Schools and Libraries Program
News Brief

October 6, 2017

TIP OF THE WEEK: **APPLICANTS: Review the information below to prepare yourself for filing BEAR Forms for FY2016 recurring services.** For most applicants, the deadline to file an invoice or request an invoice deadline extension for these services is October 30, 2017.

Commitments for Funding Years 2017 and 2016

Funding Year 2017. USAC is scheduled to release Funding Year (FY) 2017 Wave 20 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on October 12. As of October 6, FY2017 commitments total over $1.43 billion.

Funding Year 2016. USAC is scheduled to release Wave 65 FCDLs on October 10. As of October 6, FY2016 commitments total over $2.90 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).

Update on Fall Training

USAC will be conducting in-person E-rate training sessions for 2017 at these four locations:

Washington, DC area on October 10

> National 4-H Conference Center
> 7100 Connecticut Avenue
> Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Charlotte, North Carolina on October 24

> Central Piedmont Community College
> Performing Arts and Event Facilities
> 1206 Elizabeth Avenue
> Charlotte, NC 28204

Minneapolis, Minnesota on November 2

> Location information will be posted shortly on the registration page

Portland, Oregon on November 14

> DoubleTree Hotel Portland
> 1000 NE Multnomah
> Portland, Oregon 97232

You can register for any of these training sessions from the Upcoming Events section of the Trainings & Outreach page on the USAC website.

After you have registered for a specific training session, please continue to monitor the page for that session, as we will continue to provide more details as they become available.

Note that attendees will make their own arrangements for hotels and meals.

Reminders on the Upcoming Invoice Deadline for FY2016 Recurring Services

Applicants and service providers who have been successfully filing invoices – FCC Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form (BEAR Form) or FCC Form 474, Service Provider Invoice Form (SPI Form) – on a regular basis can continue to file invoices as appropriate to complete the invoicing process for FY2016 recurring services by the invoice deadline.

Applicants who are only now realizing that this deadline is approaching and are not prepared to meet it should review the following steps, read the details below the steps, and take the appropriate actions:

- See if you need to file BEAR Forms – Item 1.
- If you do, get a PIN **NOW** – Item 2.
- Request an invoice deadline extension, even if you do not think you will need it – Item 3.
- Complete and certify an FCC Form 498 – Item 4.
- Submit your banking information and then follow up with USAC – Item 5.
- Complete and certify your BEAR Forms – Item 6.

1. Verify that you have been receiving discounted bills from your service provider.

You can choose whether to receive discounted bills from your service provider or to pay the service provider's bills in full and then invoice USAC for the discount amount.

- For the SPI method, the service provider bills you for the non-discount share of the cost of the service and then invoices USAC for the discount share by filing a SPI Form.
- For the BEAR method, the service provider bills you for the full cost of the service, you pay the service provider's bill, and then you invoice USAC for the discount share by filing a BEAR Form.

If you did not communicate your choice to your service provider(s), they may have assumed you chose the BEAR method and billed you for the full cost of your services. At this late date, we recommend that you use the BEAR method if your approved discount has never been applied to your bills from the service provider.

2. Request a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

To access the online BEAR Form, you will need a PIN. A PIN is specific to a user and a Billed Entity, so if you file BEAR Forms for more than one Billed Entity, you will need a PIN for each one.

NOTE: If you have a PIN and you can access the online BEAR Form for your Billed Entity, you do not need to request a new one.

- To create a PIN, open a customer service case in EPC.
- Download the New PIN Template from the PIN page on the USAC website, even if you only need one PIN.
- Complete a line on the template for each PIN you are requesting. Avoid adding a space at the beginning or end of each of your entries, and double-check your entries for accuracy.
- Attach the completed template to your customer service case and click **Submit**.

We will first verify that you are an authorized user on the organization's account in EPC. If you are, we will create a new PIN for you and mail it to you in a secure mailer at the address you provided in the New PIN Template. It usually takes two to three weeks for you to receive your PIN after you submit your request, but we try to turn PINs around more quickly at this crucial time.

For more information on requesting a PIN, you can refer to the September 15 SL News Brief.

