

Schools and Libraries

NEWS BRIEF

October 4, 2013

TIP OF THE WEEK: Remember that you can check the status of your FCC Form 471 by using the [View 471 Status](#) tool (see below). The status of each of your forms appears at the top of the search results page, followed by a table containing a description of every status.

Commitments for Funding Years 2013 and 2012

Funding Year 2013. USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2013 Wave 21 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) October 7. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 1 (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) requests at all discount levels. As of October 7, USAC will have issued over \$1 billion in funding commitments on 25,682 applications for FY2013.

Funding Year 2012. USAC will release FY2012 Wave 63 FCDLs October 10. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance) requests at 90 percent and denials at 89 percent and below. As of October 4, FY2012 commitments total just under \$2.77 billion.

On the day the FCDLs are mailed, you can check to see if you have a commitment by using USAC's [Automated Search of Commitments](#) tool.

FY2013 Funding Commitment Status Update

We are aware that those of you who have not received a commitment decision are anxious to hear from us. We understand and are working hard to get you that decision.

Currently, we are processing and funding only Priority One applications – telecommunications and Internet access. We received 38,500 Priority One applications for FY2013, which is 2,000 more than FY2012. We have processed and committed nearly 25,700 of them for slightly over \$1 billion in commitments. Last year at this time, for FY2012, we had processed Priority One applications for \$1.2 billion in commitments. Our target is to have at least 90% of all Priority One applications completed and committed by December 31, 2013.

If you have not heard from us, that does NOT mean that there is something wrong with your application. If we have a question or need additional information as we review your application, we will contact you. You can use the [Form 471 application status tool](#) to track your application during the PIA review process.

As we mentioned above, we received 38,500 Priority One applications for FY2013 and, unfortunately, all of them cannot be reviewed at the same time. We appreciate your patience and we will do everything we can to get your decision to you as soon as we can.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Entity Numbers

An entity number is a unique identifying number assigned by USAC to each entity that (1) is eligible to receive discounts under the E-rate program and/or (2) files program forms.

An eligible entity can be an individual school, a library outlet/branch, a school district, a library system, or a [non-instructional facility](#) (NIF) such as an administrative office. Entity numbers for eligible entities

can appear in Block 1 of a program form and/or in a Form 471 Block 4 worksheet that lists the recipients of service for a funding request.

Here are some examples of entities that have entity numbers but that are not eligible for (or do not request) discounted services:

- A state procurement agency that files an FCC Form 470 to open a competitive bidding process. The agency enters its entity number in Item 3 of the form.
- A city or town that controls the budget of a library and pays the bills for the library. The city or town enters its entity number in Block 1 of all appropriate program forms.
- A consortium leader that is not itself eligible for discounts but applies on behalf of its consortium members. The consortium leader enters its entity number in Block 1 of all appropriate program forms.
- A school district, if the district is not applying for funding itself but an applicant (e.g., a consortium) is completing one or more FCC Form 471 Block 4 worksheets featuring the district's individual schools. The applicant enters the school district entity number wherever it is requested in Block 4 worksheet entries. (Note that a library enters the entity number of the school district in which the library is located.)
- A library system, if the system is not applying for funding itself but an applicant (e.g., a consortium) is completing one or more FCC Form 471 Block 4 worksheets for the system's outlets/branches. The applicant enters the library system entity number wherever it is requested in Block 4 worksheet entries.

Billed Entity Numbers (BENs)

If an entity pays a service provider for products and/or services delivered to eligible schools and/or libraries, that entity is called a billed entity. USAC assigns that entity a Billed Entity Number or BEN. There is no visible difference between a number assigned as a BEN and a number assigned as an entity number, and the terms "entity number" and "BEN" are now generally used interchangeably. (An eligible entity that pays the bills and also requests discounts does not need two numbers.)

A billed entity is not required to be – but may be – an eligible entity. For example, an ineligible entity such as town or city government may be assigned a BEN if it pays the bills to service providers for eligible services on behalf of eligible entities.

Locating an entity number

You can [search for BEN information](#) from the [Search Tools](#) web page on the USAC website. You can limit your search by entity type (school district, school, library, or all types), and then search by **one** of the following:

- Full or partial name (remember to add a "%" sign after a partial name)
- Zip code
- State/territory
- Entity number

Your search may return a single entity or a list of entities. For specific information about an entity, click on the Billed Entity Number in the search results.

Requesting an entity number

To request an entity number, contact our Client Service Bureau (CSB) either through [Submit a Question](#) (choose "Entity Number" from the Topic Inquiry list and then "I need an entity number for a new entity") or by calling 1-888-203-8100.

CSB needs specific information to create a new entity. For assistance in preparing your request for an entity number or for more information about entity numbers, refer to the [Entity Numbers](#) web page on the USAC website.

- NOTE: Multiple buildings on the same campus – i.e., you do not have to cross a public right-of-way to get from one building to another – do not need separate entity numbers if they serve the same student population. For example, a school bus garage and an administrative building on a high school campus that serve only the students in that high school do not need separate entity numbers. However, if the administrative building serves other schools in the school district not located on that campus – or the school bus garage also serves students from the junior high school located several blocks away – those facilities would need separate entity numbers.

If you are requesting three or more entity numbers, please use [Submit a Question](#) to submit your request. Be sure to include all of the information listed on the [Entity Numbers](#) web page. You can also fax your request to CSB at 1-888-276-8736. Please request entity numbers as soon as you know you will need them.

Correcting the information on an entity number

Contact CSB as described above to update any information associated with an entity number that is incorrect or that has changed. Before you call, be sure you have the entity number of the entity you want to update handy along with the information to be corrected.

Please note that, when CSB changes the entry in the database, any future forms you file will reflect the new information. You will not see a change in forms that you have already filed.

- NOTE: To change information on a form that has already been filed, follow the guidance in the [Updating Contact Information](#) web page on the USAC website. Remember to identify the form or forms to be changed by including the six- or seven-digit application number assigned by USAC to each form.

In a future issue of the SL News Brief, we will provide additional guidance on specific issues involving entity numbers.

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