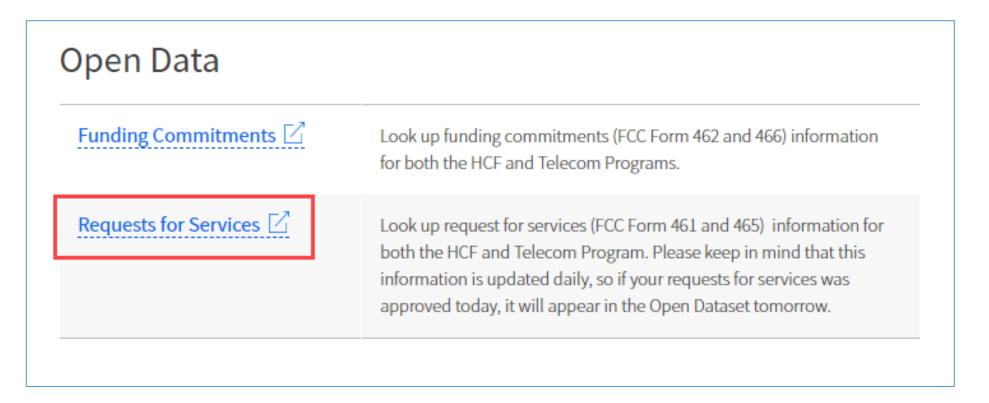
Contact RHC

Search Posted Services

RURAL HEALTH CARE

Sea	rch Posted Services								
To sea	To search, type the full or partial criteria in the appropriate box below.								
The se	earch results will show a summary of	each HCP whos	e service request(s) match t	he search criteria entered	d, with three options to view additional infor	mation:			
= Vie	w more information about each HCP w each HCP's Form 465 in its entirety ort all relevant details about each se ails for all HCPs in the search results	y by clicking on t lected HCP into	he PDF link under the "View an Excel document by check	" column.	the HCP number, then clicking on "Export."	' To export the			
Fund Year	2021 2020	City			Start Date				
HCP Number		County			End Date				
HCP Nam	e	State	Alaska Alabama Arkansas AMERICA SAMOA	* •		Search			
FCC RN		Service Type	Choose a service	~		Reset			

Search Posted Services – Open Data

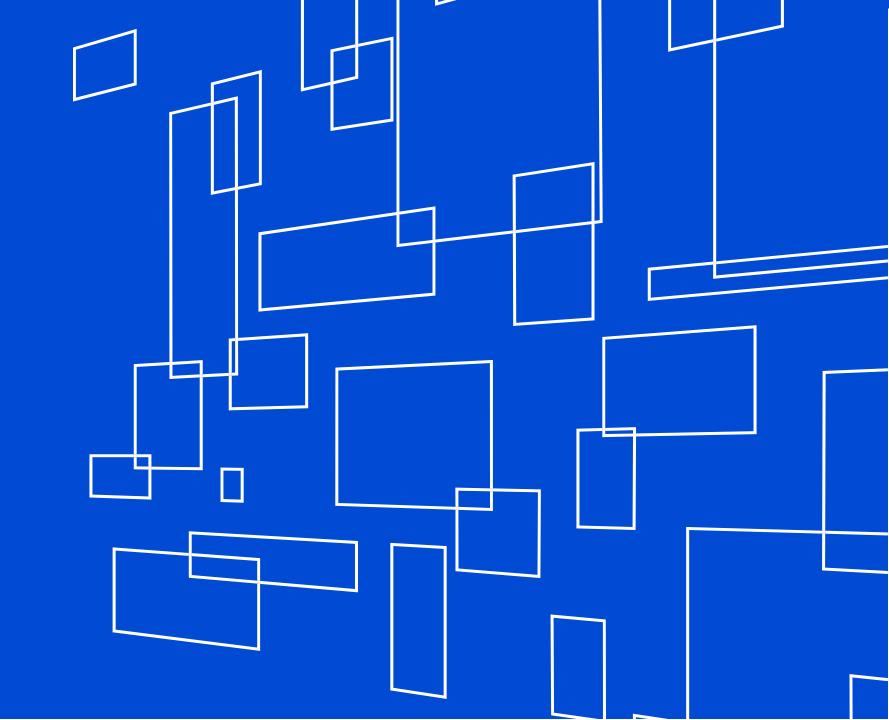


- <u>RHC Program Request for Services Dataset</u>
- <u>Learn more</u> about using Open Data.

