

## SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES PROGRAM

# NEWS BRIEF

September 25, 2015

**TIP OF THE WEEK:** If you are trying to log in to EPC for the first time using the Forgot Password process, be sure to enter your username (generally your email address) in all lower-case letters. Entering one or more upper-case letters in the username field will result in an error.

### Commitments for Funding Year 2015

**Funding Year 2015.** USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2015 Wave 19 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on October 2. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of September 25, FY2015 commitments total over \$1.99 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.

### FY2014 Invoice Deadline for Recurring Services - October 28, 2015

Recurring services are services delivered continuously or at regular intervals. Examples of recurring services include basic telephone service, monthly Internet access, and basic maintenance of internal connections. Recurring services must be delivered during the funding year – that is, between July 1 and the following June 30.

The deadline for invoicing USAC for recurring services is calculated as follows:

- 120 days after the last date to receive services (which is generally June 30 of the funding year) or
- 120 days after the date of the FCC Form 486 Notification Letter

whichever is later.

**October 28, 2015** is the deadline for most applicants and service providers to invoice USAC for FY2014 recurring services. This deadline applies if the date of your FY2014 FCC Form 486 Notification Letter is on or before June 30, 2015.

- **If your FRN is for non-recurring services or the date on your FCC Form 486 Notification Letter is after June 30, your invoice deadline is later than October 28.**
- The deadline for delivery and installation of non-recurring services is generally September 30 following the close of the funding year, so your invoice deadline for non-recurring services would be calculated based on September 30 rather than June 30.

This October 28 deadline applies to both invoice forms:

- The [FCC Form 472](#), Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form, is filed by the applicant and approved by the service provider after the applicant has paid for the services in full.
- The [FCC Form 474](#), Service Provider Invoice (SPI) Form, is filed by the service provider after the service provider has billed the applicant for the applicant's non-discount share of the cost of the services.

**Applicants and service providers can request one, one-time 120-day extension of the deadline to file an invoice. This new rule applies to both invoice types.**

**If you need to request an invoice deadline extension, you must submit or postmark your request on or before the day that the invoice is due. For most FY2014 recurring services, you must request an extension of the invoice deadline on or before October 28, 2015. USAC cannot grant invoice deadline extension requests received or postmarked after the invoice deadline.**

More information on invoice deadline extension requests, including options for submission, can be found on the [Invoice Extensions](#) webpage on the USAC website.

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#### **- Tips for applicants filing BEAR Forms**

- **Gather your customer bills and do a reconciliation.** Before you file your last BEAR Form for FY2014 recurring services, make sure that you are not invoicing USAC twice for the same service period or skipping a service period. Remember that you are invoicing USAC for discounts on the cost of services that were approved by USAC on an FCDL and actually received.
- **Make sure your service providers have filed a [FCC Form 473, Service Provider Annual Certification \(SPAC\) Form, for FY2014.](#)** USAC will not pay invoices for a funding year unless a SPAC Form is on file for that year. You can [Search for SPIN Information](#) on the USAC website to determine if your service provider has filed this form for FY2014.
- **Allow sufficient time for your service provider(s) to review and approve your forms.** This is especially important if you are requesting reimbursement for an entire year of service on a single BEAR Form. If you're not sure how long your service provider's review and approval process will take, ask your service provider.
- **Check with your service providers to see if they know how to use their online access to USAC's [E-file System.](#)** Service providers use the E-file System for a number of actions, including reviewing and approving BEAR Forms. If your service providers do not use the E-file System, suggest that they call USAC at 1-888-641-8722 (choose the "FCC Form 498" option) for assistance.
- **[File your BEAR Form online.](#)** The online system allows you to file your information quickly and easily, populates some information automatically based on your entries, and warns you in many cases if you enter incorrect or inconsistent information. Before you file online, make sure that your service providers are able to review and approve BEAR Forms online.
- **Don't wait until the last minute to file your FY2014 BEAR Forms.** Applicants should be filing their final BEAR Forms for FY2014 recurring services now.
- **Remember that invoice deadline extension requests must be submitted to USAC on or before the invoice deadline.**

#### **- Tips for service providers approving BEAR Forms**

- **Tell your customers what your requirements are for reviewing and approving BEAR Forms.** If you communicate up front with applicants about the amount of time and any documentation you need in order to review and approve BEAR Forms, you will save time and reduce frustration for them and for you.
- **Get online access to review and approve BEAR Forms.** Service providers should already have online access to USAC's [E-File System.](#) If you don't have online access or you don't know how to use your login information, call USAC at 1-888-641-8722 (choose the "FCC Form 498" option) and ask for assistance.
- **Check online once each week for pending BEAR Forms.** Although USAC will send you an email message when an applicant files a BEAR Form online, you do not need to wait to receive the email before you review a form. If you log in to the E-file System and check for pending BEAR Forms once each week, you will ensure that you won't miss any forms needing approval.
- **Do not simply click the "Certify" button at the bottom of the online form – that action will reject the entire form.** You must approve each line item by clicking the box to the right of the item, or by clicking the blanket approval box at the top of the list of line items to approve all items.

#### **- Tips for service providers filing SPI Forms**

- **Gather your customer bills and do a reconciliation before filing a SPI Form.** Make sure before you file your last SPI Form for FY2014 recurring services that you are not invoicing USAC

twice for the same service period or skipping a service period. Remember that you are invoicing USAC for discounts on the cost of services that were approved by USAC on an FCDL and then actually delivered.

- **Make sure you have filed an [FCC Form 473 \(SPAC Form\)](#) for FY2014.** USAC will not pay invoices for a funding year unless a SPAC Form is on file for that funding year. You can [Search for SPIN Information](#) on the USAC website to determine if you filed this form with USAC for a funding year.
- **File your SPI Form [online](#) or electronically.** The online system allows you to file your information quickly and easily. You do not need access to the E-file System to file SPI Forms online. If you want to file SPI Forms electronically by emailing USAC a comma-delimited file with your invoice information, review the [electronic invoicing guidance](#) on the USAC website for assistance.
- **Remember that invoice deadline extension requests must be submitted to USAC on or before the invoice deadline.**

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