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## Funding Status

### *E-Rate for FY 2025:*

Wave 26 of Funding Commitment Decision Letters (“FCDL”s) for FY 2025 was released on Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, for \$31.0 million, including \$28.5 thousand for one North Carolina applicant. Total funding for FY 2025 is \$2.17 billion, including \$49.4 million for North Carolina. Currently, USAC has funded 91.1% of submitted applications, representing 69.8% of the dollars requested.

### *Cybersecurity Pilot Program:*

The Form 471 application window for the Cybersecurity Pilot Program closed on September 15, 2025. Total pilot funding is capped at \$200 million for 690 applicants, including \$7.9 million for fifteen North Carolina applicants. PIA review of Pilot applications has begun — slowly.

## Special FY 2025 Hotspot and Bus Wi-Fi Offering from Mission Telecom

Disclaimer: As a general practice, E-Rate Central does not support specific suppliers or product offerings to E-Rate applicants, clients or otherwise. But we have recently experienced an unprecedented action by the FCC to change the rules during a funding year on previously eligible hotspot and school bus Wi-Fi services. The FCC’s actions have left many applicants in the lurch, requiring them to either cancel services or pay unbudgeted expenses to maintain service for the remainder of the year. In this situation, we feel justified in bringing to your attention one new service offering that we expect will generate considerable interest — and hopefully even competitive offerings from others.

Last week, [Mission Telecom](#), a non-profit wireless telecom provider for schools and libraries issued a [press release](#) offering E-Rate applicants, with pending — soon to be denied (see our [newsletter of October 6<sup>th</sup>](#)) — hotspot and/or bus Wi-Fi funding requests, ongoing service through the remainder of FY 2025 (i.e., through June 30, 2026) at a cost equal to the post-discount price of those wireless services. In other words, a school or library with a FY 2025 application for fifty

hotspots at a cost of \$30/mo./device, and a discount rate of 80%, would have requested \$1,500/mo. in pre-discount services for which it would have paid \$300/mo. post-discount. In the absence of E-Rate funding, Mission Telecom is offering to provide unlimited 4G/5G Wi-Fi service for the remainder of the year at the same “post-discount” price of \$300/mo. For a 90% discount applicant, with the same service, Mission Telecom would charge only \$150/mo. The goal is for the applicant to pay no more per month — net of the E-Rate discount — than it would have if the FY 2025 E-Rate application had been approved.

This is such an unusually attractive offering that Mission Telecom’s press release has drawn supporting statements from the American Library Association (“ALA”), the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (“SHLB”) Coalition, and COSN – The Consortium for School Networking.

Several conditions apply to the Mission Telecom offering and should be carefully noted:

- The underlying wireless provider for Mission Telecom’s service is T-Mobile. This means that the applicant must be in a T-Mobile service area – and must have (or buy) compatible Wi-Fi devices (SIM cards, if necessary, will apparently be provided for free).
- The discount applies only through June 30, 2026. Service beyond this date will have to be negotiated. The Mission Telecom website sets an apparent upper bound on pricing starting at \$20/mo. with increasing volume discounts up to 3,500 devices.
- Mission Telecom is a relatively small non-profit company that may have difficulty immediately responding to inquiries from the over 1,200 applicants who had applied for wireless services in FY 2025. Interested applicants can contact the company earlier rather than later by [email](#) or by [scheduling](#) a call.
- For applicants concerned about the E-Rate gift rules for receiving special discounted pricing, it should be noted that (at least for now) Mission Telecom is NOT an E-Rate supplier. Thus, there should be no conflict (unless a library seeks to use the service for its bookmobiles and also applies for E-Rate discounts).

## Updates and Reminders

### *Upcoming Dates:*

TBD	Comments on the FCC’s draft <a href="#">Eligible Service List for FY 2026</a> , originally due October 15 <sup>th</sup> , will now be due one business day after the government shutdown ends. The deadline for reply comments, initially due October 30 <sup>th</sup> , may be rescheduled accordingly
October 20	Original FCC deadline for nominating six new (or renewed) USAC Board members (see <a href="#">DA 25-738</a> and our <a href="#">newsletter of August 25<sup>th</sup></a> ). This deadline will become one business day after the government shutdown ends.
October 21	USAC EPC Administrative Window webinar has been canceled and will likely be rescheduled when the government shutdown ends.
October 23	USAC Post-Commitment Process webinar at 2:00 p.m. ET ( <a href="#">Register</a> ) will likely be rescheduled if the government shutdown continues.

- October 28      Deadline to submit invoices for FY 2024 recurring services or to request an invoice deadline extension.
- October 29      First FY 2025 Form 486 deadline for applicants funded in Waves 1-10. The Wave 11 deadline will be October 31, with subsequent Form 486 Wave deadlines following weekly. Specifically, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days after the FCDL date, or the Service Start Date (typically July 1<sup>st</sup>), whichever is later.
- October 29-31   [AnchorNets](#): 13<sup>th</sup> Annual SHLB Conference, Crystal City, VA. E-Rate Central is a Gold-level sponsor of the event.
- October 30      USAC Invoicing webinar at 2:00 p.m. ET ([Register](#)).
- November 6     USAC Eligible Services 101 webinar at 2:00 p.m. ET ([Register](#)).

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*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](mailto:join-ncerate@lists.dpi.state.nc.us). Please include your name, organization, telephone, and e-mail address.*

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