E-Rate Newbie Training

Fall 2024

Lee Bray

State E-Rate Coordinator



VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community





State Board of Education STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders





EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career

Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes





EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

EVERY School and District is Rated "C" or Higher







Agenda

- Overview
- Eligible Entities
- Eligible Equipment and Services
- Discount Calculations
- Category 2 Budgets
- Application Process all steps
- E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC)
- Helpful Sites



E-Rate

- What is E-Rate?
- Where do I Start?
- Where do I go to find out about E-Rate?
- Why is it important to my district?
- What is my role?
- Who can help me?
- Did I volunteer for this?
- Am I going to regret this?



What is E-Rate?

- E-Rate is a discount program
- Established by Congress
- \$4.94 billion federal program
- Directed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
 - Sets the rules and policies of the program
- Managed by Universal Service Administration Company (USAC)
- Schools and Libraries Program
- Provides 20-90% discounts on eligible services and equipment
- Provides post-purchase funding for items such as:
 - Internet Access / Data Transmission Services
 - Telecommunications services
- Program is highly deadline restrictive
- Application process begins 6-12 months before funding year begins



How to be E-Rate Successful

- Read listserv messages
- Document and retain everything
 - Electronic
 - Hard copy E-Rate binder for each year
 - 10-year retention policy (retention starts from last day contract is exercised)
- Know where to find E-Rate documentation
 - Mississippi E-Rate page
 - USAC
 - E-Rate Central
- Attend E-Rate meetings
- Have patience



What entities are E-Rate Eligible?

- Public School districts
- Private Schools (not for profit endowment less than \$50 million)
- Libraries
- Consortia comprised of eligible entities
- Non-instructional Facilities (NIFs)
 - Admin buildings, bus barns, etc
 - Eligible for Category 1 only
- Every organization has an E-Rate Billed Entity Number (BEN)
- Every building must have an Entity Number



What is my role?

- You are a school district
- You are a billed entity
- You are a recipient of services
- You may be a member of a consortium
- You are a governing authority with local control
- You are an E-Rate
 - E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) Account Administrator
 - E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) General Contact



E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC)

- Account and application management portal
- All E-Rate forms, letters and interactions are based in
- Every Billed Entity has an EPC Account
- Every EPC account has users
 - Username is your email address
 - Passwords expire every 60 days
 - One user is designated the Account Administrator
- Multi-factor authentication (MFA) required at login
 - Sends an email or text verification number
- Call USAC Customer Service Center for assistance
 - 1-888-203-8100



Calculating Discount

- District level for schools based on several factors
 - % of students district wide who are eligible for National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
 - Community Eligibility Program (CEP)
 - Alternative discount calculation
 - Survey
 - Sibling Match
 - Combination
 - This information is then used in the Discount Matrix
 - USAC verifies this data in the state valid file
 - E-Rate state coordinator sends file



School District Example

School	Urban/Rural	Enrollment	NSLP	
Oak Forest Elementary School	R	235	115	
Woodville Heights Elementary School	R	250	125	
Timberlawn Elementary School	R	315	214	
Marshall Elementary School	U	400	203	
Key Elementary School	U	275	102	
Whitten Middle School	U	527	216	
Peeples Middle School	R	675	337	
Siwell Middle School	R	787	305	
Wingfield High School	R	1140	756	
Forest Hill High School	U	2461	1027	
Total District Calculation	R	7065	3400	48%

District Discount

INCOME Measured by % of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	CATEGORY ONE (C1)		CATEGORY TWO (C2)	
	URBAN Discount	RURAL Discount	URBAN Discount	RURAL Discount
Less than 1%	20%	25%	20%	25%
1% to 19%	40%	50%	40%	50%
20% to 34%	50%	60%	50%	60%
35% to 49%	60%	70%	60%	70%
50% to 74%	80%	80%	80%	80%
75% to 100%	90%	90%	85%	85%



How does USAC obtain enrollment?

Schools / School districts are required to update EPC profiles during 'Admin Window'

- System automatically calculates discounts
 - NSLP
 - CEP student percentage is multiplied by 1.6
- Category 1 has no funding cap
- Category 2 is based on student enrollment multiplied by \$167
- Category 2 needs to updated only if there is an increase in students
- Each school has a C2 budget based upon \$167.00 per student for the 5-year cycle
 - FY21 FY25
- Max discount percentage
 - Category 1 90%
 - Category 2 85%



Categories of Service

- Category 1 Services that go to a school or library
 - Subcategories:
 - Data Transmission Services (Fiber, coax, etc.)
 - Internet Access
 - Maximum discount 90%
 - No funding cap
 - Services must be received between July 1 of start year through June 30 of closeout year (12 months)
- Category 2 Services or equipment that go inside the school or library
 - Subcategories:
 - Internal Connections (IC)
 - Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections (BMIC)
 - Managed Internal Broadband Services (MIBS)
 - Maximum discount 85%
 - 5-year budget cycle (Based on number of students multiplied by \$167)
 - Equipment received from April 1 of start year through September 30 of end year (15 months)
 - Can apply for 1 year extension if needed (Request must be made by September 30)



C1: Data Transmission Services

- Most Common
 - Leased Lit Fiber
 - Cable modem/DSL
 - Bundled Internet Access
- Special Construction Charges
 - Cost to build out network
- Installation Charges
 - One-time charge to turn on service

- Also Eligible
 - Leased Dark Fiber
 - Self-Provisioned Fiber
 - Broadband over power lines
 - T-1, T-3, Fractional T-1
 - DS-1, DS-2, DS-3
 - OC-1, OC-3, OC-12, OC-n
 - Frame Relay
 - ISDN
 - Satellite Services
 - Wireless data plans (hotspots)
 - WiFi on buses



C2-Internal Connections

- Wireless Access Points
- Network Routers & Switches
- In-building Structured Cabling
- Caching Servers
- Firewalls Basic
- Racks
- UPS
- Equipment License

- Cloud-based functionality of listed equipment
- Operating system software to support eligible equipment
- Taxes and fees
- Basic training on use of equipment
- Installation and configuration



C2- Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections

- Limited eligibility
- Multi-year contracts must be amortized
- Can only be for services/work performed during funding year
- 100% eligible
 - Basic tech support
 - Configuration changes
- Conditionally eligible
 - Repair of equipment
 - Cable maintenance



C2 – Managed Internal Broadband Services

- Managed internal broadband services (MIBS)
- Covers operation, management, or monitoring of a LAN
- 2 Options
 - Paying an outside vendor to own/maintain equipment
 - Paying an outside vendor to maintain school-owned equipment
 - Subject to C2 budget caps



Equipment Transfer / Disposal Rules

- Transfer:
 - Equipment may be transferred between schools after July 1, 2021
 - During 5-year budget window
 - Record reason and date of transfer
 - Don't have to contact USAC about move
 - Asset inventory retained for 10 years from date of purchase
 - Equipment can be disposed of, sold, transferred, etc. after 5 years
- Disposal:
 - Equipment can be disposed of, transferred, sold, etc. from 5 years of the date of installation
 - Retain information in asset inventory of move/disposal



NIFs – Ineligible for C2 funding

- Non-instructional facilities (NIF) are not eligible for Category 2 funding
 - Must cost allocate equipment on C2 purchase if NIF is a recipient
- Equipment may be housed at a NIF i.e. District office
 - Example: Wireless Controller for wireless access points
- After 5 years equipment can be transferred to NIF



Category 2 Budget

- FY21 FY25 Entering last year of budget cycle
- FY26 New budget will begin
 - No funds carry over from previous funding cycle
- Budgets are pre-discount
- Applicants must pay the discount portion 15% 80%
- EPC calculates budget expenditure and remaining amounts



Category 2 Budget

- C2 Budget Multipliers:
 - Single School:
 - \$167 per student or \$25,000, whichever total is larger
 - School Districts:
 - \$167 x total district enrollment
 - \$25,000 x total number of schools in district
 - Whichever total budget is greater
 - Independent Libraries:
 - \$4.50 x total square footage or \$25,000, whichever is greater
 - Library Systems:
 - \$4.50 x total square footage or \$25,000, whichever is greater



Category 2 Budget Example

5-Year Budget Cap (pre-discount amount)	E-Rate Discount	USAC will pay	District Percentage	District Payment
\$350,000	70%	\$245,000	30%	\$105,000
\$400,000	85%	\$340,000	15%	\$60,000

- C2 budget cap is the pre-discount amount.
- E-Rate discount is determined by NSLP or CEP amount.
- When budget is totally expended district must wait for next funding cycle.
- Budget can be divided between years in cycle or expended in one year.
- What is your current Category 2 budget amount?
 - Budget amount can be found in EPC or Opendata



Category 2 Budget – Student Count

- Enrollment data for Category 2 is separate from yearly student discount data
- Category 2 budget amounts are set in year 1 (FY2021)
- Not required to update on a yearly basis
- Can be updated if student count rises in funding cycle
 - Must submit request for increase during Admin window
- Information found in Manage Organization on District page in EPC



Category 2 Budget – Amount

- Do not request more funds than available
- Result for over request:
 - Application is flagged by USAC review team for adjustment
 - Adjustment will be a manual recalculation on applicant
 - Applicant identifies FRN line items to be adjusted
 - Will slow up funding request
 - May result in total cancellation of part or entire application



The Application Process

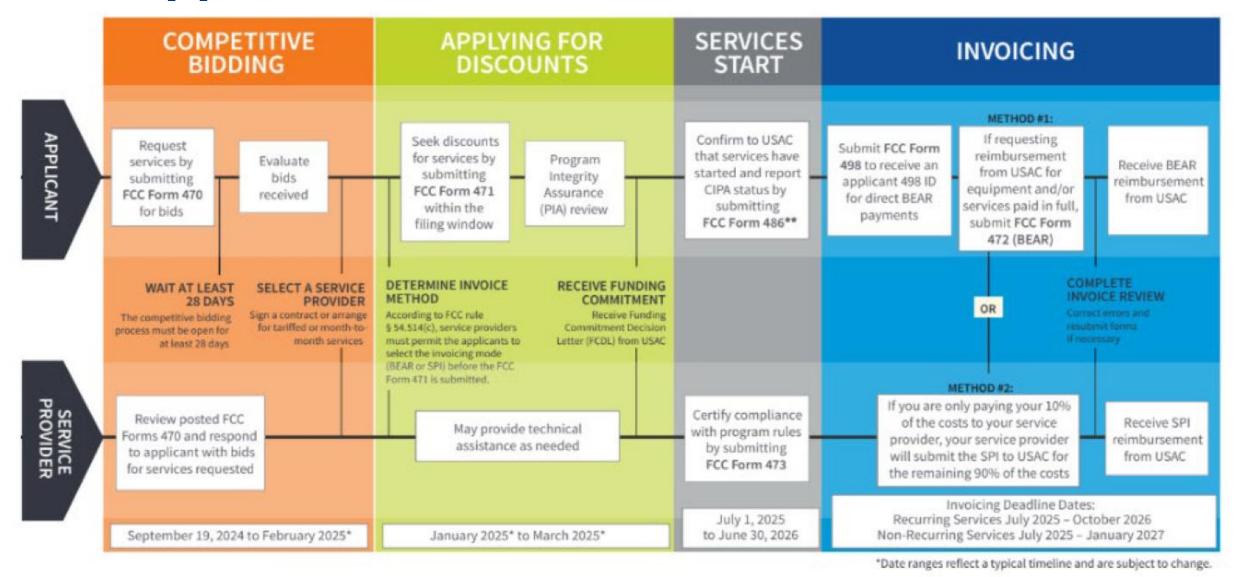


Application Process Overview

E-Rate Step	Suggested Timeline
1. Assess Needs / Create Plan	August – November
2. Update EPC Profiles – Admin Window	October – January (closes 3 days prior to Form 471)
3. Bid all new services / equipment (Form 470)	July – December
4. Bid evaluation (after 28-day Form 470 waiting period)	August - February
5. Board Approval / Sign Contracts	September – February
6. Request E-Rate funding – Form 471	January – March (TBD by USAC)
7. Application review (PIA)	April – August
8. Funding Commitment – FCDL	April – August
9. Turn on funding / CIPA Compliance – Form 486	FCDL Receipt or service start date
10. Receive services	July (start year) - June (end year)
11. Pay vendor	July (start year) - June (end year)
12. Submit invoice to USAC (Payment) applicant - BEAR /Vendor - Form 474	Anytime after start of service – must be filed by October 28 of end year without extension request.



