

December 23, 2014

URBAN/RURAL STATUS TOOLS

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted the [E-rate Modernization Order](#) on July 11, 2014. The Order takes major steps to modernize and streamline the E-rate program and focuses on expanding funding for Wi-Fi networks in eligible elementary and secondary schools and libraries across America. In the *Second Modernization Order*, adopted on Dec. 11, 2014, the FCC took significant additional steps to ensure that the nation's schools and libraries have access to robust high-speed broadband connections. In an accompanying Order on Reconsideration, the FCC modified its urban/rural definition, effective in funding year 2015, so that an individual school and library will be designated as "urban" if located in an "Urbanized Area" or "Urban Cluster" with a population of 25,000 or more as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Any school or library not designated "urban" will be designated as "rural" and would be eligible to receive an additional discount. The Order retains the current rule that any school district or library system must have a majority of schools or libraries in a rural area that meets the new urban/rural definition to qualify for the additional rural discount.

The FCC also directed USAC to post a tool on its website that will allow schools and libraries to obtain information regarding whether they are classified as urban or rural.

Following is a description of the two tools – the [Urban/Rural Lookup Tool](#) and the [Urban/Rural Status Reports by State](#) – that are now available on the USAC website on the [Search Tools](#) page. You can use these tools to:

- Locate the urban or rural status for an individual school or library.
- Find out if a school district or library system is eligible for an urban or rural discount by locating the urban or rural status of its member schools or libraries.
- Identify schools and libraries whose addresses must be updated in order for USAC to determine their urban or rural status.

1. Urban/Rural Lookup Tool

The Urban/Rural Lookup Tool allows users to locate the urban or rural status for a individual school, an individual library, a school district, or a library system. In order to receive the correct urban/rural designation for a school district or library system, the user must exclude the entity numbers of certain entities (see below for more specific information).

Any changes to the database that USAC makes – such as address corrections – are sent to the U.S. Census lookup and returned within an hour. The Urban/Rural Lookup Tool will show any changes when the updates arrive.

To perform a search using this tool, first find the type of entity below and then follow the instructions.

- Individual school

Click the radio button to the left of "Individual school." This will open up a field where you enter the entity number of the school.

You can type the entity number, paste it from your clipboard or computer memory, or use the lookup tool (the magnifying glass to the right of the "Entity Number" caption).

- The lookup tool allows you to search by name, state, or zip code. If the search criterion you specify returns multiple results, click the appropriate entity number and the tool will automatically populate it in the entity number field.

When you click "Lookup Urban/Rural Status," you will see the entity number, entity name, street address, type of entity, and urban/rural status. The status can be:

- "U" for urban
- "R" for rural
- "?" if we cannot determine the status, either because the entity number cannot be found or the address is incomplete or incorrect.

If the urban or rural status cannot be determined, we suggest that you call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 1-888-203-8100 for assistance.

Remember that, unless you are an independent school, you must use the discount calculated for your school district, even if it is urban and the individual school is rural.

- Individual library

Click the radio button to the left of "Individual library." This will open up a field where you enter the entity number of the library.

You can type the entity number, paste it from your clipboard or computer memory, or use the lookup tool (the magnifying glass to the right of the "Entity Number" caption).

- The lookup tool allows you to search by name, state, or zip code. If the search criterion you specify returns multiple results, click on the appropriate entity number and the tool will automatically populate it in the entity number field.

When you click "Lookup Urban/Rural Status," you will see the entity number, entity name, street address, type of entity, and urban/rural status. The status can be:

- "U" for urban
- "R" for rural
- "?" if we cannot determine the status, either because the entity number cannot be found or the address is incomplete or incorrect.

If the urban or rural status cannot be determined, we suggest that you call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 1-888-203-8100 for assistance.

Remember that, unless you are an independent library, you must use the discount calculated for your library system, even if it is urban and the individual library is rural.

- School district

Click the radio button to the left of "School district." This will open up a field where you enter the entity numbers of the individual schools in your school district.

You can type the entity numbers, paste them from your clipboard or computer memory, or use the lookup tool (the magnifying glass to the right of the "Entity Number" caption).

- If you paste entity numbers from another data source, you must first put them in comma-delimited format (individual entity numbers separated by commas).
- The lookup tool allows you to search by name, state, or zip code. If the search criterion you specify returns multiple results, click the radio buttons to the left of the school or schools you want to add. Notice that you may have more than one page of results. You can click radio buttons for multiple entity numbers on multiple pages, but once you click "OK" you cannot add more entity numbers using the search tool; you will have to add them manually.