Search Posted Services – Open Data

This dataset contains data allowing service providers to view service request information provided by individual >								More Views Filter Visualize Export Discuss Embed About							
Program :	Funding :	HCP Nu	HCP Na	Status :	Applican	Site/Con	Site Add	Site Add	Site City :	Site Cou	Site State	Site ZIP	Contact	Contact	Contact
Telecom	2013	34344	MAHEC Famil	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		146 Nesbitt R		Lake Lure	Rutherford	NC	28746	David	D	Reid
HCF	2020	53155	Noyes Menta	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		9221 Robert		Dansville	Livingston	NY	14437	Steve		Rau
HCF	2017	17551	Knoxville Co	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		1002 South L		Knoxville	Marion	IA	50138	David		Wagner
Telecom	2019	54498	McLeod Fami	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		3032 E HIGH		MULLINS	Marion	SC	29574	Michal		Ferber
Telecom	2012	30365	North Centra	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		1601 E. 28th		Trenton	Grundy	МО	64683	Janelle		Wilson
Telecom	2018	26562	Massena Me	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		290 MAIN ST		MASSENA	St. Lawrence	NY	13662	Jana		Grose
Telecom	2016	42565	FCHC Rural C	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		307 Live Oak		Marlin	Falls	ТХ	76661	Byrleen		Terry
HCF	2019	52054	Swedish-The	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		840 North 5t		Sequim	Clallam	WA	98382	David		Wagner
HCF	2020	33832	Kansas Healt	APPROVED	CONSORTIUM		Kansas Hospi	215 SE 8th Av	Topeka		KS	66603			
Telecom	2019	15026	Fort HealthC	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		650 McMillen		Fort Atkinson	Jefferson	WI	53538	James		Dahl
Telecom	2015	27648	Memorial Ho	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		437 West Wh		Guernsey	Platte	WY	82214	Bruce		Jones
Telecom	2015	17314	Community	APPROVED	INDIVIDUAL		721 Stedman		Ketchikan	Ketchikan Ga	AK	99901	Tony		Newell
HCF	2020	17212	CHA Broadba	APPROVED	CONSORTIUM		7335 E ORCH		GREENWOO		со	80111			

Questions?



Submitting the FCC Form 465

Request for Services Best Practices

Eligibility Info

- HCP Location Information
 - Address
 - FCC RN
- Mailing Contact
 - Primary Account Holder information
- Eligibility
 - Select HCP Type
- Additional Information
 - EIN, NPI, Taxonomy Code
- Watch <u>Eligibility Best Practices Webinar</u>

Request for Services

• Enter the posting information for this service request.

Block 5: Request for Services		🔎 Preview form	Instructions
			Approved by OMB 3060-0804
Line 30: Is the HCP requesting reduced rates	for: 🗸		
 Both Telecommunications & Internet Service Telecommunications Service ONLY Internet Service ONLY (2013 Funding Year) 			
Requested Contract Period		!	
Number Of Days USAC Should Post	28	×	
Posting End Date	28 days after posting	×	
Expected Bid Evaluation Period (days)		!	

New for FY2021 – Add Services

Block 5: Reques	st for Services						咒 Pre	view form	🔞 Form Gu
Line 30: The HCP is I	requesting reduced rates	for: 💿 T	elecommunicat	tions Service					
Requ	uested Contract Period						!		
Number Of Da	ays USAC Should Post	28					×		
	Posting End Date	28 days after	posting				×		
Expected Bid Ev	valuation Period (days)						!		
Identify services for w	hich the applicant is reque	esting bids. Sele	ect all that apply	y. If appropriate	e, enter a band	width range for	each service th	e applicant is	s requesting. 🛩
Add All Services									
Services	Input if Other		Minimum Download Bandwidth (Mbps)	Maximum Download Bandwidth (Mbps)	Minimum Upload Bandwidth (Mbps)	Maximum Upload Bandwidth (Mbps)	The HCP seeks bids for similar services if appropriate		
Select A Service 🗸)						✓	Delete	
Add Services									1