The Application Process





Step 1 – Assess Need & Plan

- When July October
- Category 1
 - Review existing contracts
 - Still valid??
 - Extensions??
 - State Master Contract
- Category 2
 - Do you have any C2 budget left?
 - How much budget available?
 - Assess district needs
 - Existing multi-year contract??

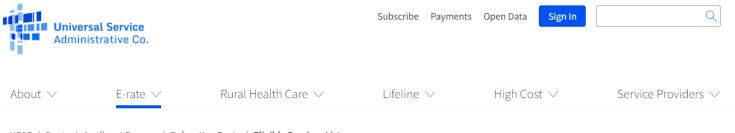


Planning

- Create plan new E-Rate year
 - Is a Form 470 needed?
 - If so, what are the bidding dates?
 - Do I need to file for a DFA waiver?
 - What date will I obtain board approval?
 - Board agenda deadline?
 - Will board meet prior to Form 471 application deadline?
 - When is the Form 471 window?
 - Has all data been updated in EPC?
 - School / District data
 - Account Administrator
 - NSLP/ CEP



Eligible Services List (ESL)



USAC | E-rate | Applicant Process | Before You Begin | Eligible Services List

Applicant Process

Before You Begin 🔨



School and Library Eligibility

Consortia

Non-Instructional Facilities (NIFs)

Non-Traditional Education Eligibility

Educational Service Agencies

Entity Numbers

Eligible Services Overview

Eligible Services List

Eihar Cummani Ovania

Eligible Services List

The Eligible Services List (ESL) for each funding year provides guidance on the eligibility of products and services under the Schools and Libraries Program.

Step 1 >

ESL Glossary 🕞

Frequently Asked Questions

2021 Eligible Services List 2020 Eligible Services List 2019 Eligible Services List 20

The ESL is organized into two primary sections plus a miscellaneous section:

- Category One
 - Data Transmission Services and/or Internet Access
- Category Two
 - □ Internal Connections (IC), Managed Internal Broadband Services (MIBS), and Basic Maintenance



Eligible Services List (ESL)

- The ESL Order has five sections, with the actual Eligible Service List posted last.
 - Introduction A preface to the contents of the Order.
 - Background –Discusses the FCC's seeking of comments, and related actions, prior to issuing the Order.
 - Discussion Detailed discussion of scope of modifications in the Eligible Services List.
 - Appendix A
 — List of Commenters
 - Appendix B FY2025 Eligible Service List.



Step 2 – Update Entity(s) Profile Information

- Update entity profiles
 - During Admin Window (November January)
 - Data can not be changed after Admin Window closes
- Confirm all entities, including NIFs are in the EPC portal
 - Contact CSC if adjustments are needed 1-888-203-8100
- Remember Libraries rely on your data for their discount percentage
- **Admin Window will change from year to year



Step 3 – Posting the Form 470



- Purpose of Form 470
 - Online form notifying vendors of services and equipment for which you are seeking proposals
 - Needed to file a Form 471 (Form 471 references)
 - Vendors are invited to submit bids / quotes for 28 days from the date of certification
 - Not obligated to purchase service / equipment listed on Form 470
- State requirements
 - Submitted information to Mississippi Bid Bank
 - Advertisement in paper
 - Reverse auction date for equipment only
 - Requested reverse auction waiver??

State Procurement Rules

\$.01 - \$5,000.00	\$5,000.01 - \$75,000.00	Greater than \$75,000	+ E-rate Requirements
May purchase without advertising or otherwise requesting competitive bids	May purchase without advertisement for bids, provided at least two competitive written bids have been obtained	Advertisement & receipt of competitive bids required by law	Post Form 470 and wait 28 days before awarding

The lifecycle cost of an information technology project means the total committed costs of the project, not just the initial or up-front costs. Lifecycle cost includes all costs associated with obtaining the item and maintaining and operating it for its projected lifecycle. Initial or one-time costs might include purchase price, freight, installation, and training. Ongoing costs include such expenses as post-warranty maintenance; support, including help desk charges, upgrade charges, and on-site vendor personnel; and any recurring usage charges.



When does a Form 470 need posting?

- Annually for all services purchased on month-to-month basis
- At the beginning of a new contract
 - Unless a multi-year contract has been filed
- Contract Extensions:
 - Can be included in original contract
 - Must have a definite end date
 - No automatic renewal
 - Notify vendor if you want to exercise extension
 - By email
 - Contract amendment
 - USAC will ask in application review



Requests for Proposal (RFP)

- RFP not required, except for:
 - State bidding requirements
 - All dark fiber or self provisioned fiber projects
- USAC considers any bidding documents provided to a vendor an RFP
- If using an RFP
 - All documents must be uploaded in EPC at time of Form 470 posting
 - Cannot cite to a website bidding advertisement
 - Any changes must be given to all vendors after application is submitted
 - Changes must be added to Form 470
 - 28-day clock will restart (29 total days application day referred to as Day 0)



When to file Form 470?

- Must be posted in EPC at least 28 days prior to the close of the Form 471 window
 - Example:
 - Form 471 window deadline is March 26
 - February 26 is Form 470 deadline
 - Do not wait this long!!!
 - Always give yourself several days to evaluate bids, negotiate contracts, seek board approval, sign contracts, upload contract, etc.
 - All items listed above must be completed prior to filing Form 471
 - Always give yourself enough time just in case something goes wrong



Step 4 - Evaluating Bids

- After bid due date (at least 28 days) applicant reviews all qualified submissions
- Must have and retain a bid matrix
- Price of eligible services/equipment must be the most <u>heavily weighted factor</u> during evaluation
 - Sample criteria
 - Quality of proposed solution
 - Cost of ineligible items
 - References
 - Experience with vendor
 - Ability to meet installation deadline
- Retain all winning and losing bids and all correspondence between applicant and vendors (winning and losing)



Bid Disqualification

- To disqualify a bid the reason must be stated in the Form 470 or RFP
- Reasons must be Yes/No (either they complied, or they did not)
- Make note of the exact reason for disqualifying a bid and show where it was stated in the Form 470 or RFP
- Examples
 - Vendor did not submit proposal by deadline
 - Vendor not authorized to do business in Mississippi
 - Equipment cannot be refurbished
 - Vendor did not attend pre-bid walk-through
 - Vendor must submit bid bond
 - Equipment not compatible with existing system



No Bids?

- Document via an email or file memo that no bids were received
- Existing services: can continue to receive services from existing service provider
- New Services/Procurement: Solicit bid from willing vendor
 - Make sure price is cost effective
 - Check marketplace options from other vendors in your area or nearby areas
 - Save research and information to justify buying service for this vendor



Bid Evaluation Matrix - Sample

FACTOR	POINTS AVAILABLE	VENDOR 1	VENDOR 2	VENDOR 3
Price of the eligible products and services	50*	20	50	40
Prior experience with the vendor	25	25	0	25
Prices for ineligible services and products	15	10	5	15
Local or in-state vendor	10	10	0	0
TOTAL	100	65	55	80



Step 5 - Contract

- Signed contract with Form 470 winning bidder on day 29 or later
- Contain handwritten signature and date of signing
 - Vendor
 - District / Library
- Signed by the applicant before From 471 submission
 - Vendor can sign after Form 471 deadline
- Contain Contract Award Date and End Date
- Types
 - One year
 - Multi-year
 - Can contain voluntary extensions
- Must be loaded in EPC in PDF format before submitting Form 471

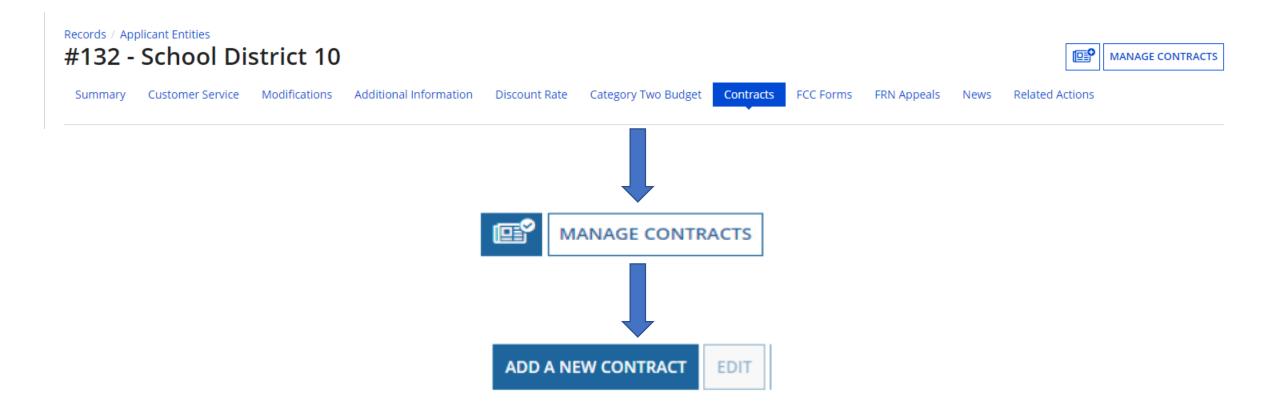


Uploading Contract

- All new contracts must be uploaded into the EPC Contract Module before starting the Form 471
- Assign a very descriptive nickname
 - Example FY25 CSpire Internet
- Upload copy of contract
- Enter the following information:
 - Form 470 used to bid service
 - Contract signing date
 - Number of bids
 - How many contract extensions, if any
 - Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)
- Contract expiration date will be added to the Form 471



Add New Contract - EPC





Step 6 - Form 471



- Filed by the applicant in EPC requesting funding C1 and/or C2
- Must have valid Form 470 for services / equipment
- Contract must be uploaded prior to filing
- Filed in designated window USAC sets dates of window (January March/April)
- File for items on ESL only
- Category 1 and Category 2 must be filed on separate applications
 - Multiple applications are ok
- Separate applications must be filed if using different vendors
 - Example Category 1 Internet Vendor A and Category 1 WAN Vendor B
- Template available for bulk upload
- Website:
 - https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/applying-for-discounts/fccform-471-filing/



Step 7 – PIA Review

Program Integrity Assurance Review (PIA)

- USAC team that reviews all applications submitted in Form 471 window
- Checks for rule compliance
 - Eligible Services
 - Eligible Entities
 - Appropriate discount level
 - Competitive bidding violations
 - Category 2 budget levels
- Form 471 main contact will receive email notification
- Inquiry questions posted in EPC
 - Applicant must respond in EPC
- Must respond in 15 days
 - Can seek a 1-week extension
- PIA will notify if they intend to deny or reduce request



Step 8 – FCDL Issued

Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)

- Funding waves are released weekly (Funded or Not Funded)
- FCDLs are emailed to the Form 471 contact and the EPC Account Admin
- Gives approval decisions of each funding requests (FRNs) on Form 471
- Information from Form 471
 - Amount of funding
 - Dates of the application
 - Service provider
 - Contract information
- Can appeal within 60 days if not in agreement with decision
- Check with vendor to see if they have been notified





Funding Commitment Decision Letter

Funding Year 2022

Contact Information:

Lee Bray MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 359 NORTH WEST STREET SUITE 118 JACKSON, MS 39201

FCC Form 471: 221017803

BEN: 128642 Wave: 1

Application Nickname: CSpire Internet Circuits - F

Y22

Totals

lbray@mdek12.org

Total Committed \$1,061,670.00

What is in this letter?

