



Universal Service  
Administrative Co.

USAC

# Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter

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April 26, 2022

**The third Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Program application filing window will open on Thursday, April 28, 2022 and close on Friday, May 13, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. ET.** During the third window, eligible schools and libraries will be able to request ECF Program support for eligible equipment and up to 12 months of services that will be received or delivered between July 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023 for off-campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons with unmet needs. Please see the Public Notice ([DA 22-309](#)) for additional information about the third application filing window, the service delivery date, and invoice filing deadline applicable to equipment, other non-recurring service, and recurring service requests submitted during this filing window. Please also note that the [ECF Open Data Set](#) and [Tool](#) will not show window 3 data until after the window has closed.

## Upcoming Office Hours

USAC will host a series of ECF Webinars and Office Hours sessions where applicants and service providers can ask questions about the third application filing window and receive information about the ECF Program. Register for these events at the below links:

- Today, April 26 @ 3 p.m. ET: ECF Window 3 Information Session – [Register](#)
- Tuesday, May 3 @ 3 p.m. ET: ECF Window 3 Office Hours – [Register](#)
- Tuesday, May 10 @ 3 p.m. ET: ECF Window 3 Office Hours – [Register](#)

Visit the [Training](#) section of the ECF Program website to access e-learning modules, register for webinars and office hour sessions, and view recordings of past trainings and office hour sessions.

## SAM.gov Transition From DUNS to UEI

On April 6, 2022, the FCC released [Public Notice DA 22-371](#) which announces the transition from the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). At this time, only entities that receive direct payments or disbursements from the FCC must obtain a UEI and complete full entity registration in SAM.gov, including for the ECF Program. Most organizations who participate and receive payments in the ECF Program should have already registered with SAM.gov. If you are submitting requests for reimbursement for the ECF Program, you are required to register in SAM.gov and already

have a UEI. No further action is required; USAC will reach out directly to these ECF participants if needed. If you will be submitting requests for reimbursement for the ECF Program and have not completed your registration in SAM.gov, you should do so now.

If you need help obtaining a UEI or have additional questions, please visit the [Contact USAC](#) page to contact USAC's Customer Service Center for the ECF Program.

## Key Reminders

**Out-of-Window Applications** – Please note that in preparation for the third filing window, any ECF FCC Forms 471 submitted and certified after the close of the second application filing window are placed in out-of-window status and will not be reviewed by USAC without a waiver from the FCC. The ECF Portal will no longer accept window 2 out-of-window applications on April 22, 2022 and any uncertified out-of-window applications will be cancelled after this date.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **If demand in the third application filing window exceeds available funding, how will funding requests be prioritized?**

In the event that demand exceeds available funding during any ECF application filing window, ECF funding requests will be prioritized based on an applicant's E-Rate discount rate for Category One services, adjusted to provide a five percent increase for rural schools and libraries. This means that those schools and libraries entitled to a higher E-Rate discount rate will receive funding ahead of those entitled to a lower discount rate, as reflected in the discount matrix provided in section 54.1708(c) of the ECF rules.

As such, if prioritization is required, for ECF applicants applying in the third window that have a validated E-Rate discount, USAC will rely on the applicant's current Category One E-Rate discount rate (adjusted for rurality, if applicable) based on the number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to prioritize the review and processing of ECF applications received in the third application filing window. If necessary, applicants may provide updated information regarding their Category One E-Rate discount rate in the narrative box on their application, as specified in another FAQ below. (This information will be validated as part of the application PIA review process.) For ECF applicants applying in the third window that have not participated in the E-Rate program (and, therefore, do not have a validated E-Rate discount rate), USAC will validate their discount rate during the PIA review process.

### **What if my school or library does not have a validated E-Rate discount because I don't participate in the E-Rate program?**

If your school or library does not have a validated E-Rate discount, please be prepared to respond quickly to requests to validate a discount rate, including providing documentation to support the discount rate. Failure to respond promptly could result in your ECF application not being reviewed.

**Due to the pandemic, we have not needed to update our NSLP data in recent year(s) for the E-Rate Program, and our NSLP percentage has increased. Can we update student enrollment or NSLP numbers for the purposes of the third application filing window?**

If you want to update your student counts and NSLP data because your NSLP percentage has increased, please provide that information in the narrative box for the first funding request number (FRN) on your third window ECF FCC Form 471.

Specifically, updates should be noted using the following language: **“NSLP Update Request: updated NSLP student count xxx; updated student count xxx; and updated NSLP percentage xx%.”**

This will allow USAC to quickly find the ECF applications that include NSLP updates during the third application filing window. USAC will need to validate any changes made to an applicant’s student count and NSLP student count numbers so please ensure you have the documentation needed to validate these requested changes. Updates may not be considered if applicants fail to respond promptly to requests for validation, and USAC may rely instead on existing NSLP percentages.

**Can a school or library submit an application in the third application filing window to continue services that were funded through a first or second window funding request?**

Yes, provided they are not requesting duplicative funding for equipment or services that are committed and were or will be funded through the applicant’s first or second window funding requests.