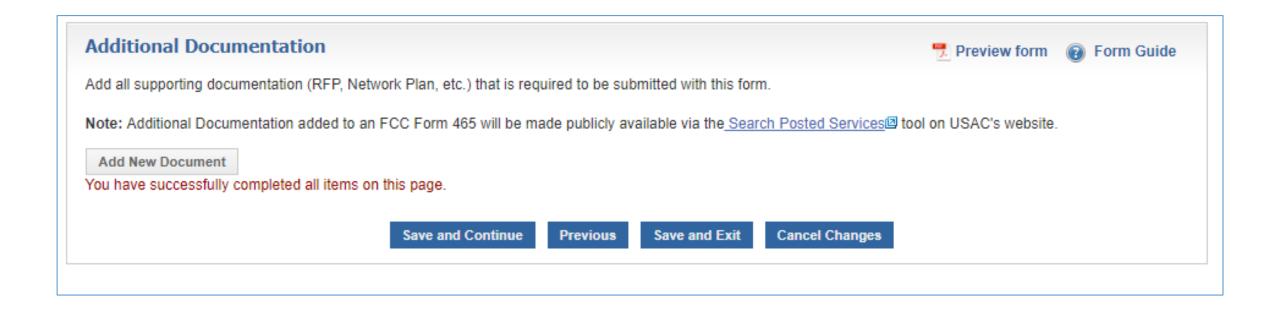
Request Services

Does the applicant require a Service Level Agreement (SLA) No 🗸	
Identify Anticipated Application(s) and Use(s) of the Supported Connection Category: Interactive	
Distance learning/training	
Real-time remote examination, consultation, and/or monitoring	
Video conferencing	
Voice service	
Other (describe)	
Category: Transactional	
Distance learning/training	
Electronic patient billing	
Exchange of electronic health records	
Transmission of large files (e.g., X-ray images, MRI, etc)	
Other (describe)	
Category: Bulk	
Electronic patient billing	
Exchange of electronic health records	
Transmission of large files (e.g., X-ray images, MRI, etc.)	
Transmission of store and forward consultations	
Other (describe)	
Category: Miscellaneous	
Backup/redundant connectivity	
Other (describe)	

New for FY2021 – Minimum Requirements for Bid Evaluation Criteria and Disqualification Factors

Bid Evaluation			📆 Preview form 🛛 🔞 Form	Guide
Select criteria (and weights assigned to each) that will be	used to evaluate bids received as	a result of this request for services.		
Add Criteria				
Line 16:	Description (if 'Other')	Minimum Requirement	Weight (%)	
Cost	•		0 Delete F	Row
Prior experience including past performance	▼	At least 2 references in the state	0 Delete F	Row
Disqualification Factors				
Applicant has no disqualification factors that will be used to remove bids or bidders from further consideration.				
Total weight of all rows must equal 100%				
Disqualification factors: Enter disqualification factors or	select checkbox to confirm applic	cant has no disqualification factors.		
Save and	Continue Previous Sav	ve and Exit Cancel Changes		

New for FY2021 – Additional Documentation



Declaration of Assistance

- Add the contact information of those who assisted in the preparation of the form (if applicable).
- New field: Nature of Relationship

Add contact		
Contact Name (First, MI, Last)		
Organization Type	Select An Organization Type 🔹	
Title]
Employer]
Phone #]
Email		(optional)
Address Line 1]
Address Line 2		(optional)
City]
State	Choose a state 🗸	
Zip Code]
Nature of Relationship]

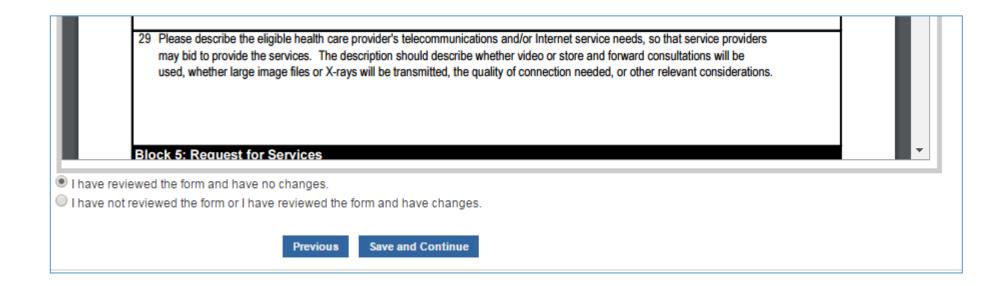
Certification

• All certifications must be checked and you must preview the form.