Thank you for submitting your application for Funding Year 2022 Schools and Libraries Program (E-rate) funding. Attached to this letter, you will find the funding statuses for the FCC Form(s) 471, Services Ordered and Certification Form, that you submitted and referenced above.

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is sending this information to both the associated applicant(s) and the service provider(s) so that you can work together to complete the funding process.



Step 9 - Form 486



- Notifies USAC that services have started
- Informs USAC that the district is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
- Can only be filed after FCDL has been issued
- Verify / update Service Start Date (SSD)
 - SSD cannot be earlier than July 1
- Must be filed within 120 days after start of service / installation or receipt of FCDL
- If a form is filed late, then USAC may reduce funding to reflect reduction in Months of Service
- https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/startingservices/fcc-form-486-filing/





FCC Form 486 Notification Letter

Lee Bray
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
359 NORTH WEST STREET SUITE 118
JACKSON, MS 39201

FUNDING YEAR 2022: 7/1/2022 - 6/30/2023

FCC Form 486 Application Number: 279840

Applicant's FCC Form 486 Nickname: CSpire Circuits FY22

This letter is to notify you that the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) has received and accepted a certified FCC Form 486, Receipt of Service Confirmation Form, from you. Information about your commitment may have changed. Please review the FCC Form 486 Notification Letter Report to confirm the information you provided. This information is also being shared with the service provider(s) identified on each Funding Request Number (FRN).

7/11/2022

If you need assistance, contact our Client Service Bureau toll-free at (888) 203-8100, or submit a customer service case in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) by selecting "Contact Us" from the menu in the top right corner of your landing page.

Next steps

Discuss with your service provider whether you would like discounts on your bills or to pay your bills in full and be reimbursed for discounts.

 Applicants invoice USAC before the invoice deadline using the applicant invoice method [FCC Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form] for reimbursements of discounts after paying the service provider bills in full.



CIPA Requirements

Any school or library receiving Internal Connections of Internet Access must:

- Filter all Internet access
- Have an Internet Safety Policy that addresses required elements
 - Policy must have been adopted after public hearing (Board meeting)
- Schools' Internet Safety Policies must include
 - Educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms to include cyberbullying awareness and response
 - Required to teach online safety to students as a prerequisite to receiving E-Rate funding
- Consortium members must submit a Form 479 to consortium leader certifying compliance in order for consortium lead to file a Form 486



Form 479

- Required by consortium members
- Certify with consortium lead that district is CIPA compliant
- Consortium lead must have all forms prior to filing Form 486
- https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/before-you-begin/consortia/fcc-form-479-filing/



Step 10 – Receiving Services / Equipment

- Category 1 Services must be delivered between July 1 June 30
 - Installation may occur as early as January 1 or contract signing date
 - Services may not begin until July 1
- Category 2 equipment may be purchased / installed anytime after April 1
 - Equipment must be installed before September 30 of the closeout year
 - Can request a 1-year extension if request is made by September 30 of the closeout year



Step 11 – Paying for Services / Equipment

- Applicant's Choice
 - Discounts on bills (SPI)
 - Reimbursement process (BEAR)
- Must select one or the other for the entire year for each FRN
- Contact vendor after signing contract to confirm payment method (SPI or BEAR)
- Applicant must always pay their non-discounted share
- Rules require it will be paid within 90 days of receiving service / equipment
 - Even if vendor is delayed in sending invoice



Step 12 – Requesting Reimbursements

BEAR Method

- Applicant must pay the vendor in full for services or equipment
- Applicant request reimbursement directly from USAC (Form 472)
- Request made in EPC
 - Separate selection from EPC or ECF
 - If BEAR selection is not on dashboard contact CSC 1-888-203-8100
- October 28 deadline for recurring services
- January 28 deadline for non-recurring services / equipment
- Can request 1 extension if submitted by original invoice deadline
- Applicant must have Form 498 completed and approved prior to filing
- USAC sends payment to applicant's bank indicated on Form 498



Form 472 - BEAR

472

- Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form (BEAR)
- Request reimbursement of discount funds of eligible products / services
- Need FCDL and services started
- Can be filed monthly / quarterly / bi-annual / annual, etc...
- Product / services must already be in use / installed
- Deadline to file 120 days after last day of service
- Eligible to receive extension past 120 days
 - Additional 1 time 120-day extension
- https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/invoicing/fccform-472-filing/



Form 498

498

- Completed prior to filing Form 472 (BEAR)
- Collects contact, billing and remittance information
- Allows USAC to send funds directly to bank
- Must be certified by USAC
- Will receive Form 498 ID to file BEAR
- Requirements:
 - Basic information BEN and address
 - Federal Employer Identification number (EIN) or Taxpayer ID
 - Remittance contact information
 - Financial contact information (account and routing number)
 - Any other BENs associated with banking account information
- https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicantprocess/invoicing/obtain-an-applicant-498-id/



Form 500



- Filed by applicant in EPC
- Filed for one of the following:
 - Adjust funding year service start date
 - Adjust contract expiration date
 - Cancel Funding Request Number (FRN)
 - Reduce amount of FRN (Must be filed for unspent Cat 2 funds)
 - Request service delivery extension of non-recurring services (Cat 2)
 - Notify USAC of an equipment transfer for equipment purchased prior to FY2020
- USAC will send RFCDL to indicate change in application
- https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/before-youre-done/fcc-form-500-filing/



Where do you start?

On any given day, you may have three funding years to be worried about. So today you have:

- Funding Year 2023 started July 1, 2023, and ended June 30, 2024
- Funding year 2024 (current year) started July 1, 2024, and will end June 30, 2025
- Funding Year 2025 PROCESS starts now, and the funding year will end June 30, 2026
- All correspondence with PIA and other reviews are through EPC (E-Rate Productivity Center)



What is the current status for each funding year?

•FY2023

- Did someone file the Form 486?
- Was a BEAR filed to seek reimbursement?
- Did my service provider file the SPI?
- Is there remaining unused funds?
- Did someone file a Form 500 to release unused funds?

•FY2024

- What has been funded?
- Have the services started?
- Has a Form 486 been filed?

•FY2025

- What needs to be applied for next year?
- Does my contract that cover next year?
- Do I have any remaining C2 budget for next year?



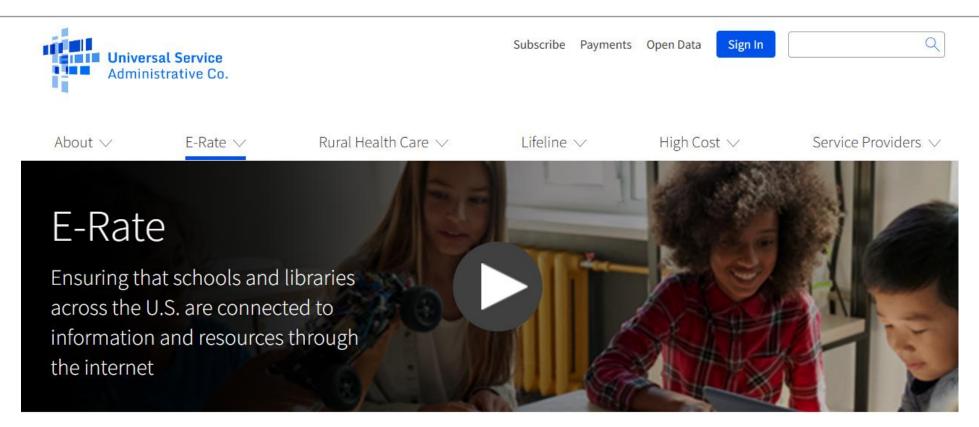
How do you find what you have just inherited?

USAC - www.usac.org/e-rate/

E-Rate Central - www.e-ratecentral.com



USAC – Schools & Libraries



Manage Your Account

Access your E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) account, submit forms, and file your invoices by logging

Resources

Announcements

Eligible Services List

E-Rate News Brief



10/24 EPC Administrative Window Webinar



E-Rate Central



enter search term...



≜ Login

E-Rate Services

Resources

E-Rate Central Forum

About Us

Contact Us

E-Rate Central provides a comprehensive range of information and consulting services about the E-rate program and E-rate funding opportunities. Subscribe to our weekly E-rate newsletter to stay informed of important program rules and updates, best practices to help you avoid E-rate filing mistakes, and strategies to help you maximize your E-rate funding and manage E-rate deadlines. Contact us to find out how our experienced E-rate consultants can help you.

Learn More



News of the Week

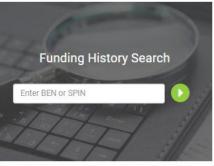
December 13, 2021

- Funding Status for 2021-2022
- Initial ACP Comments
- E-Rate Updates and Reminders
 Upcoming Dates
 Senate Confirms New Term for Commissioner
- USAC ECF Newsletter Dated December 7 Invoice Deadline Clarification

More Newsletters

Subscribe





Bulletins

- USAC Outreach: EBB Transition to ACP: EBB Enrollment Deadline is December 30, 2021 12/10/2021
- USAC Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter Dated December 7, 2021 12/7/2021
- FCC News: Statement of FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel on Senate Confirmation 12/7/2021

More Bulletins

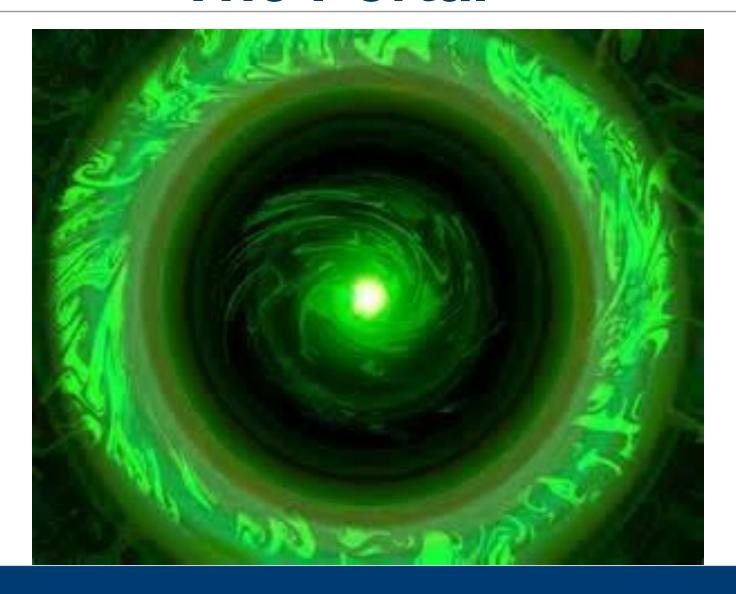


Questions???





