Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter

September 14, 2021

In view of outstanding demand and the recent spike in coronavirus cases, the FCC will open a second Emergency Connectivity Fund Program application filing window 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 will open on September 28, 2021 and close on October 13, 2021. 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.

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!

Emergency Connectivity Fund FCC Form 471 Dataset Now Live

On Friday, September 10, USAC launched the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) FCC Form 471 dataset. Open Data tools help USAC offer a consistent, user-friendly experience for everyone who explores or uses Emergency Connectivity Fund Program and other programs administered by USAC. This dataset contains information from each ECF FCC Form 471 application. Using the ECF FCC Form 471 dataset, users can view:

Applicant details, including applicant type, Billed Entity Number (BEN), student count, and dollars requested and committed.

- Data from each Funding Request Number (FRN), including service provider and contract information (if available), Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) related data, and invoicing method details.

- Data from each FRN line item ID, including individual product/service data, costs, quantities, and descriptions.

Use the dataset to answer questions about the applicant entity, services or equipment requested, the quantity of the services or equipment requested, which service provider is supplying the service or equipment, the invoicing method used, and the length of the contract or fiber type information (if applicable). All information within the ECF FCC Form 471 dataset is self-reported by applicants.

You can search for your ECF application number, a BEN, or any other information in the "Find in this Dataset" box to quickly filter the dataset and find relevant information. You can also download your information using the Export option and save a copy.

You can access this tool and more through the Open Data page on the Emergency Connectivity Fund website.

Questions?
Click "Contact Dataset Owner" to get help with general questions about the ECF FCC Form 471 dataset, ask about the information available, or provide feedback.

If you have questions about the Emergency Connectivity Fund program, visit emergencyconnectivityfund.org. For application specific assistance, open a customer service case in the ECF portal or call the ECF Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.

Cancellation of Incomplete ECF FCC Form 471 Applications

All existing incomplete ECF FCC Form 471 applications will be cancelled in advance of the opening of the second application filing window. Please copy or download any information you wish to retain from an existing incomplete application by the end of the day on September 24, 2021.

Invoice Submission

Service providers have access to the ECF Portal through their OnePortal dashboard. They are able to 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. Invoicing will be available via the ECF Portal in the coming weeks.

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

Frequently Asked Questions

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 will be included within the $400 amount.

After submitting an application during the first application filing window, a school or library realizes they need additional equipment and services to meet their students', school staff's, or library patrons' unmet needs. Can the school or library submit another application during the second window to address these unmet needs?
Yes. If a school or library determines there is additional need for eligible equipment and/or services, they may submit another application during the second application filing window to address these unmet needs. However, applicants should not seek support for equipment and services already requested during the first application filing window. Applicants requesting support for similar services or equipment should clearly explain the differences between their requests. Submitting duplicate requests may lead to additional delay in the review of the applications and duplicate applications will be denied.

How will requests be prioritized?
In the event that demand exceeds available funding during any ECF application filing window, 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 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.

If a school or library submitted an application during the first application filing window and has not heard from USAC on their funding request by the time the second application filing window opens (e.g., September 28, 2021), should they re-apply for funding in the second window?
No. Applicants should not re-file applications that were already submitted in the first application filing window. Submitting duplicate requests may lead to additional delay in the review of applications and duplicate applications will be denied.

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 FCC's Getting Started webpage.

If I have the credentials to access the ECF Portal, can I begin filling out my application for the second application filing window before the window opens?
No. Applicants should not begin completing an ECF FCC Form 471 in the ECF Portal for the second application filing window until the window opens on September 28, 2021.

In the meantime, applicants can learn more about steps that can be taken now to prepare for the second application filing window by reviewing the FCC's Getting Started Guide . Additionally, to learn more about the application process, review the FCC's How to Apply Guide, or preview the application by visiting USAC's ECF FCC Form 471 application webpage or watching USAC's ECF FCC Form 471 walkthrough.

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.

Will I receive a notification when the PIA reviewer contacts me about my application?
All full rights users in the ECF Portal will receive an email notification when the PIA reviewer sends an external communication relating to the entity's 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.