RHC Note: Read the information in each certification carefully before certifying, signing, and submitting this form. If you are unsure about any of the information you should contact the RHC team prior to submitting.
Line 31: I certify under penalty of perjury that I am authorized to submit this request on behalf of the applicant or consortium.
Line 32: I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant has complied with all applicable state, Tribal, or local procurement rules.
Line 33: I certify under penalty of perjury that all requested RHC Program support will be used solely for purposes reasonably related to the provision of health care service or instruction that the applicant is legally authorized to provide under the law of the state in which the services are provided.
Line 34: I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking supported services is a public or non-profit entity that falls within one of the seven categories set for in the definition of health care provider listed in 47 CFR § 54.600 of the Commission's rules.
Line 35: I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant seeking support services is physically located in a rural area as defined in section 47 CFR § 54.600 of the Commission's rules.
Line 36: I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant has reviewed and will comply with all applicable RHC Program requirements.
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 contained herein and in any attachments are true.
I certify under penalty of perjury that the supported services will not be sold, resold, or transferred in consideration for money or any other thing of value.
I certify under penalty of perjury that the applicant satisfies all of the requirements under section 254 of the Communications Act and applicable Commission rules.
I understand that all documentation associated with this request must be retained for a period of at least five years pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.631, or as otherwise prescribed by the Commission's rules.
Consultants (fee for service): Upload an LOA with the HCP to verify you are authorized to access the HCP's account information.
Attach Supporting Documentation
You must select all certifications before advancing

Preview FCC Form 465

• Must select "I have reviewed the form and have no changes." to proceed.



Required Certification

Block 6: Certification	
	Approved by OMB 3060-0804
RHC Note: By completing this section, you are electronically signing this form. Your electronic signature is the same as your hand-written signature form. By typing your password in the signature field below, and clicking on the "Certify & Submit" button, you will have electronically signed the form Terms and Conditions that govern the user of this system can be found by clicking on the Terms and Conditions link below.	
You must select "Accept" to move to the signature block. Selecting "Reject" will return you to My Portal, where this form will be saved in draft status u Forms tab.	inder the My
Accept Reject	

Required Certification

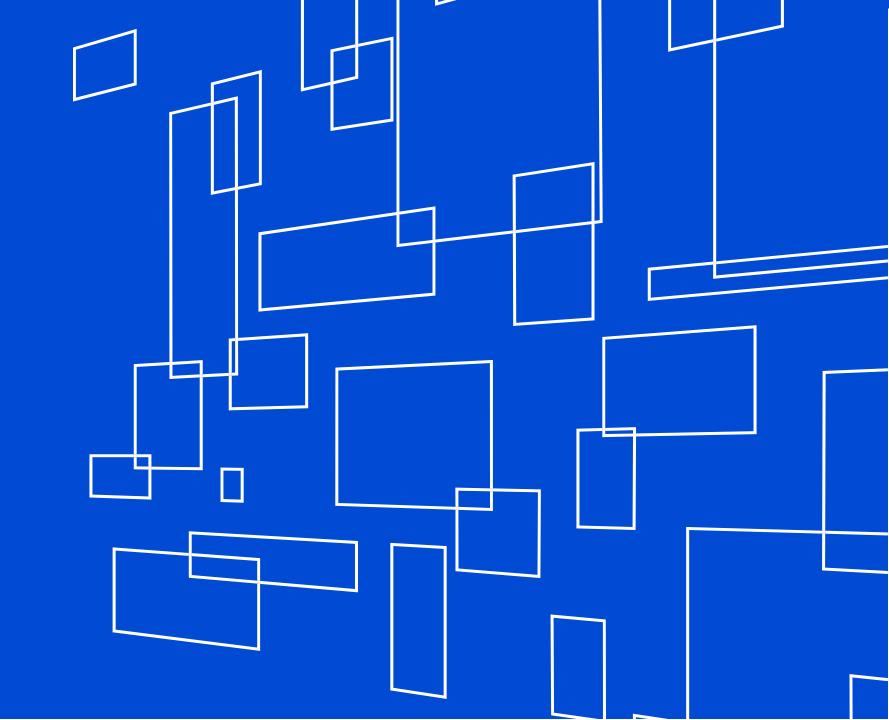
• Your signature is your My Portal password.

RHC Note: Enter your password (not your name submit this form.	or User ID) in the Signature field below, then click on the "Certify & Submit" button to electronically sign, certify, and
Line 37: Signature	Certify & Submit
Line 38: Date	Mar-17-17
Line 39: Printed name of authorized person	
Line 40: Title or position of authorized person	CEO
Line 41: Employer of authorized person	
Line 42: Employer's FCC RN	
Please remember:	
 Form 465 is the first step a health care provide program. 	r must take in order to receive the benefit of reduced rates resulting from participation in this universal service support
= After the HCP submits a complete and accurate	e Form 465, the RHCD will post it on the RHCD web site for 28 days.
 HCPs may not enter into agreements to purchage 	se eligible services from service providers before the 28 days expire.
= After the HCP selects a service provider, the HC	CP must initiate the next step in the application process, the filing of Form 466 and/or 466A.
Persons willfully making false statements on this f imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States C	orm can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. Secs. 502, 503(b), or fine or Code, 18 U.S.C. Sec. 1001.
Prev	ious Preview FCC Form 465 Cancel Changes

After Submitting

- You will receive an email confirmation that your form was submitted with a copy of the PDF form.
- Respond to Information Requests within 14 days or by the deadline listed in the email.
 - Failure to respond to the Information Request will result in a denial
 - Information requests will come from My Portal and/or an @usac.org domain address

Questions?