The Portal



Agenda

- What is EPC?
- What is an AA?
- Establishing/resetting passwords
- Landing page
- Changing AA permission to Full Rights
- Adding EPC Users
- Reviewing schools and NIFs
- Reviewing enrollment/NSLP data



What is EPC?

EPC = E-rate Productivity Center – https://forms.universalservice.org/portal/login

All E-rate forms, letters and interactions are located in the EPC system

Advantages?

- All forms, submitted documentation and requests will be archived in a single location
- Forms will be pre-populated with information
- Lots of data will be entered into EPC prior to filing the application
- Designed to provide streamlined reviews



Establishing Your Initial EPC Account

USAC created an EPC account in their database for each applicant entity and identified an Account Administrator

To receive your EPC Account Administrator, call Client Service Center (CSC) at 1-888-203-8100

Your initial account does not have a password set. You must select 'Forgot Password' on initial login access to EPC.

You must agree to the Terms and Conditions in the Task section on initial login. After agreeing, log out and log back in to gain access to all functions in EPC.



Who is the Account Administrator?

The Account Administrator (AA) is the person designated as the district contact for the EPC Portal

unless it is a consultant

Each AA should have received an e-mail from USAC indicating that their EPC Account had been created and that they should establish their password

• If you are not the AA, contact CSC at 1-888-203-8100 to have AA account changed to you.

Check to see who is the General Contact. Generally, the AA is the person listed in this role.



What is the Account Administrator's Role?

The AA can perform these functions:

- Create Users
- Assign Users' Rights/Permissions
- Update entity information
- Join Consortia
- Link to Your Consultant
- Enter Enrollment/NSLP Data
- Change AA to another user



How to Change the AA to Someone Else

Two methods:

- If the current AA has set up their password, they can log-in to the system and change AA authority to another user
- If the AA is no longer with the district, the new AA must contact CSC and give full contact information to be set as the new AA
 - the new AA will then receive an e-mail from EPC inviting them to establish their EPC password



E-mail Authorized Signer Looks Like:

From: admin@portal.usac.org [mailto:admin@portal.usac.org] On Behalf Of EPC Application Administrator

Sent: Friday, June 26, 2015 8:49 AM

To: [Name]

Subject: USAC EPC - Account Creation



Hello,

Your USAC E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) account has been created with the username: [Form 471 signer email address]

To log in with your new username, navigate to: https://portal.usac.org/suite/ Please select the forgot password option and follow ensuing directions.

Thank you.

Universal Service Administration Company



USAC website – EPC Link



Subscribe Payments Open Data

Sign In

Q

About V

E-Rate ∨

Rural Health Care V

Lifeline V

High Cost ∨

Service Providers V

E-Rate

Ensuring that schools and libraries across the U.S. are connected to information and resources through the internet



Manage Your Account

Access your E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) account, submit forms, and file your invoices by logging into One Portal.

Sign In

Resources

Announcements

Eligible Services List

E-Rate News Brief

Tools

Webinars

Upcoming Dates

10/24 EPC Administrative **Window Webinar**

10/28

FY2023 Invoicing Filing Deadline for **Recurring Services**

See full calendar



Go to this URL for EPC Log-In:

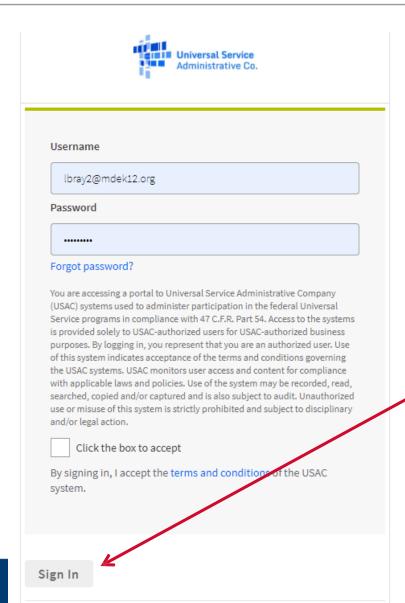
https://forms.universalservice.org/portal/login



(USAC) systems used to administer participation in the federal Universal Service programs in compliance with 47 C.F.R. Part 54. Access to the systems is provided solely to USAC-authorized users for USAC-authorized business



EPC Log-In Screen



Click "Sign In"



What Are Your EPC Log-In Credentials?

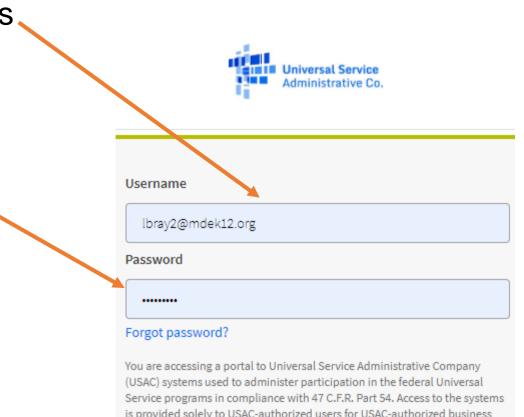
Username = Authorized Person's E-mail Address

Must be specific to a person's email address.

Must be all lowercase

Password = There is no Password!

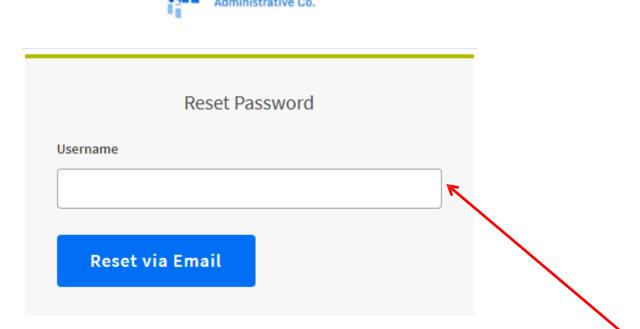
Click on "Forgot Password"





Establishing / Resetting Your Password

The next screen will look like this:



Enter username again (which is your e-mail address), and click Send Email to reset password



Password Reset

After you click 'Send Email' to reset your password, the system will send a temporary link to that e-mail address (which is only valid for 15 min.)

Clicking on the temporary link will take you to this screen:

i i	Universal Service		
	Administrative Co.		
	nge Password		
Please	complete the form to cha	nge your password.	
Usern	ame		
lbray(mde.k12.ms.us		
New F	assword		
•••	•••••		
Confi	m New Password		
		CANCEL	SUBMIT



Password Reset

The system will then take you to the Login screen. Enter your username and password to access EPC.



Username
lbray2@mdek12.org
Password
Forgot password?
You are accessing a portal to Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) systems used to administer participation in the federal Universal Service programs in compliance with 47 C.F.R. Part 54. Access to the systems is provided solely to USAC-authorized users for USAC-authorized business

Note: EPC Passwords are only valid for 60 days, so you'll have to reset them often.



EPC – Login Information

EPC users and BEAR Form filers: If this is your first time logging in to One Portal, please read this information carefully.

USAC has added multifactor authentication (MFA) to increase the security of our Universal Service Fund (USF) IT applications. The first time you sign into an application, the system will prompt you to set up MFA for your account. To do this:

- 1. Click the blue Continue button below.
- 2. Click the Forgot Password link.
- 3. Enter your Username (your email address) and click Reset via Email.
- 4. When you receive the email, click the link to create a password. Your password must be at least eight characters long and include one lowercase letter, one uppercase letter, one number, and one special character.
- 5. Accept the system's terms of use and click Sign In.
- 6. On the next page, confirm the email associated with your account and click Send Email.
- 7. Check your email for a verification code.
- 8. Enter the code and click Verify.

After logging in, you will see USAC's new single portal application dashboard if you have access to more than one application. On this page you can access all of the USF applications associated with your log in. This means users no longer have to sign into multiple applications to interact with different USF programs.

From the dashboard, you can visit the "Settings" page to add a cell phone number to your account. This will allow you to receive verification codes via either email or text message when you log in in the future.

To learn more about USAC's MFA and to find a list of all USF IT applications included in the single portal, visit USAC's website. If you cannot access the email associated with your account and need to set up a new log in, please contact your organization's USF administrator. If you need to reset your password, click the "forgot password" link. More detailed instructions are available in this video.

Continue



EPC Verification - Page 1

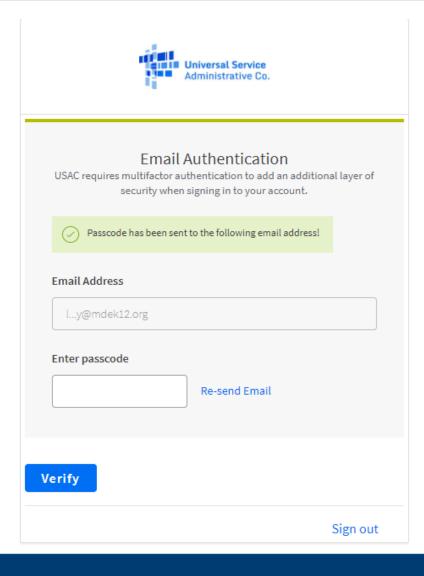


Email Authentication USAC requires multifactor authentication to add an additional layer of security when signing in to your account. Email Address L...y@mdek12.org Send Email

Sign out



EPC Verification - Page 2





EPC Dashboard





lbray@mde.k12.ms.us ∨

Dashboard

Upcoming Dates

10/28

FY2024 FCC Form 486 Deadline Reminder

10/28 Invoicing Filing Deadline for Recurring Services

10/29 Rate Training in 2024 Fayetteville, Arkansas

see full calendar

Schools and Libraries

E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) - EPC is the online system for E-Rate program participants to submit applications, manage program processes, and communicate with USAC. Applicants and service providers use EPC to prepare, submit, and certify E-Rate invoicing forms for Funding Years 2016 and later, including FCC Form 472 BEAR, FCC Form 473 SPAC, and FCC 474 SPI. For more information, please visit the applicant or service provider invoicing page at https://www.usac.org/e-rate/ or contact the E-Rate Customer Service Center at (888) 203-8100.

Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) - Emergency Connectivity Fund participants use the ECF Portal to submit applications and review notifications regarding their program activities. Using this link, schools and libraries can also access the FCC Form 472 (BEAR) and service providers can access the FCC Form 474 (SPI) to request ECF reimbursement.

Help?