To avoid duplicative support and expedite the review of the third filing window applications, applicants should include in the narrative section of the ECF FCC Form 471 application information regarding services funded through first or second window requests, including the ECF FCC Form 471 application number(s) and the service end date(s) for any services funded during the first or second window that an applicant is seeking to continue between July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023, as well as the service delivery dates for up to 12 months of new services being requested through the third window ECF FCC Form 471 (see [DA 22-309](#) ).

Please see the next two FAQs below for more information about the specific information and language that should be included in the narrative section of third window ECF FCC Form 471 applications for continuing or new recurring services.

**What information should we include in our third window ECF FCC Form 471 application if we are requesting to continue receiving services funded through a committed first or second window**

## **funding request?**

If you are continuing to receive recurring services between July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 (see [DA 22-176](#)) based on existing ECF commitments, **you will need to include the following information about your first or second window funding request in the narrative box for each applicable FRN on a third window ECF FCC Form 471:** “Continuing First or Second Window Recurring Service Request: ECF FCC Form 471 Application No.; FRN; Service Start Date; and Service End Date.”

**You will also need to include the following information about the future recurring services being requested between July 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023 in the narrative box for each applicable FRN on a third window ECF FCC Form 471:** “Continuing Third Window Recurring Service Request: ECF FCC Form 471 Application No.; FRN, Service Start Date; and Service End Date.”

Note: You may not request duplicative support and may only request up to a maximum of 12 months of recurring service to be received between July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023. If you will be pausing service, for example, during the summer months, you will need to provide the months of service you are seeking support for based on these existing ECF commitments or the third window ECF funding request.

**What information should we include in our third window ECF FCC Form 471 application if we are requesting new recurring services for the July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023 funding period of the third application filing window?**

In the third application filing window, **you will need to include the following information in the narrative box for each applicable FRN on a third window ECF FCC Form 471:** “New Third Window Recurring Service Request: ECF FCC Form 471 Application No.; FRN, Service Start Date; and Service End Date.”

Note: You may only request up to a maximum of 12 months of recurring service to be received between July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023. If you will be pausing service, for example, during the summer months, you will need to provide the months of service you are seeking support for based on the third window ECF funding request.

**Our school usually pauses recurring services during the summer months when it is not in session. If we plan to pause services, can we still request ECF support for nonconsecutive months during the relevant funding period?**

Yes. If a school or library will be pausing service, for example, during a school’s summer break, they will need to provide the specific months of service they are seeking ECF support for based on the relevant ECF funding request (i.e., committed first or second window funding request or third window funding request). Applicants will need to include this information in the narrative box for each applicable FRN. Applicants are reminded that they cannot seek duplicative support and can

only seek support for up to a maximum of 12 months of recurring service during the third application filing window.

**Can a school or library request funding in the third application filing window to replace lost or damaged devices funded by first or second window funding requests?**

Yes. Schools and libraries with students, school staff or library patrons without access to a device (due to it being lost or damaged) must be able to certify that they are only seeking support for devices provided to students/school staff/library patrons that would otherwise lack access to connected devices sufficient to engage in remote learning on the ECF application submitted during the third window. Schools and libraries should carefully document how the devices are not duplicative in their asset inventories, and the asset inventories should include the date the school or library was notified that the device was lost or damaged. Applicants are encouraged to use the narrative box of their third window applications to explain such requests and should note that they are not requesting additional devices to account for anticipated breakage or loss of devices requested during the third application filing window, which is not permitted.

## ECF Requests for Reimbursement Reminders of the Week

Check out our [Request for Reimbursement ECF FCC Form 472 \(BEAR\) Checklist](#) and [Request for Reimbursement ECF FCC Form 474 \(SPI\) Checklist](#) for step by step guidance on what to do after you receive a Funding Commitment Decision Letter.

**Check SAM.gov Registration** – We also remind applicants and service providers, who agree to invoice on behalf of the applicant, to ensure your SAM.gov information and registration is updated and active. If you will be submitting ECF requests for reimbursement (i.e., ECF FCC Form 472 or ECF FCC Form 474) and have not completed or updated your SAM.gov registration, please do so now.

You may use this link to complete or renew your SAM.gov registration: <https://sam.gov/content/home>. SAM.gov registrations must be renewed on annual basis. If not renewed, the account will be deactivated.

Following these reminders and tips will help streamline the review and processing of your ECF request(s) for reimbursement and can help you receive the funds more quickly. Requests for reimbursement will be reviewed and processed on a rolling basis. For more reminders and tips regarding requests for reimbursement, please visit the [Reminders and Tips](#) page on the ECF Program website.

## For More Information

Please review the [FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund FAQs](#), which it continues to update as new questions come in.

More detail on the ECF Program is available in the FCC [Order](#) that established the Emergency Connectivity

Fund Program. To learn more, please visit [EmergencyConnectivityFund.org](https://EmergencyConnectivityFund.org) and sign up for [Emergency Connectivity Fund Program emails](#) .

Applicants and service providers can also contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund Customer Support Center (CSC) with questions at (800) 234-9781 Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, or submit a case in the ECF Portal.

We appreciate your interest in the ECF Program and look forward to your ongoing engagement as we work together to close the Homework Gap!

#### Need Help? Contact Us!

Please contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781 or create a case in the ECF Portal.