

Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Overview and Reimbursement Overview



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Housekeeping

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers
- The audience will remain on mute
- Enter questions at any time using the "Questions" box
 - We will prioritize questions related to today's content
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Agenda

About the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program

- What is the Emergency Connectivity Fund?
- Program Eligibility
- Eligible Equipment and Services

Application Process

- Preparing to Participate

Reimbursement Process

Next Steps

- Outreach and Training

About the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program

What is the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program?

- On May 10, 2021, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted a Report and Order ([FCC 21-58](#)) establishing the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program (the Program). Congress appropriated \$7.17 billion for the ECF Program, which USAC will administer.
- The Program will provide funding to schools and libraries for the purchase of laptop and tablet computers, Wi-Fi hotspots, routers, modems and broadband connections for use by students, school staff, and library patrons at locations that include locations other than the school or library during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The initial filing window opened on June 29, 2021 and closed on August 13, 2021. The second filing window opened on September 28, 2021 and closed on October 13, 2021.
- The third Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Program application filing window will open on **Thursday, April 28, 2022** and close on **Friday, May 13, 2022**, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Third Application Filing Window

- During the third window, eligible schools and libraries will be able to request ECF Program support for eligible equipment and up to **12 months of services** that will be received or delivered **between July 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023** for off-campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons with unmet needs.
- The FCC expects over \$1 billion will be available for commitment and disbursement for the third application filing window.
- In the event that demand exceeds available funding, ECF funding requests will be prioritized based on the applicants' Category One E-Rate discount rates with a 5% increase for schools and libraries located in rural areas.
- USAC will use applicants' current Category One E-Rate discount rates and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) data to prioritize review and processing of ECF applications received in the third window, if prioritization is required.

Program Eligibility

School and Library Eligibility

- Schools, libraries, and consortia of schools and libraries that are eligible for support under the E-rate program are also eligible for support through the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.
- Schools and libraries eligible for Program funding do not need to be current E-rate participants.
 - Eligible entities that have not applied for E-rate support should be prepared to demonstrate eligibility as an eligible school or library under Program rules during USAC's application review.

School and Library Eligibility

Schools must meet the statutory definition of elementary and secondary schools in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7801).

- **An elementary school** is a non-profit institutional day or residential school, including a public elementary charter school, that provides elementary education, as determined under state law.
- **A secondary school** is a non-profit institutional day or residential school, including a public secondary charter school, that provides secondary education, as determined under state law, except that such term does not include any education beyond grade 12.

School and Library Eligibility

Libraries must be eligible for support from a state library administrative agency under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) (20 U.S.C. § 9122). The definition includes:

- A public library.
- A public elementary school or secondary school library.
- A Tribal library.
- An academic library.
- A research library, one that makes publicly available library services and material suitable for scholarly research and not otherwise available to the public, and is not an integral part of an institution of higher education.
- A private library, but only if the state in which such private library is located determines that the library should be considered a library for purposes of this definition.
- A “library consortium” is any local, statewide, regional, or interstate cooperative association of libraries that provides for the systematic and effective coordination of the resources of schools, public, academic, and special libraries and information centers, for improving services to the clientele of such libraries.

School and Library Eligibility

Ineligible schools and libraries:

- For-profit schools and libraries;
- Schools with endowments in excess of \$50,000,000;
- Libraries whose budgets are not completely separate from any schools; and
- Libraries or library consortia that are not eligible for assistance from a state library administrative agency under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).
 - Tribal libraries are eligible for support under LSTA, and thus are eligible for support through the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.

Eligible Equipment and Services

Eligible Equipment & Services

The following types of equipment are eligible for support under the Program:

- Connected Devices (laptop and tablet computers)
 - Desktop computers and smartphones are **ineligible** for Program funding
- Wi-Fi hotspots
- Modems (including air cards used to connect end-user devices to the internet through cellular data services)
- Routers
- Devices that combine a modem and router

Eligible Equipment & Services

The following services are eligible for support under the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program:

- Commercially available Internet access services providing a fixed or mobile broadband Internet access connection for off-campus use by students, school staff, or library patrons.
- Limited Exception for New Construction and Datacasting Equipment
 - Where there are no commercially available broadband Internet access services available, schools and libraries may be able to seek Emergency Connectivity Fund Program support to construct or self-provision a network or purchase customer premises equipment needed to support datacasting.