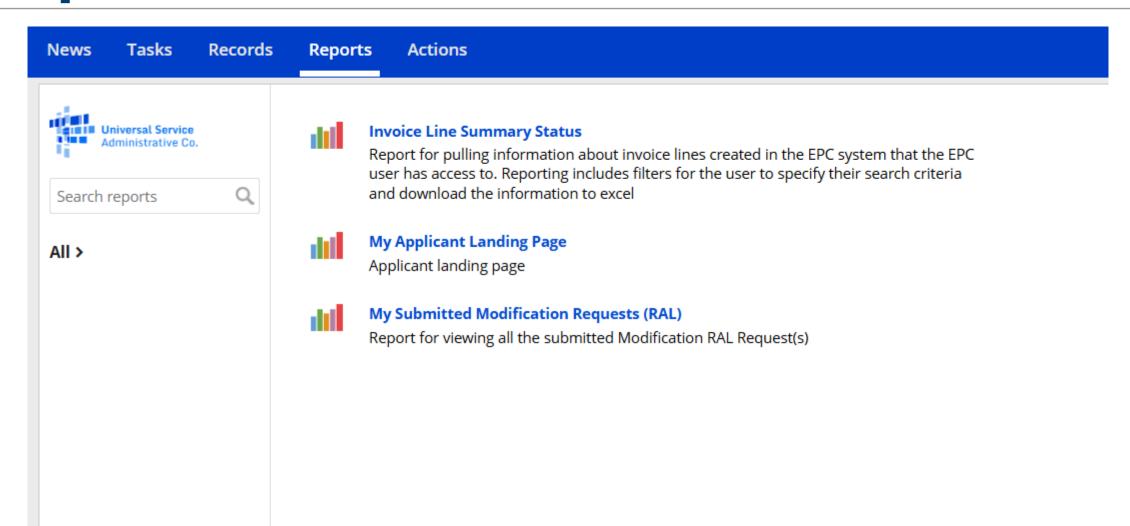
Send us a message

Click here

Call us (888) 641-8722

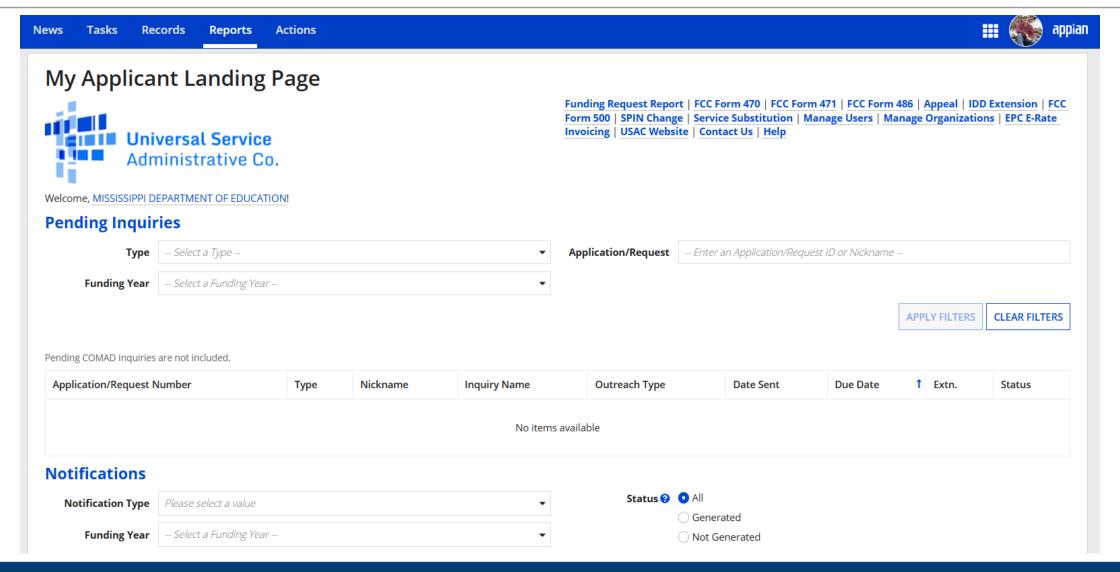


Reports



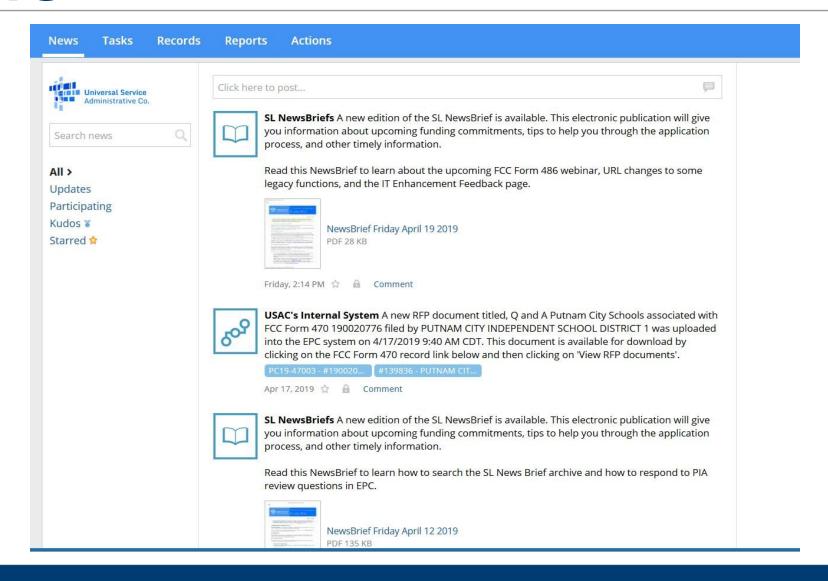


Landing Page





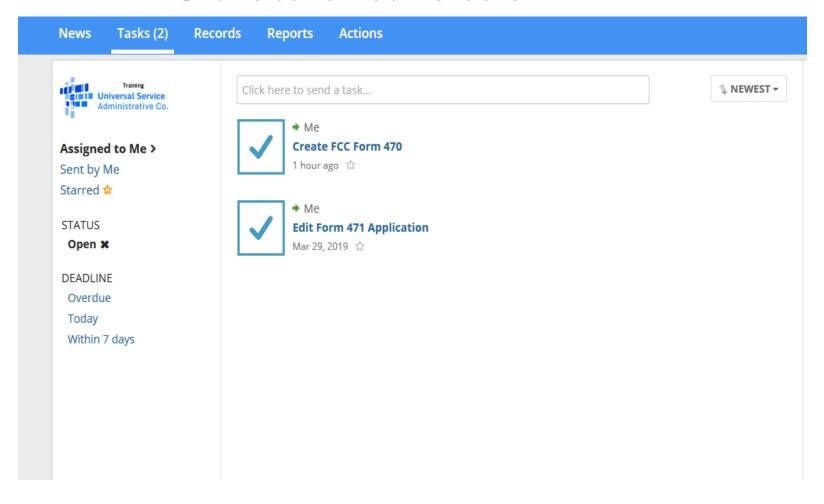
News





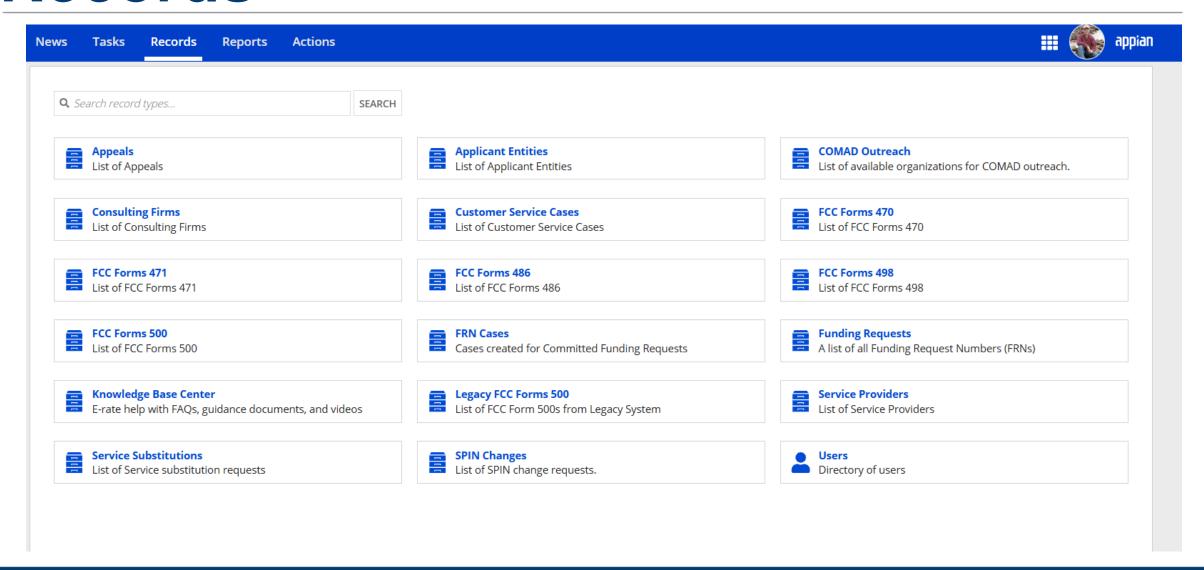
Tasks

Shows current active tasks





Records



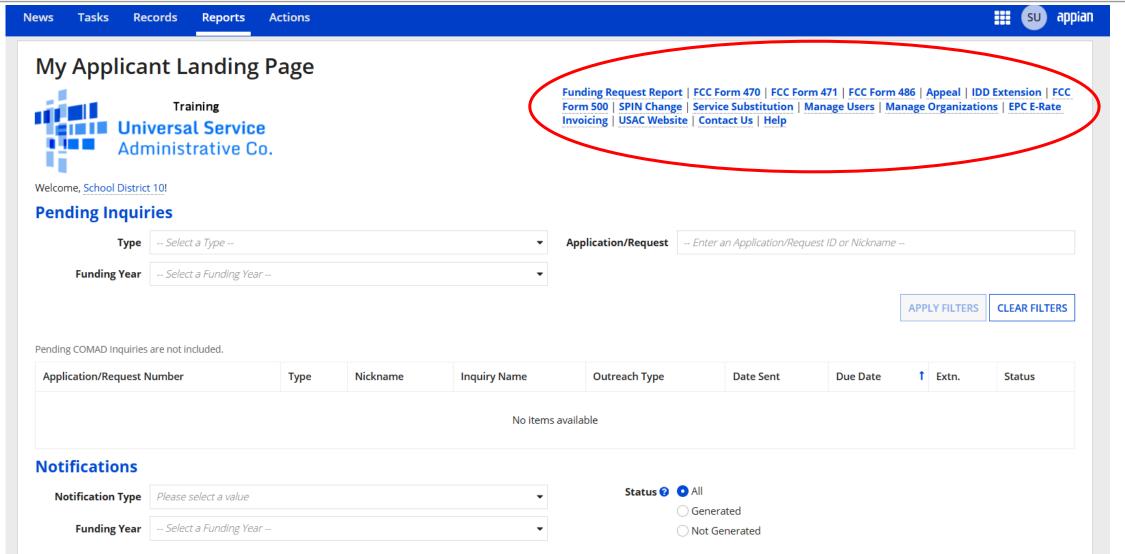


Actions

Universal Service Administrative Co.	Contact Us 😭 Create a customer service case
All > Starred ☆	Create a Whistleblower Case Use this function to report an instance of program rule violations, or waste, fraud and abuse.
APPLICATIONS EPC Customer Service (2)	Fxport 'Entities Within Counties Eligible for FEMA Individual Disaster Assistance' Report, DA 19-15 (October 2017 Northern California Wildfire Waiver) ☆
EPC Disaster Reports (2) EPC Funding Requests (1) EPC Open Competitive	This report displays entities located in counties designated as eligible for Individual Assistance by FEMA. Entities located in these areas may be eligible for limited relief from certain E-rate requirements under the Northern California Wildfire Waiver.
Bidding (1)	Factor (Entities Within Counties Eligible for FEMA Individual Disaster Assistance) Report, Wireline Competition Bureau Hurricane Relief Order, DA 17-984 (WCB Hurricane Relief Order) ☆
	This report displays entities located in counties designated as eligible for Individual Assistance by FEMA. Entities located within these areas may be eligible for limited relief from certain E-rate requirements under the WCB Hurricane Relief Order.
	✓ Search and Export Certified FCC Form 471 Funding Request(s) ☆
	This function allows you to search for certified FCC Forms 471 funding request(s) and export the results.
	∠ Search and Export Certified FCC Forms 470 ☆
	This function allows you to search for certified FCC Forms 470 and export the results.



