



USAC

Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter

October 5, 2021

ECF Application Window Countdown: 8 Days to Window Close

The second Emergency Connectivity Fund Program application filing window is open for schools and libraries to request funding for connected devices and broadband connections for off-campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons for the current 2021-22 school year. **The second application filing window opened on Tuesday, September 28, 2021 and will close on October 13, 2021** at 11:59 p.m. ET. During this window, eligible schools and libraries, in addition to consortia of eligible schools and libraries, can submit requests for funding to purchase eligible equipment and services between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 to meet the remote learning needs of students, school staff and library patrons with unmet needs. The FCC's announcement of the second application filing window is available on their [website](#) .

Please note that the FCC released a [public notice](#) directing USAC to review and process applications filed after the close of the ECF Program's initial application filing window with those filed in the second application filing window. Applicants who certified and submitted their ECF FCC Forms 471 after the close of the initial filing window on August 13, 2021 will not be required to resubmit their applications during the second application filing window, nor will they need to file a request for waiver of the initial 45-day application filing deadline with the Commission.

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

Request for Reimbursement Submission

Invoicing is now available through the ECF Portal. Service providers and applicants have access to the ECF Portal through their OnePortal dashboard and can view any funding requests that they are associated with through the ECF Portal. Applicants and service providers, who agree to invoice on behalf of applicants, can also use the ECF Portal to submit requests for reimbursement (i.e., ECF FCC Forms 472 or 474) for the ECF Program.

Please note that applicants and service providers, who agree to invoice on behalf of applicants, will not be able to receive program funding until they have completed their SAM.gov registration. The SAM.gov banking information will be used for reimbursement.

Filing the FCC Form 498 (Service Providers Only)

Service providers must also file the FCC Form 498 in order to gain access to the ECF Portal to request reimbursement. Please note that the form will ask for banking information, however, USAC will rely upon that which is stored in SAM.gov for disbursement purposes. After you complete this form, USAC will assign a unique nine digit number, or 498 ID, and will set up a user name and password for you to access the [E-File system](#), a portal that allows you to update your FCC Form 498 online and set up permissions for other users in your company. Some of the contact information on the FCC Form 498 can be searched using the [SPIN Search tool](#) , so it is helpful to keep your information current in case another program participant needs to contact you.

Access the ECF Portal

Once you receive the 498 ID, you will automatically be granted access to the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC). If you are a new Service Provider, you must log in to the EPC and sign the terms and conditions and wait 10 minutes to be granted access to the ECF Portal.

For additional information regarding the request for reimbursement process for [applicants](#) and [service providers](#), please visit the Emergency Connectivity Fund website.

Upcoming Webinars

USAC will host an Emergency Connectivity Fund Office Hours session today, Tuesday, October 5 at 3 p.m. ET, where applicants and service providers can ask questions and receive information about the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program. Register for this event and other upcoming office hours sessions at the below links:

- Tuesday, October 5 @ 3 p.m. ET: Emergency Connectivity Fund Office Hours - [Register](#)
- Tuesday, October 12 @ 4 p.m. ET: Tribal Applicant Office Hours - [Register](#)

Training

USAC offers E-learning modules, including a [Program Overview](#) video, an [ECF FCC Form 471 Walkthrough](#) video, and an overview video for [Tribal Schools, Libraries and Consortia](#) to help applicants successfully participate in the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.

Visit the [Training](#) section of the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program website to view trainings, access E-learning modules, register for office hour sessions, and view recordings of past trainings and office hours sessions.

Applicants and service providers can find more information regarding how to file [Appeals](#) by visiting [EmergencyConnectivityFund.org](#). They can also find more information regarding the ECF FCC Form 471 [here](#) on the Program website.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I change the service provider or the make or model of equipment after I've received a funding commitment decision letter (FCDL)?

After a FCDL has been issued, you will need to submit a service provider or service substitution change through a Post-Commitment Request Form in the ECF Portal. USAC will review your request and notify you of its decision and/or whether more information is needed via email.

A service provider told us that 1:1 device initiatives are eligible for ECF Program support. Is this true? Can an applicant request funding for connected devices or Wi-Fi hotspots for all of its students as part of a 1:1 device initiative?

No. Applicants must certify, as part of their funding application, that they are only seeking support for eligible equipment and/or services provided to students and school staff who would otherwise lack access to connected devices or broadband services sufficient to engage in remote learning. To the extent your service providers are telling you that 1:1 device initiatives may be funded by the ECF Program, please be advised that this is not an accurate representation of ECF rules.

How do I edit an incomplete application?