Reasonable Support Amounts

- Applicants may seek funding for:
 - Up to **\$400** for each connected device (laptops and tablets)
 - Up to **\$250** for each Wi-Fi hotspot provided to a student, school staff or library patron
- The reasonable costs of all other eligible equipment and services will be determined upon careful review by USAC with guidance from the FCC.

Application Process

Emergency Connectivity Fund

The Process

These steps will help applicants navigate the process to get funding.

- 1 Complete Registrations
- 2 Determine Eligibility
- 3 Request Funding
- 4 Application Review
- 5 Funding Decision
- 6 Reimbursement

Preparing to Participate – Set Up an Entity Profile

- To apply for and receive Emergency Connectivity Fund Program funding, participants will need an **ECF Portal account**.
 - Applicants and consultants participating in the ECF Program will use this online portal to manage program processes.
- To create your ECF portal account, USAC will use your new or existing credentials for the **E-rate Productivity Center (EPC)**.
 - EPC is the account and application management portal for the E-rate program.
- USAC will automatically transfer your EPC account information to create an account in the ECF portal.

Preparing to Participate – Set Up an Entity Profile

If you are already an E-rate participant and have an account in EPC:

- You will get access to the new ECF portal with your existing EPC credentials.
 - This includes your entity or company information and account management settings, such as account users and user permissions.

Preparing to Participate – Set Up an Entity Profile

If your entity or company has an EPC account, but you need to create a new user:

- Your EPC account administrator can set up new users in EPC.
- Once your account administrator has added you as a new user on your entity or company account, USAC will send you a new user email with a link to reset your account password.
- After setting your account password, you will need to accept the EPC terms and conditions to complete the process of becoming a new user in EPC and gain access to the ECF Portal.
- If you need assistance with your EPC account, contact the Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781 Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET.

Preparing to Participate – Set Up an Entity Profile

If you are brand new to the Emergency Connectivity Fund and E-rate programs:

- Obtain an FCC Registration Number and register with the System for Awards Management (SAM).
 - If you have already registered with both the FCC and SAM.gov, check to ensure your SAM.gov registration has not expired or will not expire in the near future.
 - Program participants can complete these registration steps before the application window opens.
- Create an EPC account for your entity or company.
 - Call the Customer Support Center (CSC) to set up your account in EPC.

Preparing to Participate – Obtain an FCC Registration Number


Federal Communications Commission
Commission Registration System (CORES)

FCC Registration

[FCC](#) > [FCC Registration](#) > [User Login](#)
< [FCC Site Map](#)

FCC Registration - Login

You are accessing a U.S. Government Information System. Information system usage may be monitored, recorded, and subject to audit. Unauthorized use of the information system is prohibited and subject to criminal and civil penalties. Use of the information system indicates consent to monitoring and recording.

Welcome to the COmission REgistration System (CORES).

If you DO NOT have an FCC Username, please click the "REGISTER" button below to register an FCC Username.

CORES allows you to:

- Register and Manage the 10 digit FCC Registration Number (FRN).
- View financial standing (RED or Green Light Status) with the FCC and make payments.
- Manage Incentive Auction financials.

Click [Here](#) for CORES Tutorial Videos.

[News releases](#) related to the FCC Registration Number.

Username Login

Note: The Username is the email address associated with your FCC Username Account.

Username:

Password:

Need a Username?

Forgot/Reset your [Username Password?](#)

Check [Username Availability](#)

Search for public FRN information

Customer Service

[Help](#)
[Frequently Asked Questions](#)
[Privacy Statement](#)
[FCC Home Page](#)

For assistance, please submit a help request at <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/available-support-services> or call 877-480-3201 (Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-6 p.m. ET).

Preparing to Participate – Obtain an FCC Registration Number

- All Emergency Connectivity Fund participants must have an FCC Registration Number.
- Program participants can obtain an FCC Registration Number by visiting the FCC's Commission Registration System ([CORES](#)) and completing the registration process.
- If your organization already has an existing FCC Registration Number, you do not need to register again.

Preparing to Participate – Register with SAM.gov

Home Search Data Bank Data Services Help

Sign In

SAM.GOV

Official U.S. Government Website
100% Free

The Official U.S. Government System for:

- Contract Opportunities**
(was fbo.gov)
- Contract Data**
(Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)
- Wage Determinations**
(was wdol.gov)
- Federal Hierarchy**
Departments and Subtiers
- Assistance Listings**
(was cfda.gov)
- Entity Registration**
Including Disaster Response Registry
- Entity Reporting**
SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting
- Exclusions**

Register Your Entity
Register your entity to get started doing business with the federal government.

