

ECF Webinar 6/9/21 Q&A

- Will this be recorded?
 - Yes
- Can we start obtaining bids/quotes now?
 - Yes
- Is there a link to this presentation?
 - <https://erate.fi.ncsu.edu/ecf/>
- Do vendors require a SPIN?
 - No they may need a registration with the FCC and a SAMs registration
- If a laptop costs \$450 can we apply for up to the \$400 cap?
 - Yes. There may also be a waiver process for equipment for special needs
- Does the laptop require a cellular antenna?
 - No
- Is the funding only devices for students or are teachers included?
 - Any staff member directly involved in educational purposes with the student is eligible if there is an unmet need
- Are there funding limits per PSU
 - No
- ECF pays for the hotspot device but not the monthly service fees, correct?
 - ECF pays for the hotspot and for the monthly service fee
- Do Chromebooks qualify?
 - Yes they are considered a laptop. Not sure about the licensing associated with Chromebooks
- Do previously purchased Chromebooks qualify or is this only for future purchases?
 - The first window is only for new purchases beginning 7/1/21. Should monies still be available a second window will open for reimbursements of purchases back to March 2020
- Can I defer payments of already purchased and received Chromebooks?
 - Recommendation: Don't take delivery
- Can Chromebooks be used both at home and school?
 - Yes. If the device is left at school to be placed back in a cart, the device is not eligible.
- Are iPads OK?
 - Yes
- If the finance officer already has SAM.GOV account does the E-rate Certifier also have to create a SAM.GOV account?
 - There should be one per organization.
- If we deployed 1000 hotspots last year and we have identified 50 more students that require them, can we apply for the monthly service beginning July 1, 2021 for 1050 or only the 50?
 - The monthly service for all 1050 can be applied for. In addition, the purchase price associated with the 50 can be applied for.
- We purchased CradlePoint hot spots for our buses, can we apply to renew their monthly service on them?
 - Yes
- Please define "Unmet Students"
 - Please refer to Paragraph 81 of the order: "To ensure that funding is focused on unmet need, we will require schools to certify, as part of their funding application, that they are

only seeking support for eligible equipment provided to students and school staff who would otherwise lack access to connected devices sufficient to engage in remote learning. We will also require schools to certify, as part of their funding application, that they are only seeking support for eligible services provided to students and school staff who would otherwise lack broadband services sufficient to engage in remote learning. This should not be an onerous burden, as the record shows that many school districts have conducted needs assessments to determine the connectivity needs of their students and staff..."

- We have 100 Chromebooks close to end of life, can we apply for funding to replace them?
 - If you can meet the requirements of "unmet need" and the devices are going home with the student, Yes. Same goes for teachers.
- Do Chromebooks/iPads/Laptops have to have cellular service?
 - No
- Can we apply for funding but not purchase right away?
 - Yes, however you must make the purchase during the funding year
- How do you file the application for the hotspot monthly service if that's covered? How does that work under \$400?
 - You can apply for the monthly recurring fees which are a separate funding amount apart from the \$400/device. It is anticipated there is a bulk internet service purchase amounting to approximately \$10 - \$25/month.
- Not knowing the exact need, if we purchase too many will there be a way to return the funding?
 - Yes, there will be a type of F500 to return funds to ECF
- Can we apply for service only on hot spots that were purchased last year through COVID funds?
 - Yes for service beginning July 1, 2021
- Can I use ECF to refresh iPads?
 - This conversation will be tabled to a one-on-one conversation for specific details.
- How is "unmet need" defined?
 - Please refer to Paragraph 81 of the order: "To ensure that funding is focused on unmet need, we will require schools to certify, as part of their funding application, that they are only seeking support for eligible equipment provided to students and school staff who would otherwise lack access to connected devices sufficient to engage in remote learning. We will also require schools to certify, as part of their funding application, that they are only seeking support for eligible services provided to students and school staff who would otherwise lack broadband services sufficient to engage in remote learning. This should not be an onerous burden, as the record shows that many school districts have conducted needs assessments to determine the connectivity needs of their students and staff..."
- We set up two WAPs on the outside of our building for students to gain access, are they eligible?
 - No, WAPs are eligible under the E-rate program
- For an audit, would you need to show that you hadn't budgeted for "refreshing/purchasing" the student previously?
 - ECF is looking at quotes/purchases/invoices. These are the records that you must provide during an audit along with inventory distribution.
- If a device purchased and assigned to one specific child and the device is damaged beyond repair and the child is issued a replacement device, how do we handle the discarding of the device? What if the device is lost by the child?

- Equipment purchased through ECF funding needs to be kept for three years. After that time you can dispose of it as allowed by established policies. If the device is lost, the documentation must be kept on that serial number that it was lost/stolen.
- I can't buy replacement devices, correct?
 - Correct
- If we discard, end of life devices by July 1, can we apply for funding to purchase new devices?
 - This is not necessarily to the spirit of the order as wasn't created to refresh devices in the school nor create 1:1 computing.
- If a device goes home occasionally does that count?
 - We need to define occasionally. The purpose of the program is to provide devices and connectivity to those students that otherwise did not have it for educational purposes.
- To add to June 2022 Chromebook question, if Google ends support, so they can no longer managed, kept secure, enforce CIPA, can we apply for funding to replace them?
 - If these devices are assigned to a student to manage their education at home and the device does not adequately provide that ability, the purchase of a device for this student can be applied for.
- Is a student eligible even if they have devices at home?
 - Comment: The more aggressive the application the more possibilities for audit. Please refer above to paragraph 81 of the order.
- If I already have a line item in ESSR for hot spots should I just purchase them with those funds or go through the application with ECF?
 - Comment: If you can use the ESSR funding for other needs within the school, apply for ECF funding

Additional Resources:

ECF Order: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-21-58A1.pdf>

ECF Newsletter: <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/>

E-rate Central Newsletter: <https://e-ratecentral.com>