

Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter

May 2023

ECF Deadlines and Emergency Period Termination Guidance

Service Delivery Date Extension Order

On May 12, 2023, the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) released an Order ([DA 23-405](#)) partially granting the request for waiver filed by the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) and Consortium for School Networking (CoSN). In the Order, WCB waives and extends the service delivery deadline date for certain applicants who requested Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) support for equipment, other non-recurring services, and recurring services during the first, second, and third application filing windows, recognizing that some did not receive a funding commitment decision letter (FCDL) or revised funding commitment decision letter (RFCDL) approving an appeal, waiver, or post-commitment change request early enough to make full use of the commitment. The service delivery date has also been waived and extended for recurring service requests for first, second, and third filing window applicants that were approved for new construction services but were unable to use the full amount of their approved funding for monthly recurring services associated with the construction.

Please review the tables below for a summary of the updated service delivery dates:

Application Filing Windows 1 & 2		
Funding Request Service Type	FCDL or approved RFCDL Received by Date:	Service Delivery Date:
Equipment	On or before December 31, 2022	June 30, 2023
	On or after January 1, 2023	180 days after the date of the FCDL or RFCDL, but not to exceed beyond June 30, 2024
Recurring Services <i>(*but see recurring costs associated with construction)</i>	On or before June 30, 2022	June 30, 2023
	On or after July 1, 2022	14 months after the date of the FCDL or RFCL, or June 30, 2024, whichever date is earlier
*Recurring Services associated with approved special construction request	On or before June 30, 2022	June 30, 2023
	On or after July 1, 2022	June 30, 2024
Special Construction		One year from date of FCDL

Application Filing Window 3	
Funding Request Service Type	Service Delivery Date:
Equipment, non-recurring services, and recurring services	June 30, 2024
Special construction	One year from date of FCDL

Emergency Period Termination and Sunset of the ECF Program Public Notice

On May 12, 2023, WCB and the Office of the Managing Director (OMD) released a Public Notice ([DA 23-406](#)) offering guidance to ECF program participants on the expiration of the COVID-19 public health emergency on May 11, 2023, and announced June 30, 2024 as the sunset date for the ECF Program. Therefore, **applicants must purchase eligible equipment and services by June 30, 2024, to be eligible for reimbursement through the ECF program.** Please review the Public Notice and this Newsletter and reach out to us if you have any questions.

Information pertaining to the Deadlines Extension Order and Public Notice will be updated and available in the FCC's [ECF Program FAQs](#).

Keep Your Contact Information Up to Date

With the upcoming Invoice Deadline Date (IDD) and Service Deadline Date (SDD) for Windows 1&2 funding requests approaching, it is crucial that your organization does not miss any communication that comes from USAC. USAC is also currently reviewing and funding Window 3 applications at the 60% discount rate band. Please be ready to respond to USAC's inquiries as quickly as possible.

If the current Account Administrator has changed or is no longer with the organization, call the ECF Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781 and request an update to the name and email address of the new Account Administrator.

Returning Funds (Cancelling or Reducing a Commitment vs. Voluntarily Returning Disbursed ECF Dollars)

Cancelling or Reducing a Commitment

Currently, there is insufficient funding to issue funding decisions for all of the third filing window (Window 3) applications. As such, USAC encourages applicants that do not plan to use all or part of their ECF funding commitment(s) to file Post-Commitment Requests (PCR) to cancel or reduce those funding requests' commitments as soon as possible. Once these

cancellations or reductions are processed, this funding can be made available for other pending Window 3 applications.

For example, if a school was committed \$100,000 in their FCDL, but only ultimately invoiced for \$75,000, they can reduce their funding request's commitment by \$25,000 by filing a PCR. If they received alternative funding for the eligible equipment or services, they can cancel their ECF funding request by filing a PCR.