- Get Started
- Renew Entity
- Check Registration Status

Already know what you want to find?

Select Domain... e.g. 1606N020Q02

Preparing to Participate – Register with SAM.gov

- Registration with the [System for Awards Management](#) (SAM.gov) is necessary for all applicants and service providers who will submit requests for reimbursement (FCC Forms 472/474) in the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.
- Applicants whose service providers will file invoices for ECF reimbursement on their behalf (SPI invoicing) are not required to register with SAM.gov.
- USAC recommends you first search SAM.gov to see if your organization has a current registration.
- The SAM.gov registration process can take more than a week.
 - USAC recommends that participants begin the process now.
- Please note that applicants and service providers, who agree to invoice on behalf of applicants, will not be able to submit requests for reimbursement (ECF FCC Forms 472/474) and receive program funding until they have completed their SAM.gov registration.

Complete Application

- To apply, Schools and Libraries complete the Emergency Connectivity Fund FCC Form 471.
- Applicants must complete and certify the Emergency Connectivity Fund FCC Form 471 during the application filing window.
- Service providers may not complete the Emergency Connectivity Fund FCC Form 471 on behalf of a school or library.
- Applicants must certify that they have complied with all applicable local, state, and Tribal procurement requirements with respect to both previous purchases and future purchases and contracts.
- While similar, the Emergency Connectivity Fund FCC Form 471 is not the same form that applicants submit to participate in E-rate.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Updates

- If you have updates regarding your student counts and NSLP data, please provide that information in the narrative box for the first funding request number (FRN) on your ECF FCC Form 471
- Updates should be noted using the following language: **“NSLP Update Request: updated NSLP student count xxx; updated student count xxx; and updated NSLP percentage xx%.”**

Continuing First or Second Window Requests for Recurring Services

- As the service delivery date was extended until June 30, 2023 for the first and second window requests, if you are continuing to receive recurring services between July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 based on committed first or second window funding requests, you will need to include the following information in the narrative box for each applicable FRN: **Continuing First or Second Window Recurring Service Request: ECF FCC Form 471 Application No.; FRN; Service Start Date; and Service End Date.**
- If you will be pausing service, for example, during the summer months, you will need to provide the months of service that you are seeking support for based on these committed first or second window ECF funding requests

New or Continuing Recurring Services through Third Window Request

- As you may only request up to a maximum of 12 months of recurring service to be received between July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023 in the third application filing window, you will need to include the following information in the narrative box for each applicable FRN: **New or Continuing Third Window Recurring Service Request: ECF FCC Form 471 Application No.; FRN, Service Start Date; and Service End Date.**
- If you will be pausing service, for example, during the summer months, you will need to provide the months of service you are seeking support for based on the third window ECF funding request.

Reimbursement Process

Before you Begin

- Prior to requesting reimbursement for the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program, applicants need to have received a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) indicating that their funding request submitted on the ECF FCC Form 471 was approved.
- Requests for reimbursement will be submitted in the ECF Portal. USAC will make the reimbursement request forms available in the ECF Portal after the first wave of funding commitments are issued for the initial application filing window.

Complete Registrations

- When requesting funding on the ECF FCC Form 471, applicants must indicate whether the applicant or the service provider will submit the requests for reimbursement in the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program and complete the steps below.
 - **Register in the System for Awards Management system (SAM.gov) (Applicants and Service Providers).**
 - **File the FCC Form 498 (Service Providers Only).**
 - Please note that while you are required to file a Form 498, the banking information from that form will not be used. The SAM.gov banking information will be used for reimbursement.
 - **Access the ECF Portal (Service Providers only).**
 - 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

Starting Services

- The relevant funding period for the first and second application filing windows run from **July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022**. The relevant funding period for the third application filing windows run from **July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023**. USAC will issue a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) to both the applicant and service provider, which includes details of funding commitments for the equipment and services requested.
- **Applicants** may order eligible equipment and services prior to the start of the relevant funding period, but the equipment and services can only be delivered, received, or paid for (except for certain prepaid monthly services or leasing arrangements that occurred prior to July 1, 2021 for first and second application filing window or July 1, 2022 for the third application filing window – please review the [FCC's FAQs](#) 2.5, 2.5A, and 2.6) once the relevant funding period has started.
- **Service providers** can start providing services or delivering equipment before USAC has issued an FCDL, however, USAC will not issue an FCDL until its review is complete, and that review may result in the requested funding being reduced or denied.