Creating Forms



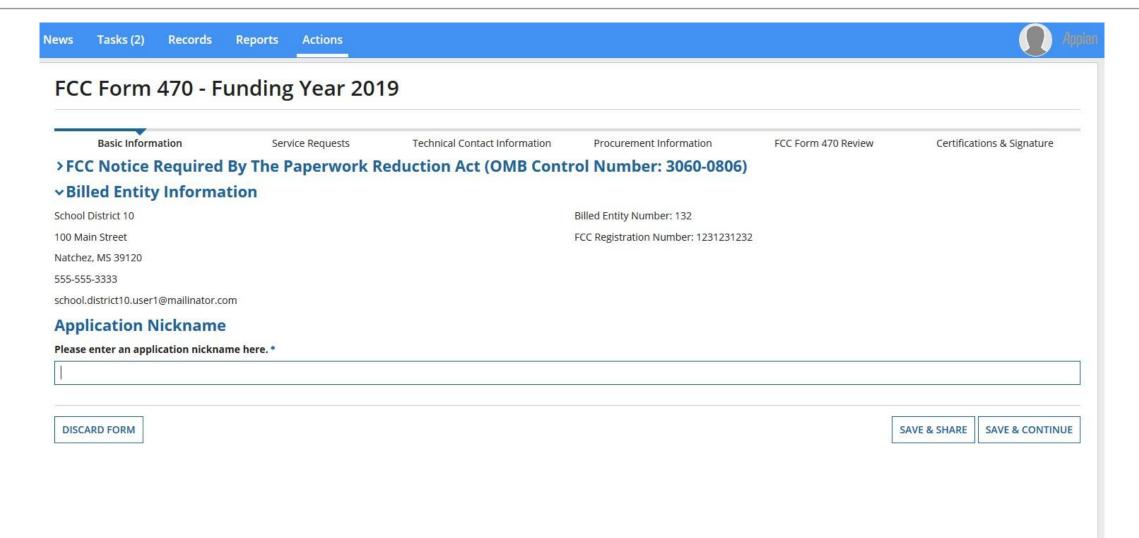


Creating Forms

- Form 470 The Description of Services Requested and Certification Form is an FCC form that schools, and libraries complete to request services and establish eligibility
- Form 471 The Services Ordered and Certification Form is an FCC form that schools, and libraries use to report services ordered and discounts requested for those services.
- Form 486 The Receipt of Service Confirmation and Children's Internet Protection Act Certification Form is an FCC form that schools and libraries file to inform USAC that services have begun, and of their CIPA compliance.
- Form 500 The Funding Commitment Adjustment Request Form is filed by schools and libraries to notify USAC of reductions to or cancellations of approved FRNs and/or changes to reported Service Start Dates or Contract Expiration Dates, to request a service delivery extension for non-recurring services, or to notify USAC of an allowable equipment transfer.

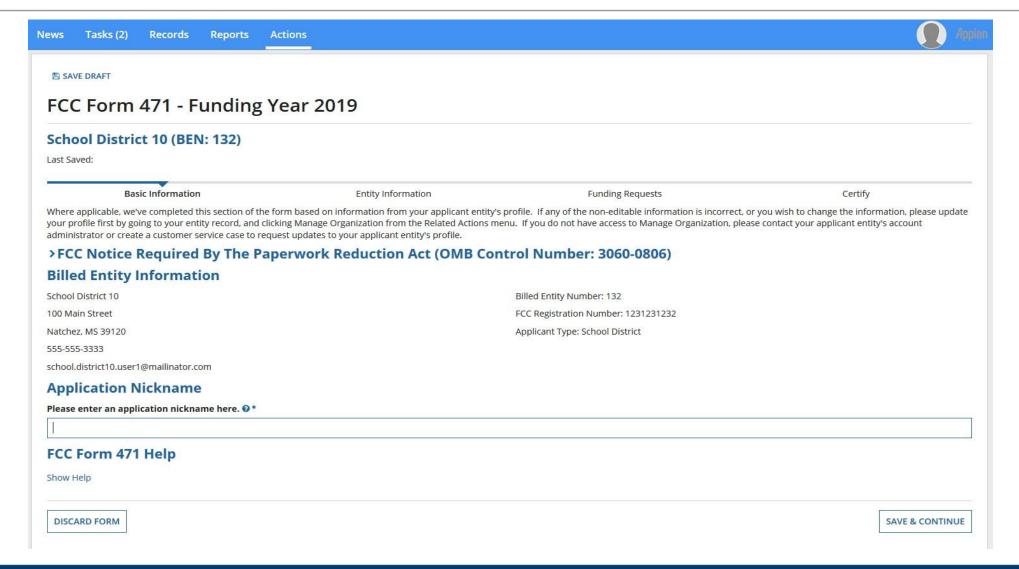


Form 470





Form 471





Form 471 Certification

Certification Confirmation

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (BEN: 128642) - CSpire Internet Circuits - FY22 - Form # 221017803

Last Saved: 3/14/2022 4:17 PM CDT

Basic Information

Entity Information

Funding Requests

Certifications

You have successfully filed FCC Form 471 #221017803 for FY 2022

Certification Date

3/14/2022 4:17 PM CDT

Authorized Person

Name Lee Bray

Title Mississippi - State E-Rate Coordinator (Consortia)

Employer MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Address 359 N WEST STREET, Suite 118

P.O. Box 771

JACKSON, MS 39205- 0771

Phone 601-359-5544

Email | Ibray@mdek12.org

Please click here to access your certified FCC Form 471 PDF

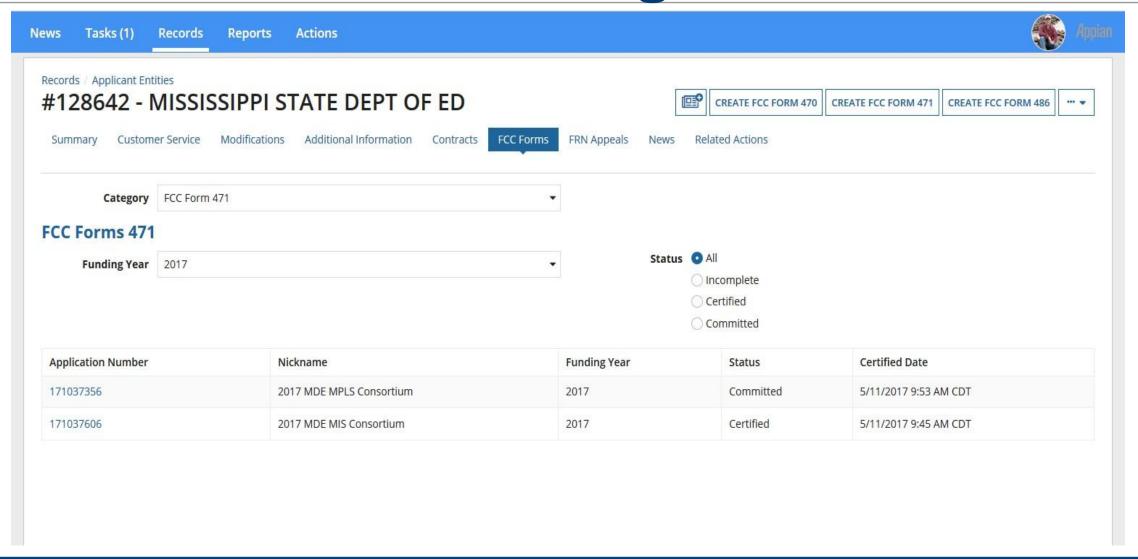
FCC Form 471 Help

Show Help

CLOSE

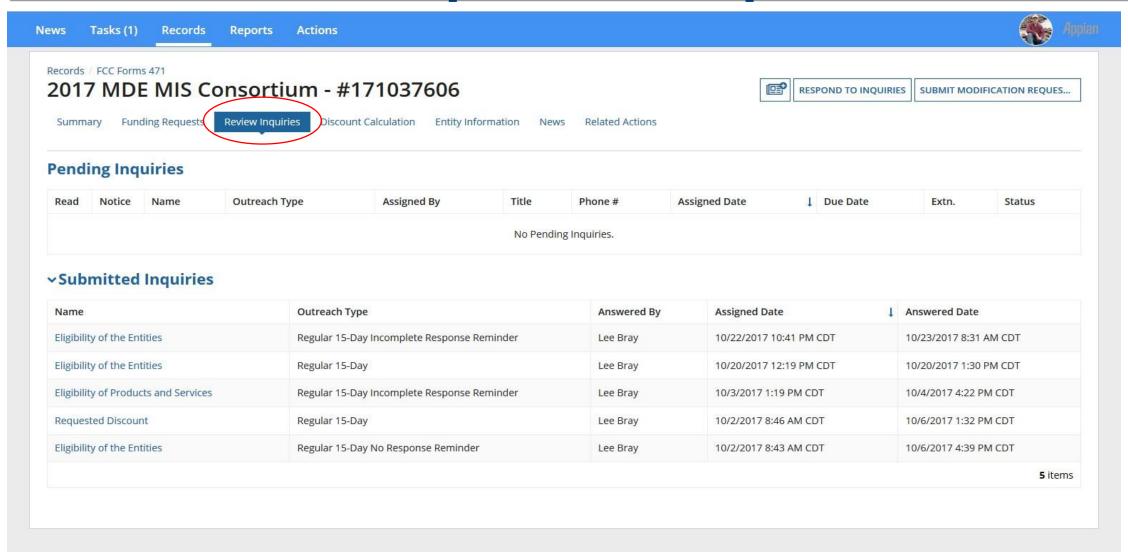


Form 471 Search Page



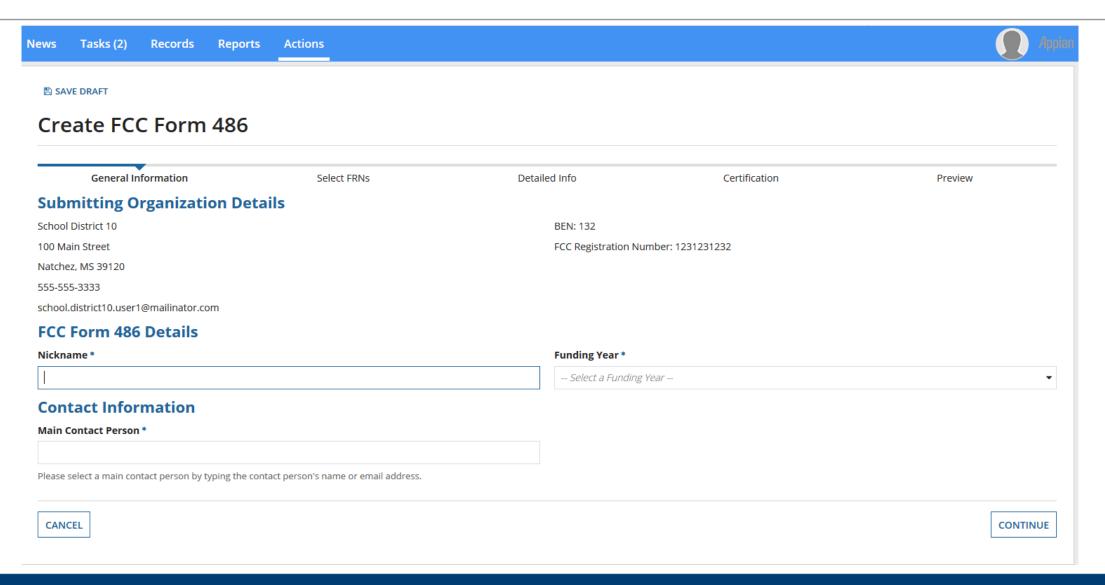


Form 471 – Respond to Inquiries





Form 486





Form 486 Certification

News Tasks Records Reports Actions

Certifier Information

You have successfully filed FCC Form 486 #279840 for FY 2022

Click here to view and print the FCC Form 486

Certification Date

7/11/2022 1:47 PM CDT

Authorized Person

Name Lee Bray

Title Mississippi - State E-Rate Coordinator (Consortia)

