

E-Rate Overview



Training Topics

E-RATE



1. History of E-rate
2. NC School Connectivity
3. EPC
4. Types of Funding
5. Eligible Services

Universal Service

E-RATE

Universal service is based on the principle that all Americans should have access to a baseline level of telecommunications service and further the public interest of keeping Americans connected.

This is **the founding principle** of the Communications Act of 1934, which established universal service in legislation and created the FCC. The establishment of the Universal Service Fund in 1997 advances this founding principle.

The **1934 Communications Act** of Congress created the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The job of the FCC was *and still is* to implement and administer regulation for interstate communication platforms.

Fast Forward to 1996.....

The 1934 Communications Act was rewritten and is now called the **Telecommunications Act**. It includes new technologies (*think Internet*) and to codifies the concept of "Universal Service" by creating a fund to ensure that all Americans have access to basic telecommunications. **This was the genesis of what we know as E-Rate.**



Universal Services Fund

E-RATE

Funds 4 Programs:

- Schools and Libraries (E-rate)
- Rural Health Organization
- Low Income America
- High Cost for Eligible Service Providers

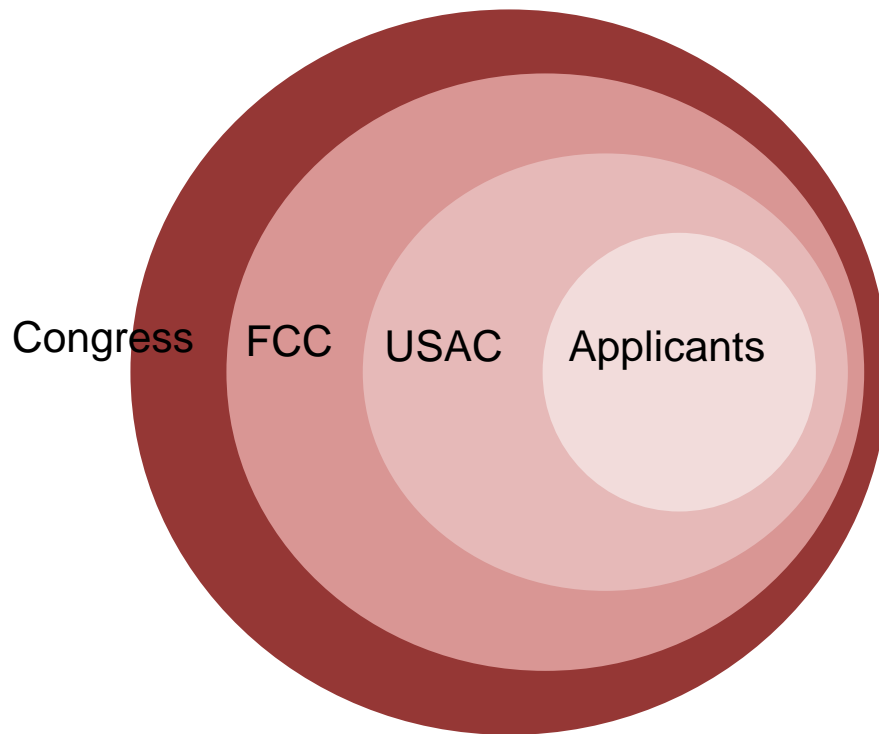


- Discount program
- “Educational Rate”
- Schools and Libraries, considered to be educational organizations, referred to as E-rate



The BIG Picture

E-RATE



The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) administers the E-rate program for the FCC.



Am I eligible?

E-RATE

- Am I a K-12 public/private school or public library?
- Is my purpose to educate eligible students and the public (libraries)
- Am I applying for eligible services?
- Will these services be used on the school or library campus only?



Eligible Services List

E-RATE

Each year the FCC approves a list of eligible services.

- Commonly referred to as the **Eligible Service List (ESL)**.
- The timing of the release of the ESL typically sets the timing for the upcoming funding window.
- FY21 ESL should be released in early November



How much can I get?

E-RATE

Discounts depend on **two** factors:

- The level of poverty (the percentage of NSLP* eligibility of its equivalent in the school district).
- The urban or rural status of the school district or library system.

*NSLP = National School Lunch Program



How much can I get?

E-RATE

INCOME Measured by percentage of students eligible for NSLP	DISCOUNT	
	URBAN	RURAL
Less than 1%	20	25
1% to 19%	40	50
20% to 34%	50	60
35% to 49%	60	70
50% to 74%	80	80
75% to 100%	90 for C1, 85 for C2	90 for C1, 85 for C2



How much can I get?

E-RATE

Library Discount Calculation

- Determine the main branch of the library.
- Determine the school district in which the main branch of the library is located.
- Use the NSLP (or equivalent) percentage calculation for that school district.