Completing Services

- The relevant funding period for the first and second application filing windows ends on **June 30, 2022**. The relevant funding period for the third application filing window ends on **December 31, 2023**. Both recurring services (e.g., monthly internet service) and non-recurring services (e.g., delivery and installation of equipment) must be delivered on or before **June 30, 2023** to be eligible for reimbursement for the first and second funding period. Both recurring services (e.g., monthly internet service) and non-recurring services (e.g., delivery and installation of equipment) must be delivered on or before **December 31, 2023** to be eligible for reimbursement for the third funding period.

Requests for Reimbursement

- There are two ways for applicants to request reimbursement for eligible equipment and services through the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program. Applicants and service providers who agree to invoice on behalf of an applicant may submit a request for reimbursement (sometimes referred to as an invoice) for the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program once services and equipment have been received or delivered consistent with what was approved on the ECF FCC Form 471 application.
 - **If the applicant is invoicing:** The ECF FCC Form 472, or Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form, is for applicants who are requesting reimbursement on approved funding from the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.
 - **If the service provider is invoicing:** The ECF FCC Form 474, or Service Provider Invoice (SPI) Form, is for service providers who agree to invoice on behalf of applicants, to request reimbursement from the Program.

Requests for Reimbursement

- **Invoice Deadline Dates**

- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within **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 service delivery date, whichever is later.
- Please note for equipment and other non-recurring services that have not been received when the applicant submits the application, the service delivery date is **June 30, 2023** for the first and second application filing window. For equipment and other non-recurring services that have not been received when the applicant submits the application, the service delivery date is **December 31, 2023** for the third application filing window. In the event you wish to extend an invoice deadline date, you must file a waiver with the FCC

Requests for Reimbursement

- **Method for Applicants**

- After receiving the ECF-supported eligible equipment and/or services, applicants file the ECF FCC Form 472, or BEAR Form, to request reimbursement.
 - If the applicant has not paid the service provider at the time of submitting the request for reimbursement, the applicant should indicate this on the ECF FCC Form 472. The applicant will be required to certify compliance and provide verification of payment to the service provider payment within 30 days of the invoice payment date. USAC may seek recovery of the funds if applicants do not verify timely payment.

- **Method for Service Providers**

- The service provider(s) must provide the ECF-supported eligible equipment and/or services and then file the ECF FCC Form 474, or SPI Form, to request reimbursement.

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 falls within 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 service or equipment has been delivered.

Next Steps

Upcoming Emergency Connectivity Fund Office Hours

- Attend ECF office hour sessions and [view recordings](#) of previous sessions
 - Tuesday, May 3 @ 3.p.m ET - [Register](#)
 - Tuesday, May 10 @ 3 p.m. ET - [Register](#)

Stay Informed

- Visit the ECF website at EmergencyConnectivityFund.org.
- Visit the [FCC ECF FAQs](#)
- Sign up for the [ECF Newsletter](#)
- Refer to the [ECF learning modules](#)
- Contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781 Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET

Questions?

Thank You!





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Appendix

Preparing to Participate – Obtain an FCC Registration Number

Register with CORES

- First, go to the [FCC's CORES webpage](#).
- Set up an account in CORES by creating a username and password.
- You will then receive an automated email to verify your account's email address and activate your account.
- Once your account is activated, log in to CORES, and select “Register New FRN” if you do not have an FCC Registration Number. If you have an existing FCC Registration Number, select “Associate Username to FRN.”
- After you provide the required information and submit, CORES will generate a new FCC Registration Number for you, which will be associated with your username.

Preparing to Participate – Register with SAM.gov

- To register for a SAM account, you will need to enter the following information into the SAM.gov:
 - Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) or Employment Identification Number (EIN); and
 - Your bank's routing number, your bank account number, and your bank account type (i.e., checking or savings), to set up electronic funds transfer (EFT). You will receive a confirmation email once the registration is activated.

Preparing to Participate – Register with SAM.gov

Locate or Obtain a TIN or EIN

- A Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) is a unique identification number issued by either the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or the Social Security Administration (SSA). The Employee Identification Number (EIN), also referred to as the Federal Tax Identification Number, is an example of a TIN and is used to identify a business entity.
- To learn more about the TIN, visit the [IRS Taxpayer Identification Number \(TIN\)](#) webpage. To learn more about the EIN, visit the [IRS Employee ID Numbers](#) webpage.