To reduce the funding amount on a committed request or cancel a committed funding request, applicants should file a PCR. Instructions on how to file a PCR are located here:

- <https://www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org/ecf-post-commitment-request-form/>

Reasons to cancel or reduce commitments include:

- Funding, or a portion thereof, is no longer needed from the ECF Program.
- Funds have been received from other programs like the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) or another grant.
- Applicant's estimate of unmet need for connected devices and/or broadband connections was greater than its actual unmet need number.
- Request was filed in error or is a duplicate funding request.
- Services will not be used at all, or certain months/devices are no longer needed.

Voluntarily Returning Disbursed Funds

At times, applicants have notified USAC that ECF dollars were disbursed to them for equipment or services that was funded through other programs, or no tax ended up being collected by the applicable state and they needed to return funds to the program. To return excess disbursed ECF dollars, applicants should call the ECF Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781.

Reasons to voluntarily return funds include:

- Received funds for the ECF-support equipment or services from another federal program or grant.
- Services or connected devices originally requested and reimbursed for, are not actually being utilized or used by students, school staff, or library patrons with unmet needs.
 - **Reminder:** ECF funding cannot be used to address future unmet needs, or to account for anticipated lost or broken equipment.
- Clerical error found in the price per unit.

Invoice Reminders

Invoice Filing Deadline for Windows 1 & 2 Requests

The invoice filing deadline for the majority* of Windows 1 and 2 ECF funding requests is fast approaching on **August 29, 2023**. Applicants and service providers with upcoming invoice filing deadlines should submit reimbursement requests as soon as feasible to avoid delays surrounding invoice deadlines. USAC is unable to extend the invoice filing deadline in the ECF program.

*Please note that some new construction funding requests have invoice deadlines before August 29, 2023, while others have a later invoice deadline due to the Extension Order ([DA 23-405](#)).

Reimbursement Reminders

Each request for reimbursement must be accompanied by a vendor invoice supporting the amount requested. Vendor invoices must include the level of detail needed for USAC to validate the following information during its review of this supporting documentation.

- The date of the service for non-recurring charges, or the bill date for recurring charges, is consistent with what was entered on the ECF FCC Form 472.
- The date of the service or bill is acceptable based on the relevant funding period.
- The equipment or services provided are the same as what was approved on the ECF FCC Form 471 and are at the same or lower price point approved on the ECF FCC Form 471.
- The service provider who provided the equipment or services is the same as who was approved on the ECF FCC Form 471.
- The date that the service or equipment is delivered or shipped.
 - **Note** - We encourage applicants to work with their service providers to include delivery information on the invoice and reduce delays.

Submitting entities will receive outreach from the USAC Invoice Team via the Communications tab of the ECF Portal if any of this required information is missing.

Payment Verification Requests

If an applicant did not pay the service provider before it submits its reimbursement request, the applicant must pay the service provider within 30 days after receiving the disbursement.

Once this is complete, the applicant must also provide proof of payment to USAC. Applicants may upload documentation in the Communications tab of the ECF portal. If documentation is not uploaded within 35 days, the USAC Invoice Team will request proof of payment via the

Communications tab of the ECF Portal, so please continue to monitor your inbox for these messages. Acceptable documentation includes processed checks, bank statements with redacted information, credit card statements, ACH statements, and money orders.

Please note that the applicant's failure to provide proof of payment will result in the recovery of the disbursed ECF funds.

For More Information

Please review the [FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund FAQs](#) to learn more about the program's requirements and commonly asked questions. The FAQs have been updated based on the May 12th ECF Deadlines Extension Order and Public Notice. Additional information on the rules and requirements is also available in the FCC's [ECF Program Report and Order](#).

You can also visit EmergencyConnectivityFund.org and sign up for [Emergency Connectivity Fund Program emails](#) for more information about the ECF program.

Applicants and service providers can also contact the ECF Customer Service Center (CSC) with questions at (800) 234-9781, Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, or submit a customer support request through the ECF Portal.

We appreciate your participation in the ECF program and look forward to your ongoing engagement as we work together to close the homework gap!