What will it pay for?

E-RATE

Category 1

- Broadband services from the service provider to the schools/libraries

Category 2

- Network equipment and services for the management and maintenance of eligible equipment used for broadband connectivity within schools/libraries.



Category 1 Examples

E-RATE

- Cable Modem
- DS-1, DS-2, DS-3, DS-4
- Ethernet
- Leased Dark Fiber
- Self-Provisioned Network
- Satellite Service
- Microwave
- Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS)
- Broadband over Power Lines



Category 2 Examples

E-RATE

- Network Cabling
- Wireless Access Point
- Switch
- Router
- Managed Internal Broadband Service (MIBS)
- Repair and upkeep of eligible hardware
- Wire and cable maintenance
- Basic technical support



Key Terms – Funding Year

E-RATE

Funding Year (FY)

- Funding year runs July 1 to June 30
- Named for the year it begins
 - Example: FY21 begins July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.



Key Terms - FRN

E-RATE

Funding Request Number (FRN)

- The funding request number (FRN) line-item detail and costs associated with the eligible and ineligible products and services requested.
- Each funding request is assigned a number or FRN



Key Terms - BEN

E-RATE

Billed Entity Numbers (BEN)

- USAC assigns a unique identifying number to each entity that participates in the Schools and Libraries Program. This number assigned by USAC is called a Billed Entity Number.
- Need a BEN? – call 1-888-203-8100



Key Terms – Filing Window

E-RATE

- The filing window is the time frame, specified by USAC, during which applications can be filed.
- The Filing Window varies from year to year, typically opening in January and closing in March.



Key Terms - SPIN

E-RATE

A Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) is assigned to providers participating in E-rate

Service providers may have more than one SPIN because...

- Different business units or service areas
- Mergers and acquisitions



Key Terms - SPAC

E-RATE

Service Provider Annual Certification (SPAC) is an FCC form that service providers file annually to certify that they will comply with program rules and guidelines. This must be filed before USAC will pay invoices.



Key Terms - EPC

E-RATE

E-rate Productivity Center (EPC)

- EPC is the account and application management portal for the Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program.
- Applicants, consultants, and service providers participating in the E-rate Program use this tool to manage program processes (submit forms, answer inquiries) and to submit questions.

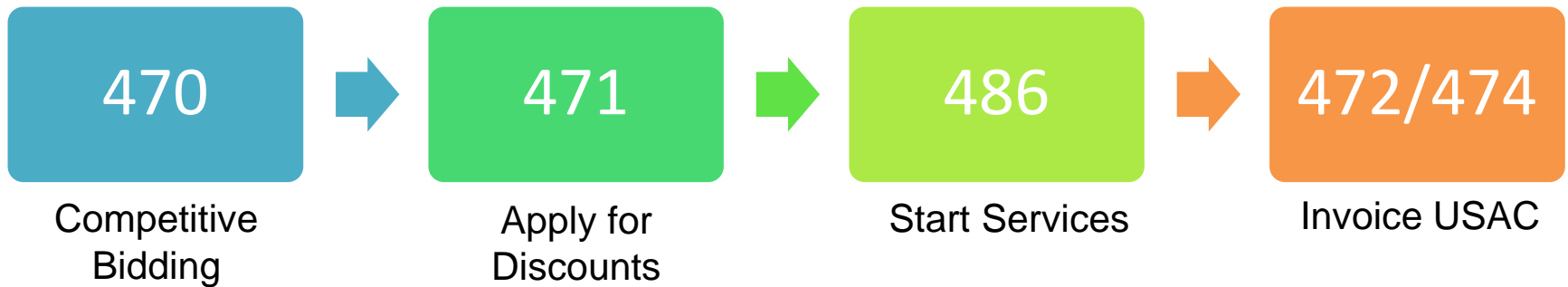


Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)

After an application is reviewed by the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) reviewer(s), an applicant is notified of the status of their application via the FCDL. It consists of a form and a spreadsheet which show the details of the decision.

Key Forms

E-RATE



Key Forms

E-RATE

470

- Begin Competitive Bidding Process

471

- Apply for Discounts/Description of Services

486

- Set Service Start Date/CIPA Compliance

472

- BEAR – Billed Applicant Reimbursement

474

- SPI – Service Provider Invoice (discounted billing)

498

- Banking Information – Once and done!



Q&A



What's Next?

Thursday, Nov. 12 @ 3 PM EPC
Overview and the Admin Window
Changes

Tuesday, Nov. 17 @ 10 AM
Session 2 for Newbies

Resources

E-RATE

Recording/Slides posted on our training page!

- NC E-rate Website: <https://erate.fi.ncsu.edu/>
- 2021 E-rate Handbook:
<https://www.livebinders.com/b/2733920>

