



August 4, 2017

**TIP OF THE WEEK:** To request corrections to your FCC Form 471, you can use the **RAL Modification process up until the time that USAC issues a funding commitment decision.** To file a RAL modification, go to your FCC Form 471 in EPC, choose **Related Actions** from the left-hand menu, then choose **Submit Modification Request (RAL)**.

## Commitments for Funding Years 2017 and 2016

**Funding Year 2017.** USAC is scheduled to release Funding Year (FY) 2017 Wave 11 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on August 11. This wave includes commitments for approved applications for all service types and at all discount levels. As of August 4, FY2017 commitments total over \$686 million.

**Funding Year 2016.** USAC is scheduled to release Wave 58 FCDLs on August 8. This wave includes commitments for approved applications for all service types and at all discount levels. As of August 4, FY2016 commitments total over \$2.82 billion.

On the date that FCDLs are issued, you can access your FCDL notification from the **Notifications** section of your landing page in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC).

## Webinar on Highlights from Service Provider Training

On July 25, 2017, USAC held a training for service providers in Dallas, Texas. Next week, USAC will host a live webinar to review highlights of the training. We expect this opportunity will be of particular interest to service providers who were unable to attend the Dallas training.

The live webinar will be held on Wednesday, August 9, 2017, at 3:00 PM EDT. USAC staff will provide a brief overview of the service provider process, and cover basic information about each of the training presentations. Attendees will be able to post questions during the webinar, and USAC staff will answer as many questions as time allows at the end of the webinar.

We suggest that you [register for the webinar](#) in advance, although you can register and join the webinar at any point after it has started. On Monday, August 7, 2017, we will have the training presentations posted on the [archived event page](#). We recommend reviewing the presentations to help you prepare questions for the webinar.

USAC will post a recording of the webinar in the **Webinar Recordings** section of the [Online Learning Library](#) shortly after the conclusion of the webinar.

## Common Questions on the Competitive Bidding Process

Now that applicants are filing FCC Forms 470 for FY2018, we are providing answers to some common questions coming in to the Client Service Bureau (CSB).

### How do I count the 28-day waiting period? Do I exclude weekends and holidays?

The day that you certify the FCC Form 470 in EPC – even if you certify it at 11:59 PM EDT – counts as the first day of your 28-day waiting period. Weekend days and holidays count toward your 28 days.

- EPC calculates the end of your minimum 28-day waiting period and displays it on your FCC Form 470. We refer to this date as the Allowable Contract Date or ACD. You can also find the ACD in the Receipt Notification Letter posted on your **News** tab in EPC shortly after you certify your form.
- If you make a cardinal change to the scope of your project and/or the services you are requesting, you must restart your 28-day clock on the day you make the change – for example, on the day you post the new Request for Proposal (RFP) document to your FCC Form 470. In this case, you must count the 28 days yourself – EPC does not calculate a new ACD for you.
- Remember that the 28-day waiting period is a minimum requirement. You can wait longer than 28 days.

**What if I have only one service provider in my area? Am I still required to file an FCC Form 470?**

Yes. If you are receiving services under tariff or on a month-to-month basis, you must file an FCC Form 470 each year.

You do not have to file an FCC Form 470 if:

- You are under a multi-year contract that covers your services for the upcoming funding year.
- You have a contract with voluntary extensions, and you and your service provider agree to exercise an extension that covers your services for the upcoming funding year.
- You order a commercially available, business-class internet access service that meets [specific requirements](#).

**What can I do if I only receive one bid? Can I choose it?**

Yes, but only if it is cost-effective. If the service does not appear to be cost-effective based on your evaluation, you can solicit bids from other service providers and evaluate those bids as well.

If the bid is cost-effective, send yourself an email or create a memo to the file indicating that you only received one bid. Keep that email or memo and your evaluation with your other competitive bidding documentation.

**What if I don't receive any bids?**

You can solicit bids. If you are currently receiving service from a service provider, you can consider your existing service – for example, by using a current bill – as a bid response. We suggest that you check with your service provider to be sure they are willing to continue your current service at your current rates.

- If the rates may be going up or the services are changing, it would be helpful to get that information in writing or by email from your service provider.
- Be sure to verify that any changes in your current service are within the scope of your posted FCC Form 470.

You may also be eligible to purchase services under a [state master contract](#) negotiated by your state government.

As above, send yourself an email or create a memo to the file indicating that you did not receive any bids and describe the action that you took (e.g., you solicited bids or you used a bill from your current service provider). Keep that email or memo with your other competitive bidding documentation.

**Do I have to choose the bid with the lowest price?**

No. You choose the evaluation factor(s) you will use to evaluate the bids you receive. You can choose as many or as few as you like.

You must include the price of the services that are eligible for E-rate discounts as an evaluation factor, and that factor must be weighted more heavily than any other single factor in your evaluation.

You can refer to the USAC website for guidance on [constructing an evaluation](#). That guidance includes a [sample bid evaluation matrix](#).

**As a service provider, how do I submit a bid on the services requested?**

First, review the FCC Form 470 – especially the narrative sections – and any attachment (what we refer to as "RFP documents"). Applicants who have specific requirements on preparing and submitting bids should provide that information there.

If there are no specific requirements provided, contact the contact person (or the technical contact person, if one is identified) for any additional information.

Do not submit questions or bids directly to USAC.

### **Where can I get more information on competitive bidding?**

The following guidance materials are available on the USAC website.

**Application process steps** - note that you can find links to related documents in the grey area just below the title of each step:

- Applicant Step 1 - [Competitive Bidding](#)
- Applicant Step 2 - [Selecting Service Providers](#)
- Service Provider Step 2 - [Responding to Bids](#)
- Service Provider Step 3 - [Winning the Bid](#)

### **SL News Briefs**

- [June 30, 2017](#) on reminders for FY2018 FCC Form 470
- [July 14, 2017](#) on common questions about the FCC Form 470

### **Videos**

- [How to File FCC Form 470](#)
- [How to Search for FCC Forms 470](#)
- [Gift Rules](#)

### **Other guidance documents**

- [Eligible Services Overview](#)
- [Document Retention](#)

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