USAC CONNECTION

SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES PROGRAM

NEWS BRIEF

February 5, 2016

> **TIP OF THE WEEK: Check each SL News Brief for EPC filing tips (see below).** We will publish a few tips each week to help applicants navigate in EPC and file program forms; these tips will also be added to the Navigation Tips document.

Commitments for Funding Years 2015 and 2014

Funding Year 2015. USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2015 Wave 36 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on February 11. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of February 5, FY2015 commitments total over $2.99 billion.

Funding Year 2014. USAC will release FY2014 Wave 76 FCDLs on February 12. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 1 (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) requests at all discount levels. As of February 5, FY2014 commitments total just under $2.28 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.

Schools and Libraries ... File Along with Me!

We're excited to introduce "File Along with Me," our new blog that uses a friendly, step-by-step approach to help schools and libraries, regardless of experience level, apply for E-rate Program funding.

> **File Along with Me: A step-by-step blog to help you complete your funding application successfully**
> Check it out here: **www.filealongwitherate.org**.

File Along with Me also serves as a schedule for managing your application process. We hope you'll complete each post's task as soon as you can, so you'll identify problems early, get help if you need it, and submit your application with time to spare before the filing window closes.

The blog is one of the optional tools we are offering as application filing guidance. It is designed with first-time applicants in mind, but even if you've applied for E-rate funding before, this year everyone is a beginner in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC). In its first weeks, File Along with Me will walk you through how to set up your profile and correspond with USAC in the new online filing portal.

You can receive instant, automatic notices of new posts! To sign up, visit the blog and fill out the "subscribe" form on the right side of your screen. We'll also include a weekly recap of File Along with Me posts here in the weekly SL News Brief.

We hope you enjoy the new blog, and find it helpful while you're applying to E-rate!

Filing Tips

Each week we will devote a section of the SL News Brief to tips about filing program forms in EPC. This week's tips are:

1. Sign out of your current session in EPC if you are finished.

You sign out of EPC by clicking on your name at the top of any page in EPC and then choosing "Sign Out." If you simply close your browser, your session will remain active. You cannot have more than three sessions open at once, and the system will lock you out for at least an hour if you try to open a fourth.

2. Get an FCC Registration Number if you don't already have one.

The billed entity (the parent entity filing a program form) must have an FCC Registration Number (FCC RN). If you don't have one already, you can get one through the FCC's Commission Registration System (CORES) website.

Child entities (e.g., schools in a school district or libraries in a library system) do not need FCC RNs, in spite of the text that currently appears in their individual profiles.

3. Go to your Tasks tab to retrieve a form that you started but did not finish.

When you leave a form – voluntarily or involuntarily – the system will automatically create a task for you to continue your form. You can also find this task on your landing page by clicking the USAC logo and then scrolling to the "My Tasks" section.

Also, if you indicate that you are ready to review the PDF of your form before certification, the system will return you to your landing page. Within a few minutes, all full-rights users should see a task appear on their landing pages to review and certify the form.

4. When completing the cost information for an FCC Form 471 funding request, provide an entry in every field.

If there are no costs associated with a particular entry in a field in either the monthly (recurring) costs or one-time (non-recurring) costs, enter a zero ("0").

5. When a funding request asks for the number of users, enter the number of lines or circuits.

Don't enter the number of students, patrons, or staff.

EPC Training Site Ready Early Next Week

USAC has developed a training site for EPC. Users can use this training site to practice filing forms and navigating the new system. The training site will be available early next week from the Trainings & Outreach page of the USAC website.

Trainers can submit a request for the number of unique logins they need for one or more types of test entities – independent schools, independent libraries, school districts, and/or library systems. Each user needs a separate login.

- Request a single login if you are just doing a demonstration.
- Request logins for each of your trainees if you want the trainees to practice on their own.

USAC will respond by email – generally the same day – with a list of logins. More information on how to use the system will be available on the training site page.