NOTE: Certain entity numbers must be included or excluded to receive the correct urban/rural designation.

INCLUDE:

- Charter schools if they are part of the school district.
- Schools that are considered schools by the state if they are part of the school district, even if they are not the home school for any students (e.g., vocational education schools).

EXCLUDE:

- Entity numbers of entity type "DISTRICT" if they represent an administrative function or building and not an actual school.
- Non-instructional facilities (NIFs), whether or not they contain classrooms.
- Entity numbers for single schools with multiple physical locations. (USAC may have required such schools to request entity numbers for each location because the locations have different addresses; include only the entity number for the main school location.)

When you click "Lookup Urban/Rural Status," you will see three fields:

- A pink notification of the number of errors (i.e., schools that could not be found or assigned a status). If you click on the "Show/Hide" link you can get details on those schools.
- The percentages of the schools in the school district that are urban (U), rural (R), or undetermined (?), along with a notification that the school district is eligible for an urban discount, a rural discount, or the eligibility cannot be determined because there are too many entity numbers with errors.
- A list of the schools from your search, featuring the entity number, entity name, street address, type of entity, and urban/rural status for each school.

If the urban or rural status cannot be determined for one or more entities, we suggest that you call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 1-888-203-8100 for assistance.

- Library system

Click the radio button to the left of "Library system." This will open up a field where you enter the entity numbers of the individual library outlets/branches in your library system.

You can type the entity numbers, paste them from your clipboard or computer memory, or use the lookup tool (the magnifying glass to the right of the "Entity Number" caption).

- If you paste entity numbers from another data source, you must first put them in comma-delimited format (individual entity numbers separated by commas).
- The lookup tool allows you to search by name, state, or zip code. If the search criterion you specify returns multiple results, click the radio buttons to the left of the library or libraries you want to add. Notice that you may have more than one page of results. You can click radio buttons for multiple entity numbers on multiple pages, but once you click "OK" you cannot add more entity numbers using the search tool; you will have to add them manually.

NOTE: Certain entity numbers must be included or excluded to receive the correct urban/rural designation.

INCLUDE:

- Bookmobiles and library kiosks, if they are considered library outlets/branches in your state.

EXCLUDE:

- Entity numbers that represent a library administrative function or building and not an actual library.
- Non-instructional facilities (NIFs).

When you click "Lookup Urban/Rural Status," you will see three fields:

- A pink notification of the number of errors (i.e., library outlets/branches that could not be found or assigned a status). If you click on the "Show/Hide" link you can get details on those library outlets/branches.
- The percentages of the library outlets/branches in the library system that are urban (U), rural (R), or undetermined (?), along with a notification that the library system is eligible for an urban discount, a rural discount, or the eligibility cannot be determined because there are too many entity numbers with errors.
- A list of the libraries from your search, featuring the entity number, entity name, street address, type of entity, and urban/rural status for each library.

If the urban or rural status cannot be determined for one or more entities, we suggest that you call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 1-888-203-8100 for assistance.

2. Urban/Rural Status Reports by State

- Notes on state reports:

1. If you are having difficulty accessing the state reports from a mobile device, please switch to a desktop or laptop computer.
2. Some browsers will store and display the version of a state report you viewed on your last visit to the site. To avoid this issue, please clear your browser's cache before each visit.
3. State reports may include entity numbers for entities that are inactive or closed, or that have never been featured on an application. It is not necessary to update addresses for these entities.

This tool features static files, one for each state or territory, which contains the following for each entity in the USAC database:

- Entity number
- Entity name
- Street address
- City
- State
- Zip code
- Entity type (SCHOOL, DISTRICT, LIBRARY, SLC CONSORTIUM)
- Entity status (Urban, Rural, Invalid Address)

Note that this report simply uses the address of record to locate and report an urban or rural status. Entity numbers for a school district, library system, consortium, statewide applicant, or NIF do not have an urban or rural status that can be used to determine the eligibility for urban or rural discounts even though an urban/rural status for each may appear in a state or territory status report.

Any changes that USAC makes to the database – such as address corrections – are sent to the U.S. Census lookup and updated in the Urban/Rural Status Reports by State in one to two days.

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