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Funding Status – FY 2018 and FY 2017

FY 2018:

The FY 2018 Form 471 Application Window will:

- Open Thursday, January 11, 2018 at 12:00 noon EST.
- Close Thursday, March 22, 2018 at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

Important note: On January 10 at 11:59 p.m. EST, USAC will lock every applicant’s entity profiles for the duration of the Application Window. Any changes applicants need to make in preparation for the FY 2018 application cycle must be made before these profiles are locked.

FY 2017:

Wave 30 for FY 2017 was released Thursday, December 21st, for a total of \$21.6 million. There were no Nevada applications processed in this wave.. Cumulative national funding through Wave 30 is \$2.01 billion, including \$7.3 million for Nevada. Last week’s wave broke the \$2 billion funding barrier one month earlier than last year. Wave 31 is scheduled to be released on Friday, December 29th

Updates on USAC’s E-Rate Productivity Center and Legacy System

Updates on USAC’s E-Rate Productivity Center and Legacy System

Important: Category 1 Form 470 Options:

Reminder from last week’s [newsletter](#): USAC has posted, but still has not yet publicized, a [Reference Table for FCC Form 470 Category One Drop-Downs](#). The table provides additional

USAC guidance concerning which Form 470 menu options must be used (for Form 470s filed on or after August 26, 2017) when requesting various combinations of transport and Internet services. Those seeking Internet service with bundled transport need to be particularly careful. If USAC strictly enforces these new menu options, applicants relying on last year’s Form 470 selections may find themselves facing funding denials for FY 2018.

The table also notes which combinations of requested transport services affirmatively require uploaded RFP documents. As a small matter, it should be noted that both the table and the underlying [Form 470 filing instructions](#) incorrectly indicate that the “Cellular Data Plan/Air Card Service” option does not require an RFP. Selecting that option without uploading an RFP, however, leads to an error message. The workaround is to upload some form of an “RFP.”¹

You have selected a service function that requires a RFP. In order to add this service request, please first upload all RFPs.

Form 471 EPC Updates:

EPC’s FY 2018 version of the Form 471, scheduled to become available with the opening of the Application Window on January 11th, will operate in much the same fashion as last year. Minor changes, many designed to help applicants avoid problems experienced with FY 2017 filings, are reviewed in [USAC’s December 22nd News Brief](#) discussed below.

Form 500s and the Category 2 Budget Tool:

Applicants who have filed Form 500s to reduce Category 2 commitments for earlier funding years, and whose reductions have been approved, may find that USAC’s [Category Two Budget Lookup Tool](#) does not yet reflect EPC-generated Revised Funding Commitment Decision Letters (“RFCDLs”). We expect the Category Two Budget Lookup Tool to be updated soon to reflect FY 2017 data, with or without a fix for the Form 500 reduction problem. In the meantime, RFCDL information for FY 2016 and FY 2017, including revised funding commitment amounts, are shown in the [FRN Status Tool](#) (“FST”).

E-Rate Updates and Reminders

Upcoming 2017 E-Rate Dates:

December 26 Form 486 deadline for FY 2017 funding committed in Wave 13. Upcoming FY 2017 Form 486 deadlines include:

Wave 14	01/02/2018
Wave 15	01/08/2018
Wave 16	01/15/2018

¹ Applicants seeking quotes on wireless data services should remember that such services are eligible only if they can demonstrate that the services are a cost-effective means of providing internal broadband access for mobile devices at schools and libraries. This may require also seeking bids for, and comparing costs to, Category 2 WiFi systems.

Applicants missing these (or earlier) deadlines should watch carefully for “Form 486 Urgent Reminder Letters” in EPC. The Reminders will afford applicants with 15-day extensions to submit their Form 486s without penalty.

January 10 Close of the EPC Administrative Window. As of 11:59 p.m. EST, EPC entity profiles will be locked. Applicants will not be able to update their profiles (e.g., with student NSLP data) until after the close of the Form 471 Application Window.

January 11 The FY 2018 Application Window opens at 12:00 noon EST. The Form 471 Window will close at 11:59 p.m. EDT on March 22, 2018.

USAC Board Nominations:

FCC Chairman Pai appointed six members to the USAC Board of Directors ([DA 17-1228](#)). Five of these members are already on the Board with terms which would have expired at the end of December. The one new member, to be one of the two school representatives, will be Joan H. Wade, Ed.D, the Executive Director of the Association of Educational Service Agencies (“AESA”). Ms. Wade steps in to replace long-time member (and current USAC Board Chairman), Dr. Brian L. Talbott, Executive Director Emeritus of AESA, whose term is up this year.

We will personally miss Dr. Talbott. He has been a good friend and ardent supporter of the E-rate program. As indicated in Chairman Pai’s [letter to Dr. Talbott](#), the FCC will miss him as well.

E-Rate Training Material:

USAC’s annual fall training sessions were held this year in Charlotte, Minneapolis, Portland, and Washington DC. Presentation slides for these training sessions are available [online](#). USAC also did a webinar earlier this month entitled “[Applicant Training Highlights](#).” Other useful instructional videos and webinar recordings may be found in USAC’s [Online Learning Library](#) and at [EducationSuperHighway’s Webinars](#) site.

USAC News Brief Dated December 22 – Updates to the FY 2018 Form 471

[USAC’s Schools and Libraries News Brief of December 22, 2017](#), reviews a series of minor EPC changes USAC is implementing in the FY 2018 version of the Form 471 application. The new version of the Form 471, which will become available when the Application Window opens January 11th, will have the following changes:

- Continuing the phase-down of discounts on voice services, discounts of 10% will now be available only to applicants with nominal discounts at the 90% level.
- The Category 2 budget parameters (on a per student and per square-foot basis) are expected to be updated sometime in the first quarter to reflect the next year’s inflation

factor. This information will not be available at the time the Application Window is first opened.

- EPC will not accept a Service Start Date (“SSD”) for FY 2018 any time before July 1, 2018. Remember that preparatory work can begin earlier (January 1 for Category 1 or April 1 for Category 2) so that the service itself can begin July 1st.
- The “COPY FRN” function, designed to ease the entry of FRNs already entered into an earlier Form 471, has been modified so as not to copy the SSDs from previous year applications.
- EPC will not accept the citation of any Form 470 that has not yet been posted for the required 28 days. This will make it impossible to pre-format any portion of a funding request relying on that Form 470. To avoid last-minute Form 471 filing problems, Form 470s should be filed as early as possible.
- Additional helper and hover texts have been added to assist applicants with fields which have caused some applicants to have problems in the past.

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