SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES PROGRAM
NEWS BRIEF

January 29, 2016

> **TIP OF THE WEEK: The application filing window for FY2016 will open at noon EST on February 3, 2016 and close at 11:59:59 PM EDT on April 29, 2016.** Now is a good time to start updating the information in your organization's profile in EPC (see below).

Commitments for Funding Years 2015 and 2014

Funding Year 2015. USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2015 Wave 35 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on February 4. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of January 29, FY2015 commitments total over $2.96 billion.

Funding Year 2014. USAC will release FY2014 Wave 75 FCDLs on February 3. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 1 (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) requests at all discount levels. As of January 29, 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.

FY2016 Filing Window Opens Next Wednesday

The FY2016 application filing window for the FCC Form 471 opens on Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at noon EST and will close on Friday, April 29, 2016 at 11:59:59 PM EDT. The window will be open for 87 days.

Helpful Tips and Reminders

- **Log in to your E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) account and review and update your profile information (see below).** Address and contact information, school and library attributes, discount calculation information, connectivity questions, and contract information can be updated in your profile now and then automatically populate in your FCC Form 471 when you start the filing process.
- **FY2016 FCC Forms 470 and 471 must now be filed and certified online in EPC.** Applicants can no longer certify the FCC Form 471 on paper.
- **Funding request details for costs and services are entered directly into the online FCC Form 471.** There is no longer an "Item 21 Attachment" submitted separately from the form.
- **Retain all documents** to be able to demonstrate compliance with program rules.
- **Review program guidance materials** – such as the FY2016 Eligible Services List and the guidance materials in the Applicant Steps on the USAC website – so that you are aware of program rules.
- **Ask for assistance** if you need it (see below).

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE FY2016 FILING WINDOW

NOTE: Do not wait for these dates to occur before you start these forms, as you may not be able to complete all the necessary data entry requirements by the application filing window deadline.

April 1, 2016 – This is the last POSSIBLE date to file **AND CERTIFY** an FCC Form 470 on USAC's website, meet the 28-day posting requirement for the competitive bidding process, and submit an FCC Form 471 on the filing window closing date.

April 29, 2016 – The FY2016 application filing window will close at 11:59:59 PM EDT. For your FCC Form 471 to be considered as filed within the filing window, it must be filed **AND CERTIFIED** online no later than the filing window closing date.

TIPS FOR FILING THE FCC FORM 471 ONLINE

For FY2016, the online form is divided into five sections: Basic Information, Entity Information, Funding Requests, Connectivity Information, and Certify. The flow of the form and the information provided is similar to that from last year. However, remember that the Item 21 information is now entered directly in the Funding Requests section of the form.

We will be providing additional tips and guidance during the coming days and weeks. However, here are some important actions you can take now:

Log in to your EPC account. USAC has created accounts in EPC for independent schools, independent libraries, school districts, library systems, and consortia. Each account has an account administrator who can create additional users on the account.

After you have been created as a user, you must follow the process to create a password, log in to EPC, and accept the Terms and Conditions for using the system. You can watch a video to view the specific steps in this process. You will not appear in the system as a user until you have completed this entire process, including accepting the Terms and Conditions.

Check your organization's applicant type. You can no longer file different types of applications (school, library, school district, library system, consortium) using the same billed entity number. For example, if in the past you filed applications for your school district using the administration building's entity number, you will now need two numbers – one for the admin building and one for the school district – and the school district will be the organization filing applications.

Review your organization's profile information. The profile – the information about your organization – has been moved from your FY2015 FCC Form 471 into EPC. Check to make sure that your address and contact information is correct.

- School districts: Make sure all of your individual schools and non-instructional facilities (NIFs) are listed under "My Entities" on your landing page. If any are missing, contact the Client Service Bureau (CSB) as described below.
- Library systems: Make sure all of your library outlets and NIFs are listed under "My Entities" on your landing page. If any are missing, contact CSB.
- Consortia: Make sure all of your members are listed. If not, you can add the missing members yourself from your landing page by clicking "Related Actions," then "Manage Organization Relationships," then "Add Consortium Member."

Ask for assistance. If you have questions, please contact CSB.

- **Submit a customer service case in EPC.** To do this, go to your landing page, click "Contact Us" at the top of the page, and provide the information requested.
- **Call us toll-free at 1-888-203-8100.**
- **Submit a Question** by email.

Thank you for your participation in the E-rate program.