



Universal Service  
Administrative Co.

USAC

# Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter

## October 2024

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October 31, 2024

### Hurricanes Helene and Milton

On October 1, 2024 and October 9, 2024, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) released two Orders ([DA 24-1025](#), [DA 24-1059](#)) providing certain relief in areas affected by Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton, respectively. For Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) program participants located in impacted areas, WCB provided a 150-day extension of the deadlines to submit waivers and appeals and the deadlines to respond to USAC-related information requests. Further, WCB provided impacted program participants with a waiver of the document retention rule for records destroyed by the hurricanes.

### Update on the Congressional Funding Rescission

Please review the following ECF FAQs updates to better understand how the continuing resolution that went into effect on October 1, 2024 impacts aspects of the ECF program. More details about the impact of the congressional funding rescission on the ECF program can be found on the [FCC's ECF FAQs website](#).

**Q: What is the status of the rescission following the August 29, 2024 invoice filing deadline?**

A: The FCC satisfied the rescission in mid-September by returning the full \$1.768 billion to the U.S. Treasury. The FCC and USAC were then able to proceed with resolving appeals, requests for waivers, and other post-commitment transactions. But see the next FAQ regarding the continuing resolution.

**Q: What impact does the continuing resolution (CR) have on the ECF program?**

A: The continuing resolution (CR) that went into effect on October 1, 2024 means the FCC cannot make any new commitments from ECF funding until Congress adopts a government funding bill for fiscal year 2025. This again restricts the FCC's ability to make certain changes to existing funding commitments and in obligating any new funds, including to resolve an appeal, waiver request, or other post-commitment transaction. The CR has the effect of extending the fiscal year 2024 funding levels put in place by the government funding bill passed in March 2024, and also extends the rescission of \$1.768 billion from the ECF program. Even though the FCC has returned the full rescinded amount, without a new funding bill for fiscal year 2025, the FCC remains constrained by the ECF rescission and is prohibited from making any new commitments from the ECF funding while the CR is in effect.

**Q: When can ECF appeals and post-commitment requests be processed?**

A: The restrictions on making new commitments from ECF funding should be lifted if Congress passes a government funding bill for fiscal year 2025. It is expected that the FCC and USAC will be able to resume processing appeals, requests for waivers, and other post-commitment transactions for the ECF program at that time.

## Reminders for Applicants/Service Providers with Pending Requests for Reimbursement

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. Please continue to look for these communications and respond as soon as feasible.

## Payment Verification

If an applicant did not pay the service provider before it submits its BEAR 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.

## ECF Program Compliance and Other Friendly Reminders

Please continue to check the ECF Portal and your email communications, and keep your entity information up-to-date in the ECF Portal. It is crucial that your organization not miss any communication that comes from USAC. For example, the ECF program team may contact you for information and documentation for post-commitment- or request for reimbursement-related reviews. As a reminder, failure to respond to a USAC information request(s) may lead to denial or recovery of ECF support, so it is important to respond to these requests in a timely manner.

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

## For More Information

Please review the [FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund FAQs](#) to learn more about the program's requirements and commonly asked questions, and in particular, the newly updated section on the congressional funding rescission. The FAQs are frequently updated to reflect any program deadline extensions and provide other important details. Additional information is also available in the FCC's [ECF Program Report and Order](#) and in the [March 1, 2023, Public Notice on ECF Compliance Obligations](#).

You can also visit [EmergencyConnectivityFund.org](https://www.fcc.gov/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 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.

**Need Help? Contact Us!**

Contact the the ECF Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781.