Under the "My Pending Tasks" tab of your dashboard, there will be a task to edit or resume the creation of your incomplete ECF FCC Form 471 application. Please note that if you select the application in "My Applications," you can view what you have done, but you cannot edit or continue your application.

For equipment and non-recurring services, what is the deadline for filing requests for reimbursement?

For equipment or other non-recurring services that have not been received when the applicant submits the application, applicants may use June 30, 2022 as the service end date and the invoicing deadline will be 60 days from the date of the funding commitment decision letter; a revised funding commitment decision letter approving a post-commitment change or a successful appeal of previously denied or reduced funding; or August 29, 2022 (i.e., 60 days after June 30, 2022), whichever is later. FCDLs include the Invoice Deadline Date.

Please see the [FCC's Public Notice DA 21-881](#) for more information about the deadline for invoicing for non-recurring purchases.

If I filed an application after the first application filing window deadline on August 13, 2021, should I cancel my application and reapply in the second window?

No. In accordance with [FCC Public Notice DA 21-1182](#), “while many schools and libraries timely submitted their applications during the initial application filing window, a number of applicants certified and submitted their ECF FCC Forms 471 after the August 13 deadline. We therefore direct USAC to review and process these late-filed applications during the second application filing window in accordance with Program rules and requirements.”

Applicants that certified and submitted their ECF FCC Forms 471 after the close of the initial application filing window on August 13, 2021 will not be required to resubmit their applications during the second application filing window, nor will they need to file a request for waiver of the initial 45-day application filing deadline with the Commission.”

What if I filed a waiver request for my late-filed application with the FCC already?

You can file a request to withdraw the waiver request in the FCC’s [Electronic Comment Filing System](#) (ECFS) in WC Docket No. 21-93, referencing the original ECF FCC Form 471 application number.

When will information about applications filed during the second application filing window be made available on Open Data?

Data from ECF funding applications submitted during the second application filing window (and late-filed applications moved to the second application filing window) will be made available after the close of the filing window on October 13, 2021.

Do I need a SAM.gov account if I am an annual E-Rate applicant?

SAM.gov registration is necessary for all applicants and service providers that are submitting requests for reimbursement (ECF FCC Forms 472/474) and receiving funds from the U.S. government. Because this is not currently required to participate in the E-Rate program, applicants, who are planning to submit requests for reimbursement (ECF FCC Form 472) and have not registered before should begin the process now. Service providers that agree to invoice on behalf of applicants also need to be registered with SAM.gov. ECF applicants whose service providers will file invoices for ECF reimbursement on their behalf (SPI invoicing) are not required to register in SAM.gov.

Can a school or library submit a reimbursement request after it has received the ECF-supported equipment but before it distributes the equipment to their students, school staff, or library patrons?

Yes. While the school or library must have received the equipment or services prior to submitting their request for reimbursement and must certify to this on the ECF FCC Form 472, they can seek reimbursement before distributing the equipment or services to students, school staff members, or library patrons with an unmet need.

Applicants and service providers are also reminded of the need to certify on their reimbursement

requests (ECF FCC Forms 472/474) that they are not willfully or knowingly requesting reimbursement for equipment or services that are not being used.

Are taxes included as part of the \$400 maximum for connected devices?

No. Taxes are not included as part of the \$400 cap for connected devices, but reasonable fees are included within the \$400 capped amount.

I applied during the initial application filing window and I'm still waiting to hear back about my application. Is there anything else I should be doing now?

Double check that you have completed all of the registrations necessary for applying for and/or receiving ECF support, including:

- Obtaining a DUNS Number,
- Obtaining an FCC Registration Number,
- Obtaining a Billed Entity Number, and
- Registering with SAM.gov.

Be sure that the information provided in these registrations match the information included on your application. For more information about these registrations, review the [Getting Started](#) webpage.

Also, please be sure to respond to all information requests in a timely manner.

Will I have visibility in the ECF Portal for the committed version of my application?

Yes. Applicants will be able to see the committed version of the funding requests submitted within an application.

I can access the ECF Portal, but can't file any forms – what can I do?

Users that have view-only permissions will only be able to see forms created by others but cannot create forms themselves. The account administrator must upgrade your permissions in order to create forms. Please contact the account administrator for your organization.

Please review the FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund FAQs, which it continues to update as new questions come in: www.fcc.gov/emergency-connectivity-fund-faqs.

For More Information

More detail on the Program is available in the FCC [Order](#) that established the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program. To learn more, please visit EmergencyConnectivityFund.org and sign

up for [Emergency Connectivity Fund Program emails](#).

Applicants and service providers can also contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund 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.

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.