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Funding Status for E-Rate and ECF

E-Rate for FY 2022:

Wave 4 for FY 2022 was issued on Thursday, May 12, 2022, for \$77.7 million including \$514 thousand for twelve North Carolina applicants. Cumulative commitments after four waves are \$1.42 billion including \$32.3 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 75.4% of the FY 2022 applications representing 44.9% of the requested funding.

A special extended application window for new Tribal libraries closes on May 26th (see [DA 22-231](#) and our [newsletter of March 14th](#)).

E-Rate for FY 2021:

As of Wave 54 for FY 2021, released May 6th, cumulative commitments stand at \$2.63 billion including \$84.3 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 98.7% of the FY 2021 applications representing 95.3% of the requested funding.

ECF for 2021-2023:

As of [Wave 14](#), issued May 5th, total ECF commitments are \$4.83 billion including \$150 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 93.9% of filed applications. Authorized disbursements as of last Friday totaled \$1.05 billion.

The third ECF application window closed last Friday, May 13th. We expect that an indication of funding demand will be available later this week. The FCC indicates that a minimum of \$1 billion — our estimate is at least \$2 billion — will be available to fund the same type of eligible equipment and services as in the original two windows but for delivery within the 18-month span from July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023 (albeit capped at 12 months of service for recurring services). For details, see [DA 22-309](#) and/or our [newsletter of March 28th](#).

Proposed E-Rate Eligibility for WiFi on School Buses

Speaking at a meeting of the National Coalition of Technology in Education & Training (“NCTET”) last week, FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel [announced](#) a proposal to permit E-rate funds to be used to provide WiFi on school buses. The [proposal](#), if adopted, would take the form of a Declaratory Ruling — not requiring a formal rulemaking — directing the Wireline Competition Bureau to include WiFi on buses as an eligible service in the Eligible Services List for FY 2023.

For schools and school districts who are funded for WiFi on school buses in the third ECF window, E-rate eligibility in FY 2023 would provide continuity of service from the 2022-2023 school year to the 2023-2024 school year.

The availability of WiFi on school buses is seen by Chairwoman Rosenworcel as an incremental step towards solving the Homework Gap. It provides major advantages for all students facing long commutes to and from school, sports games, and other school trips. Additionally, some schools have used WiFi-equipped buses as mobile hotspots by parking them after hours in convenient, but unserved, areas.

A draft of the Declaratory Ruling has been circulated to the other FCC Commissioners. We expect a consensus approving the Ruling shortly.

Updates and Reminders

Upcoming Dates:

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| May 16 | Comments due on the FCC’s Notice of Inquiry regarding the prevention and elimination of digital discrimination (FCC 22-21). Reply comments are due June 30 th . | | | | | | |
| May 20 | Form 486 deadline for FY 2021 covering funding committed in Wave 41. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date or from the service start date (typically July 1 st), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines are:
<table><tbody><tr><td>Wave 42</td><td>05/27/2022</td></tr><tr><td>Wave 43</td><td>06/03/2022</td></tr><tr><td>Wave 44</td><td>06/10/2022</td></tr></tbody></table> | Wave 42 | 05/27/2022 | Wave 43 | 06/03/2022 | Wave 44 | 06/10/2022 |
| Wave 42 | 05/27/2022 | | | | | | |
| Wave 43 | 06/03/2022 | | | | | | |
| Wave 44 | 06/10/2022 | | | | | | |
| May 26 | Extended FY 2022 application window deadline for new Tribal libraries (see DA 22-231). | | | | | | |
| May 27 | Reply comments due on the FCC’s proposal to create an E-rate competitive bidding portal (FCC 21-124). | | | | | | |

USAC ECF Newsletter Dated May 10 — Third Window ECF FAQs, Again

[USAC's Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter of May 10, 2022](#), repeated — undoubtedly for the last time — a series of FAQs dealing with the filing of applications in the third window that closed last Friday. For continuity, the Newsletter also repeated the SAM.gov registration reminder for reimbursement purposes.

Newsletter information and disclaimer: This newsletter may contain unofficial information on prospective E-rate developments and/or may reflect E-Rate Central's own interpretations of E-rate practices and regulations. Such information is provided for planning and guidance purposes only. It is not meant, in any way, to supplant official announcements and instructions provided by USAC, the FCC, or NCDPI.

Additional North Carolina specific E-rate information is available through our Web site — <http://www.e-ratecentral.com/us/stateInformation.asp?state=NC>. Note that this site provides easy access to formatted North Carolina applicant E-rate histories via the Billed Entity Number (“BEN”) search mechanism in the upper left-hand corner. Detailed information can be obtained by “drilling down” using the links for specific funding years and individual FRNs.

If you have received this newsletter from a colleague and you would like to receive your own copy of the North Carolina E-Rate Forum, send an email to join-ncerate@lists.dpi.state.nc.us. Please include your name, organization, telephone, and e-mail address.

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