Employer MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Address 359 N WEST STREET, Suite 118

P.O. Box 771

JACKSON, MS 39205- 0771

Phone 601-359-5544

Email lbray@mdek12.org



Form 486 Notification Letter



FCC Form 486 Notification Letter

Lee Bray
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
359 NORTH WEST STREET SUITE 118
JACKSON, MS 39201

FUNDING YEAR 2022: 7/1/2022 - 6/30/2023

FCC Form 486 Application Number: 279840

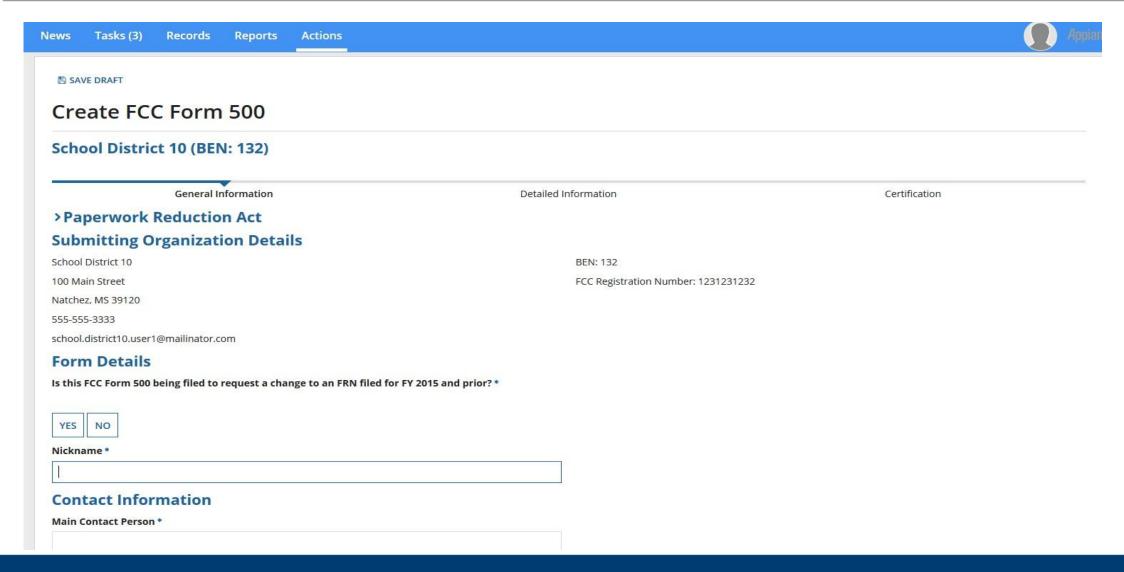
Applicant's FCC Form 486 Nickname: CSpire Circuits FY22

This letter is to notify you that the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) has received and accepted a certified FCC Form 486, Receipt of Service Confirmation Form, from you. Information about your commitment may have changed. Please review the FCC Form 486 Notification Letter Report to confirm the information you provided. This information is also being shared with the service provider(s) identified on each Funding Request Number (FRN).

7/11/2022



Form 500





Additional Landing Page

Spin Changes

Service Substitution

Manage Users – Account Administrator Only

Manage Organizations

Entity Information

Customer Service Cases

FCC Forms and Post Commitment Request

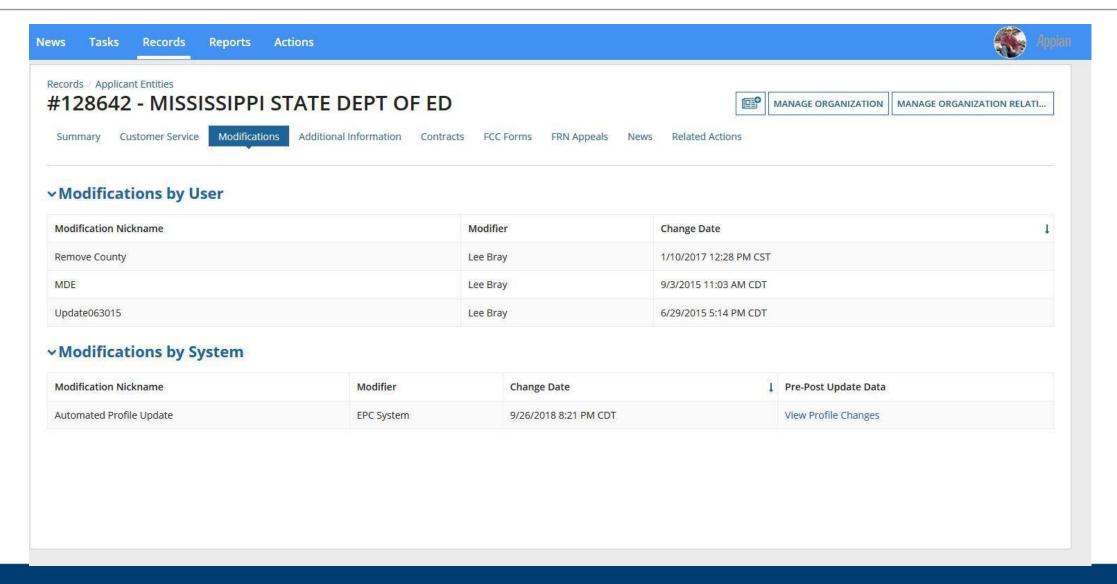
USAC Website

Contact Us

Help

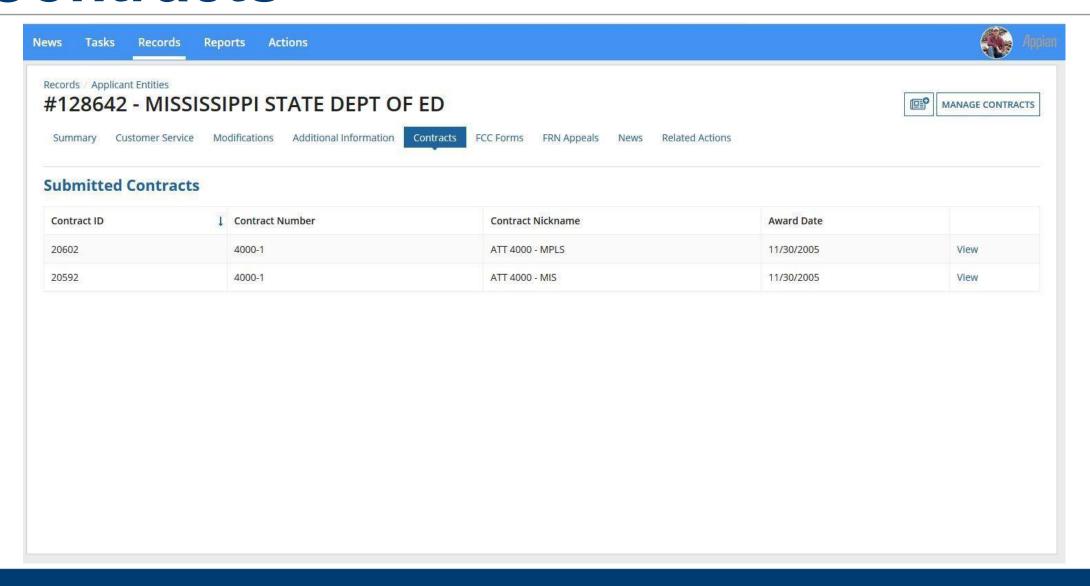


BEN Modifications





Contracts





District Information

Summary

Customer Service

Modifications

Additional Information

Discount Rate

Contracts

FCC Forms – Submitted by District (2016 – present)

