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Funding Status for E-Rate and ECF

E-Rate for FY 2022:

Wave 21 for FY 2022 was issued on Thursday, September 8th, for \$32.3 million including \$474 thousand for one North Carolina applicant. Cumulative commitments to date are \$2.47 billion including \$62.9 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 95.2% of the FY 2022 applications representing 80.3% of the requested funding.

ECF for 2021-2023:

Wave 7 for the third ECF window was [released](#) on Wednesday, September 7th, for \$81.4 million including \$2.02 million for six North Carolina applicants. Total commitments for all three ECF windows are \$5.76 billion including \$159 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 96.4% of the applications from ECF windows one and two and 29.3% of applications from ECF window three. Total disbursements as of last Friday were \$1.76 billion.

Updates and Reminders

Upcoming Dates:

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| September 15 | Form 486 deadline for FY 2021 covering funding committed in Wave 55. 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. The next Form 486 deadline (for Wave 56) will be September 26 th . |
| September 15 | First of two USAC webinars on the ECF Invoice Review Process (register). |
| September 20 | Second USAC webinar on the ECF Invoice Review Process (register). |
| September 21 | Comments due on the FCC's proposed Eligible Services List (DA 22-878) for FY 2023. Reply comments are due October 6 th . |
| September 30 | Service delivery deadline for FY 2020 and FY 2021 non-recurring services. |

Note: Given current global supply chain problems, the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (“SHLB”) Coalition filed a blanket request for [waiver](#) with the FCC asking for a one year extension of the non-recurring service delivery deadline for both FY 2020 (that had already been extended one year) and FY 2021. Unless and until this waiver is approved, we recommend that applicants facing service delivery delays this fall file a Form 500 requesting their own extensions of the September 30th service delivery deadline.

- October 24 Nominations due for six USAC Board of Directors positions (see [DA 22-877](#)).
- October 28 Invoice deadline for FY 2021 recurring service FRNs and/or the deadline for requesting a one-time 120-day extension to February 27, 2023.
- October 31 The first Form 486 deadline for FY 2022 Waves 1-11, committed before July 1, 2022.

E-Rate and ACP Fraud:

The U.S. Department of Justice (“DOJ”) Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Oklahoma [announced](#) a settlement last week with Omega Technology Center, Inc. (“Omega”) and its owners regarding allegations of E-rate fraud involving the submission of SPI invoices for goods and services never provided to an Oklahoma school district in FY 2010 and FY 2012. Under the settlement, Omega agreed to pay \$54,000 and to not participate in any FCC/USAC program for a period of at least three years. Although the settlement does not allege any fault by the school district, it does highlight the need for applicants to track SPI invoices filed on their behalf.

Fraud is also an issue in the Affordable Connectivity Program (“ACP”), an internet discount program for households that we continue to track as a successor to ECF internet subsidies. The FCC’s Office of the Inspector General (“OIG”) issued a [news release](#) and [advisory](#) last week of probable fraudulent enrollments (coincidentally highlighting one major problem in Oklahoma.) ACP discounts are available only to households meeting low-income thresholds. Eligibility must be verified by the internet providers, usually based on those subscribers’ participation in federal SNAP or Medicaid programs. A subscriber may also become eligible, however, through a Benefit Qualifying Person (“BQP”) — another household member, such as a child or dependent, who meets one of the ACP eligibility requirements. What the OIG found was that a number of internet providers or their agents have been enrolling multiple households in ACP based on a single BQP. In the most egregious case, three ACP providers claimed more than \$365,000 in program reimbursements in connection with over a thousand Oklahoma households enrolled in ACP on the basis of a single BQP, reputedly a four-year old child receiving Medicaid benefits. Neither the news release nor the advisory indicates what disciplinary action the FCC has taken as a result of these findings but the FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau (“WCB”) quickly announced ([DA 22-931](#)) additional program integrity measures regarding BQP enrollments.

ECF Program Announcement – Upcoming Webinars

USAC’s [Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Announcement of September 8, 2022](#), provides information on two “ECF Invoice Review Refresher Webinars” both at 3:00 p.m. ET on Tuesday, September 15th and Thursday, September 20th.

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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