

February 25, 2015

EPC Improvements and Enhancements to the Online FCC Form 471

On Monday, February 22, we deployed a number of improvements and enhancements to the online FCC Form 471. Some of these improvements have been in the works for some time; others came as suggestions from early filers that we were able to incorporate and implement. We expect that these changes will improve the online experience, and we will deploy more of them as we are able to do so.

Below is a list of the changes that are now available to online filers:

New FRN/ FRN line item navigation

Entering the high-level and the detailed information for a Funding Request Number (FRN) is still a two-step process, but the navigation is now easier.

When you click the green "Add FRN" button to add an FRN, you provide the high-level information (e.g., narrative, contracted services or tariffed/month-to-month services, service start and end dates) as before. You are then returned to the main FRN screen.

- If you want to edit the information you just provided or delete the FRN entirely, check the box to the left of the FRN. The "Edit FRN" and "Remove FRN" buttons to the right of the green "Add FRN" button will be enabled.
- To continue the process of entering your first FRN line item in that FRN (e.g., specific services, costs, and recipient of service allocations), click the FRN itself – the number is a hyperlink. Clicking this link will take you to the FRN line item landing page. On that page, you can click the green "Add FRN Line Item" button to add the line-item information. Once you have completed entering all of the details for that FRN line item, you can either add another FRN line item by clicking the "Add FRN Line Item" button or you can return to the main FRN landing page by clicking the "Continue" button at the bottom of the screen.

Help screens

At the bottom of each page in the form is a Help section. The links in this section will allow users to access program guidance relevant to that particular page of the online form.

To access the Help section for a particular page, look for the "FCC Form 471 Help" section at the bottom of the screen and click the plus sign ("+") to the right of that heading. Doing so will expand this section and display a list of hyperlinked documents.

The links may take the user to EPC-specific navigation guides, program guidance on the USAC website, videos, PDF documents, or other useful information, depending on the entries required on that page. Clicking the link will open the document in a new tab in your web browser: simply click the original tab in your browser to return to your FCC Form 471.

Some Help links will be available today, and more will be added over the next week or so. Going forward, as USAC issues additional guidance, new links will appear in this section.

Save & Share button added

A Save & Share button similar to the one in the online FCC Form 470 has been added to the online FCC Form 471. This will now allow full- and partial-rights users – including consultants that have been given these levels of rights – to view and, if necessary, edit an incomplete form. Remember that when you click "Save & Share," that the form is no longer assigned to you and can be picked up by other full- and

partial-rights users in your account. If you click the button by accident, return to your Landing Page by clicking on the USAC logo in the top left-hand corner of your screen, and select your FCC Form 471 from the "Tasks" section.

Entity conversions can be processed more quickly

The Client Service Bureau (CSB) now has the ability to change any entity into any other type of entity. So, for example, if a school should be a non-instructional facility (NIF) or a library system should be a library, CSB can now process these requests.

NOTE: If the organization has started but not certified an FCC Form 470, we suggest discarding that form before you call CSB to change your entity type. You can discard a form at any point in the process before it is certified by clicking the "Discard Form" button at the bottom of any page of the form.

If you have already certified your FCC Form 470, there is no need to file a new form, and CSB can change your entity type. However, we strongly suggest that you make any necessary entity-type changes before you certify your FCC Form 471.

Pricing confidentiality data in the FCC Form 471 record

In general, the prices for products and services for which E-rate discounts are requested can no longer be confidential. However, if there is a rule, statute, or other restriction that prohibits publication of the specific pricing information, applicants can provide the appropriate citation and upload the associated documentation to demonstrate this.

If pricing confidentiality is indicated on an FRN, the pricing information provided will now appear in the FCC Form 471 record, so that applicant users on that account can view it. Other users will not be able to see this information.

Other enhancements

Users will also notice some small improvements in navigation, helper text, and displays of information throughout the online form.

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