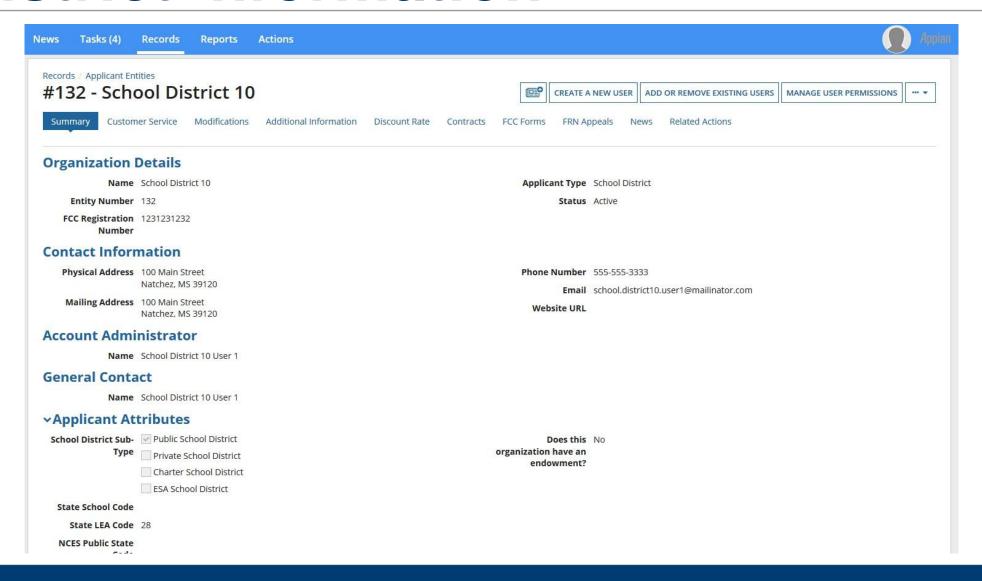
FRN Appeals

News – District only

Related Actions

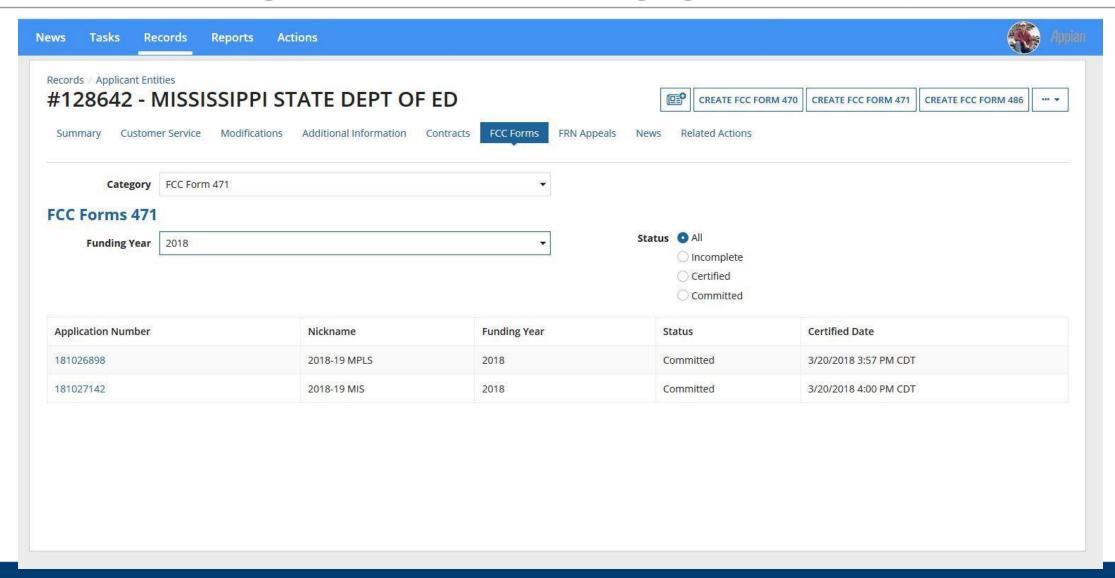


District Information



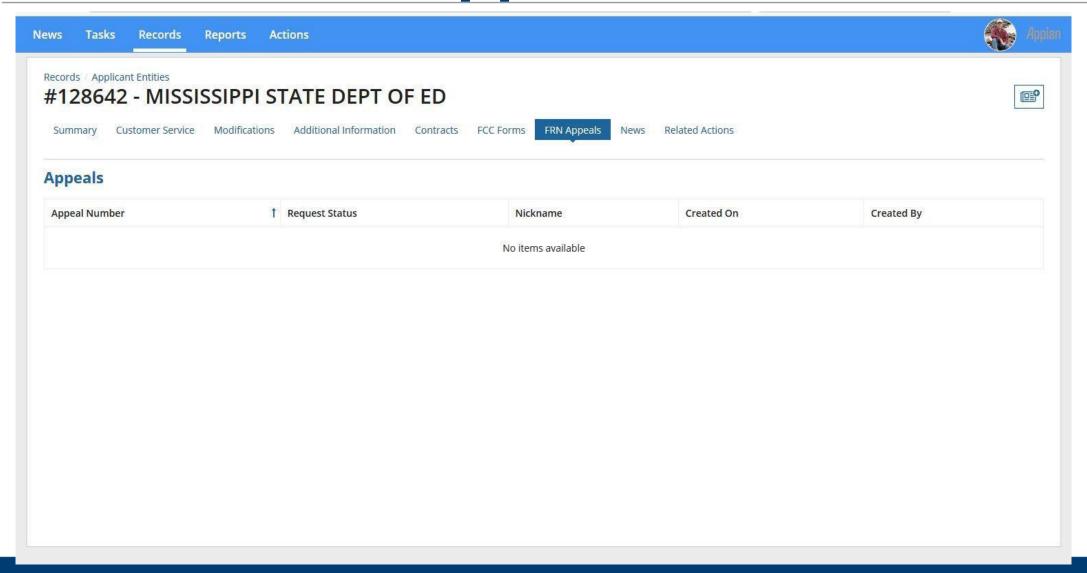


District Submitted FCC Forms



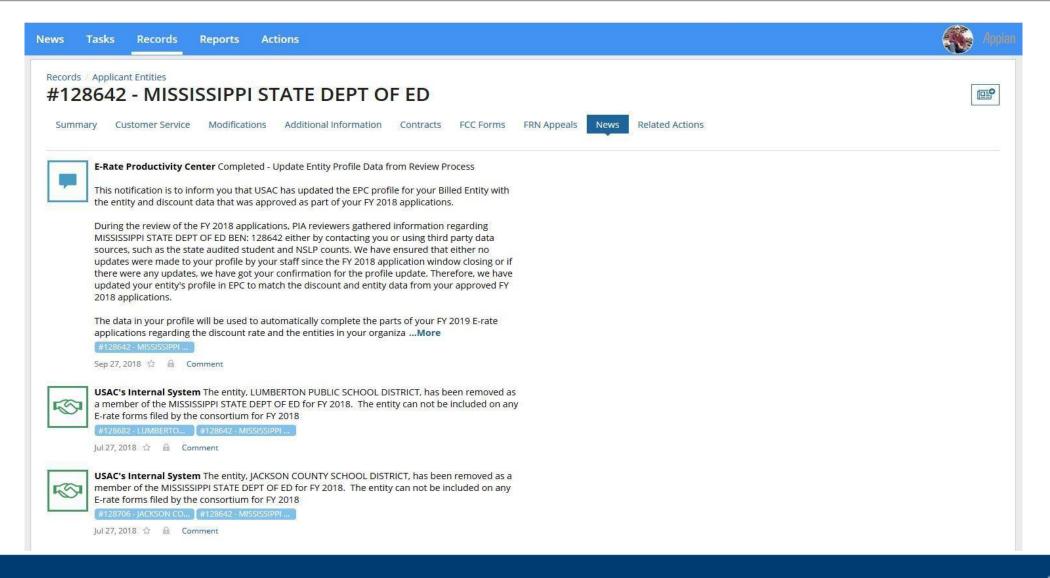


District FRN Appeals





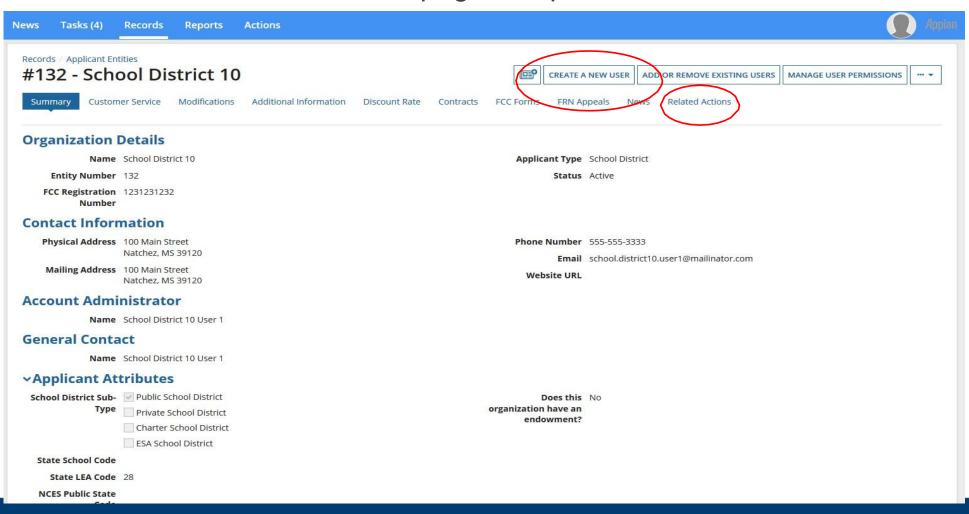
District News





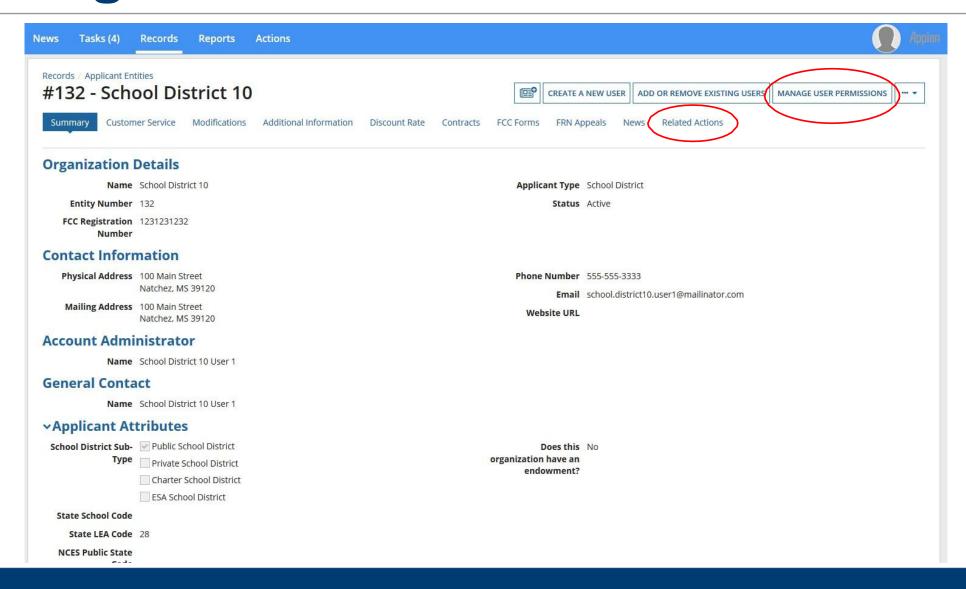
Adding District Users

Located on School District page at top or from Related Actions





Manage User Permissions





Related Actions

Contains all actions need for district

- Add, create, and modify permission of a user
- Manage organization / relationships
- Create Forms
- Manage Contracts
- Upload Entity information
- Create appeals, spin changes and service substitutions
- Invoice deadline extensions



School Information

Summary

Customer service

Modifications

Additional information

Category Two Budgets

Contracts

FCC Forms

News

Related Actions

Manage Organization

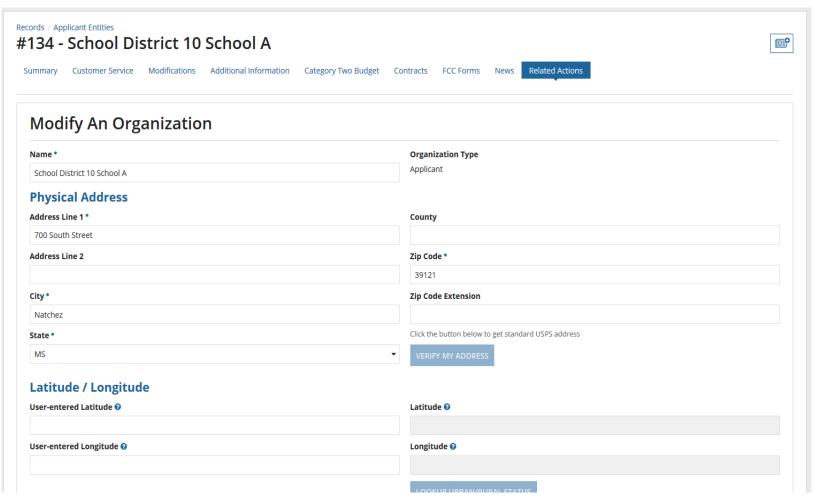
Manage Annexes



Manage School Information

Allows you to manage information

- Name
- Location
- Student Count
- State Codes
- Federal Codes





Questions???





Where to Go For Help

State E-Rate Coordinator

- Lee Bray 601-359-5544 / lbray@mdek12.org
- www.mdek12.org/OTSS/e-rate/

Client Service Center

- Call 1-888-203-8100
- They are extremely knowledgable and can see the "backend"

USAC's EPC Website: www.usac.org/e-rate/

- Contains FAQs
- User Guides
- Video Tutorials