Best Practices & Resources

Request for Services Best Practices

Best Practices: Communicating with Your Service Provider

- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.
- Include language in your bid documentation that confirms your service provider will act in compliance with all RHC Program rules and FCC Orders.
- Once your ACSD has passed and you've chosen a service provider, include them when you reply to Information Requests via email.
- All bid correspondence should be handled via email for audit purposes.
- HCPs are required to retain documentation for a period of five years.

Milestones to Receive Funding for FY2021: Telecom Program

Telecom Program Form	Last Day to Submit
FCC Form 465 – Eligibility & Request for Services	February 10, 2021 Recommended Date
FCC Form 466 – Funding Request	April 1, 2021 Deadline to Submit*

Please note that these dates (with the exception of the FCC Form 466 filing window deadline of April 1) are not mandatory deadlines, but rather recommended milestones to meet the close of the filing window.

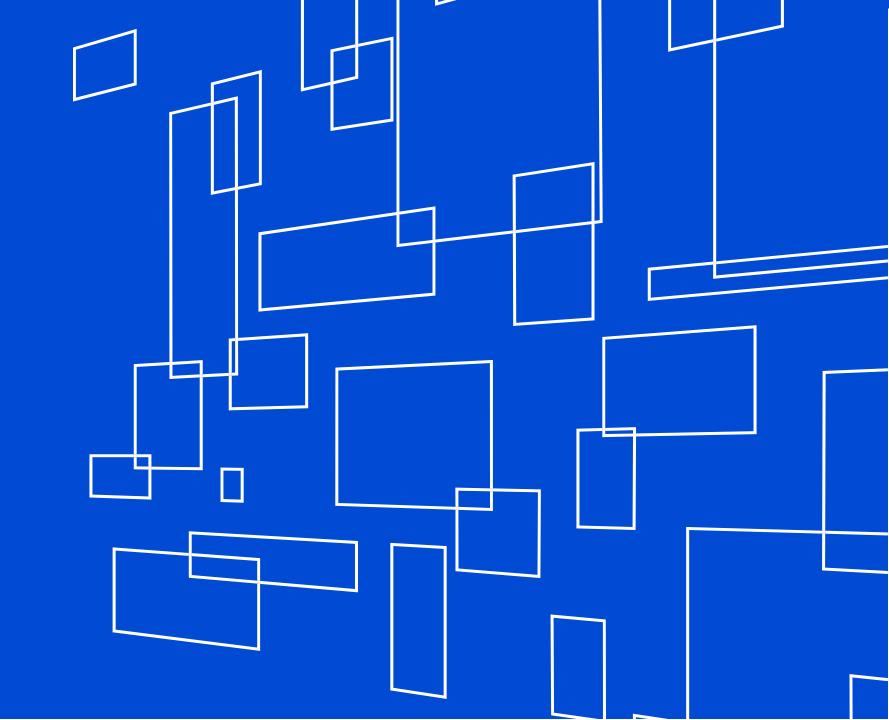
RHC Learn

About	E-rate	Rural Health Care	Lifeline	High Cost	んそう Service Providers	
USAC Rural He	ealth Care Learn					
Learn		Learn				
Webinars		Leann				
Online Training		Welcome to RHC Learn! Here you will find all the handouts, training videos, and webinar recordings th will assist you in applying to the RHC Program. All events and resources are offered free of charge.				
Videos			0 0	Resources? Provide your feed	-	
Newsletter						
Upcoming Dates	i	Upcomin	g Events			
FAQs 🗸		 Telecom Program 	n FCC Form 465 Best Prac	tices – July 29, 2020, 2:00 p.r	n. ET – <u>Register here ⊠</u> !	
		RHC Program	n General Info	ormation		

Resources

- <u>Competitive Bidding FAQs</u>
- <u>RHC Program Request for Services Dataset</u>
- Search Posted Services
 - <u>Telecom Program</u>
- Subscribe to the <u>RHC Monthly Newsletter</u>
- Blank FCC Form 465 and Instructions

Questions?



Thank you for joining us today!

- RHC Help Desk
 - Call (800) 453-1546
 - Email <u>RHC-Assist@usac.org</u>
- Please fill out the post-webinar survey!



