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Funding Status

E-Rate for FY 2024:

Wave 27 for FY 2024 was released on Thursday, October 24th, for \$15.8 million including \$380 thousand for three North Carolina applicants. Total funding is now \$2.31 billion including \$66.6 million for North Carolina. Currently, USAC has funded 95.7% of the originally submitted applications, representing 78.0% of the dollars requested.

ESL for FY 2025 with Hotspots

Late Friday, the FCC released the FY 2024 Eligible Services List (“ESL”) ([DA 24-1104](#)), a necessary step that will allow USAC to open the Form 471 application window as it has traditionally done in mid-January. Most importantly this year, the ESL establishes the basic eligibility rule for school and library hotspots by simply expanding the language on eligible wireless services to read:

- **Wireless (e.g., fixed wireless; microwave; mobile service for use on school buses; or mobile service for use with Wi-Fi hotspots)**

The latest ESL also added a useful note on school bus Wi-Fi to clarify that basic “technical support (i.e., software updates including bug fixes and security patches, and remote technical support) appropriate to maintain reliable operation of school bus network equipment is eligible for support under Category One.

What the FCC did not do in the latest ESL — as it has not done in years past — is expand the eligibility of firewalls beyond the term “basic.” We find this particularly disappointing this year because, in establishing the Cybersecurity Pilot Program, the FCC has clearly acknowledged the need for greater network protection. The FCC’s inaction on the E-Rate eligibility of advanced firewalls is further annoying because, as pointed out in the comments of both [LAUSD](#) and [SECA](#), the ESL language under Category Two has long indicated that firewalls — without any definitional limitation — are eligible. Admittedly, the ESL does suggest that “basic firewall protection provided as a standard component of a vendor’s Internet access service” is ineligible, but that is as a Category One service.

Updates and Reminders

Upcoming Dates:

- October 28 Nomination due date for eight positions on the USAC Board of Directors (see [DA 24-867](#)).
- October 28** E-Rate invoice deadline for FY 2023 recurring services and final date to request an invoice deadline extension.
- October 29 USAC’s Cybersecurity Office Hours ([register](#)).
- October 29 Form 486 deadline for FY 2024 Waves 1-10. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date, or the service start date (typically July 1st), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines for FY 2024 are:
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| Wave 11 | 10/31/2024 |
| Wave 12 | 11/08/2024 |
| Wave 13 | 11/15/2024 |
| Wave 14 | 11/22/2024 |
- November 1** Close of the FCC’s Cybersecurity Pilot Program Form 484 Part 1 application window. See [USAC’s Cybersecurity Pilot Program Newsletter for November 1, 2024](#).
- November 4 Due date for reply comments on the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (“FNPRM”) on the FCC’s recent hotspot order ([FCC 24-76](#)).
- November 7 Form 486 deadline for FY 2023 Wave 58. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date, or the service start date (typically July 1st), whichever is later. The next Form 486 deadline for FY 2023 is:
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| Wave 59 | 11/14/2024 |
| Wave 60 | 11/21/2024 |

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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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