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Funding Status

E-Rate for FY 2025:

Wave 29 of Funding Commitment Decision Letters (“FCDL”s) for FY 2025 was released on Thursday, November 6th, for \$28.1 million, including \$2.55 million for two North Carolina applicants. Total funding for FY 2025 is \$2.28 billion, including \$52.1 million for North Carolina. Currently, USAC has funded 92.0% of submitted applications, representing 74.1% 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 is proceeding with some applications reported to be “Wave Ready.” Issuance of the first Funding Commitment Decisions Letters (“FCDLs”), however, will require FCC post-shutdown review.

FCC, USAC, and the Government Shutdown:

The government shutdown is still affecting the FCC. USAC, however, is operational and fully staffed. From an E-Rate perspective, the most visible aspect of the difference between the two is that USAC continues to issue funding decisions on FY 2025 funding requests and to review and pay BEAR and SPI invoices. The FCC’s activities, in contrast, have been sharply curtailed, with significant reductions in staffing. This has undoubtedly cut into the processing of FCC E-Rate waivers and appeals and led to the cancellation of USAC webinars (which require FCC review). More importantly, it has slowed the release of the Eligible Services List for FY 2026, which could delay the opening of the Form 471 application window. Lack of coordination between USAC and the FCC is also causing delays in the release of Cybersecurity Pilot Program FCDLs.

One other aspect of the shutdown that we are following closely, although not immediately related to E-Rate, is funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”). SNAP funding was cutoff on November 1st and is now being partially restored under a court order from contingency funds. As discussed in our [newsletter of November 3rd](#), the 2025 budget reconciliation bill, currently stalled in Congress and at the heart of the shutdown, proposes sweeping reductions — approximately \$287 billion over ten years — in the SNAP program by tightening eligibility

criteria. If enacted, as currently proposed, the number of families eligible for SNAP benefits would be reduced by millions. Over time, such a change would begin to limit CEP participation and NSLP percentages which, in turn, would lead to lower E-Rate discount rates for certain applicants.

In the short term, of course, the most immediate concern is making sure that SNAP-eligible families are being fed. A study issued this past weekend by the Food Research & Action Center (“FRAC”) shows [SNAP benefit status by state](#). For North Carolina, full benefits will be available this week.

Updates and Reminders

Upcoming Dates:

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| TBD | Comments on the FCC’s draft Eligible Service List for FY 2026 , originally due October 15 th , will now be due one business day after the government shutdown ends. The deadline for reply comments, initially due October 30 th , will be rescheduled accordingly. |
| TBD | The original FCC deadline for nominating six new (or renewed) USAC Board members (see DA 25-738 and our newsletter of August 25th) was October 20 th . This deadline will become one business day after the government shutdown ends. |
| November 14 | FY 2025 Form 486 deadline for applicants funded in Wave 13. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days after the FCDL date, or the Service Start Date (typically July 1 st), whichever is later. The next Form 486 deadlines for FY 2025 are: |
| | Wave 14 11/21/2025 |
| | Wave 15 11/28/2025 |
| | Wave 16 12/05/2025 |

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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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