3. Submit an invoice deadline extension request.

Applicants and service providers can receive a single, 120-day extension of the deadline to file an invoice. We suggest that you request one now just in case you need it.

The request MUST be submitted no later than the invoice deadline itself – for most FY2016 recurring services, that deadline is October 30, 2017. We recommend using the **Deadline Extension Tool** to

submit your request.

Applicants access the tool by logging in to the [online BEAR Form](#).

- Click the **Deadline Extension** link on the right-hand side of the blue bar at the top of the BEAR Form home page.

Service providers access the tool by logging in to the [E-File System](#).

- Set (select) the SPIN you are using if you have more than one SPIN.
- Click the **472 BEAR Form** link on the left-hand side of the home screen.
- Click the **Deadline Extension** link on the right-hand side of the blue bar at the top of the BEAR Form home page.

We will notify you of the status of your request on-screen, and follow up with an email. If your request is approved, the FRN and its extended deadline will show up immediately in the [FRN Extension Table](#).

4. Complete and certify an FCC Form 498.

Before you can file a BEAR Form, you must have a 498 ID. USAC issues this identification number after you certify — and USAC approves — an FCC Form 498.

NOTE: If all of your service providers use the SPI method to invoice USAC, you do not need to file an FCC Form 498.

To complete and certify an FCC Form 498, you need the following:

- **A School or Library Official and a General Financial Contact.** Your EPC account administrator assigns these two roles in your organization's profile in EPC. One person can hold both roles. The School or Library Official must be the one to certify your form.
- **Your Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Tax Identification Number (Tax ID).** In general, schools and libraries already have a Federal EIN or Tax ID. If the billed entity is not the school or library — for example, if a town or county government files program forms on behalf of a library that does not control its own finances — use the EIN or Tax ID of the appropriate agency.
- **Your Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number.** DUNS is a proprietary system developed and regulated by Dun & Bradstreet. Dun & Bradstreet will issue a DUNS number without charge to an entity required to register with the federal government for contracts or grants.
  - If you do not already have a DUNS number (you can check by searching the [online D-U-N-S database](#) website), you can apply for one by clicking the button labeled **Request a D-U-N-S Number** on the [online D-U-N-S database](#) site.
- **Your FCC Registration Number.** An FCC Registration Number (FCC RN) is required by all entities that do business with the FCC. If you have filed an FCC Form 471 in the last several years, you already have an FCC RN. If not, you can apply for one on the FCC's [CORES website](#). Only the Billed Entity (the entity filing program forms) needs this number.
- **Your bank name, bank account number, and routing number for direct payments.** To identify the bank account where you want USAC to send your direct payments, you will be asked to provide these three pieces of information. The bank account you provide cannot be for a bank account owned by a consultant.

For more information on filing the FCC Form 498, you can refer to the [August 11 SL News Brief](#).

5. Provide verification of your banking information to USAC.

After you certify your form, scan and upload a copy of a voided check or a statement from your financial institution that includes your bank name and bank account number. The name on the account must match the name on the FCC Form 498, and the bank account information must match the information on the voided check or bank statement.

- To upload your documentation, complete the information requested on the [Upload Documents](#) page, locate and upload your documentation using the **Browse...** or **Choose File** function on that page, and then click the **Send** button.
- To fax your documentation to us, create a cover page that includes your billed entity name, your 498 ID (from your certified FCC Form 498), and the contact person's name, email address, and

phone number. Fax the cover page and your documentation to us at (888) 637-6226.

To check the status of our review, you can email USAC Customer Support or call us at (888) 641-8722 (choose option 3, then option 2, then option 2 again – ignore the verbal prompts).

We also verify that the EIN or Tax ID you report matches the number you reported on the FCC RN on file with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). We will notify you if there is a mismatch that you must correct.

For more information on our FCC Form 498 review process, you can refer to the August 18 SL News Brief.

6. File your BEAR Forms.

When you are ready to file your form, log in to the online BEAR Form using your PIN, last name, Billed Entity Number, and email address. The information you provide in all four fields must match the information you provided USAC when we issued your PIN.

For assistance in filing this form, you can refer to the FCC Form 472 User Guide and the BEAR Form video in the Invoicing section of the Online Learning Library on the USAC website.