

Helping Keep Americans Connected

The USAC Connection High Cost & Low Income monthly newsletter will give you information about upcoming program deadlines, tips to help you ensure timely and proper filings, and other information.

HCLI Denver Training May 5

There is still time to register for USAC's High Cost Low Income training session May 5 in Denver. The session will highlight changes in USAC's Audit program under the new Beneficiary/Contributor Compliance Audit Program (BCAP) and discuss USAC's new Payment Quality Assurance Program (PQA) for 2010. For more information or to register, visit the [High Cost/Low Income Training Events](#) page.

High Cost Program

Interstate Common Line Support (ICLS) – Revenue Requirement Revisions for ILECs

Rate-of-return ILECs can make revisions to projected ICLS revenue data filed March 31 (for the upcoming ICLS program year July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011) between **April 1 and June 30**.

Revisions to projected data for the ending ICLS program year (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010) are due by **June 30**. Both filings are made on FCC Form 508, which can be found on the [High Cost forms](#) page.

IAS Annual Self-Certifications due June 30, 2010

Each price-cap carrier, and CETCs serving lines in the service area of a price-cap carrier, must file an annual self-certification with USAC and the FCC **by June 30, 2010** to receive Interstate Access Support

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IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

May 5	HCLI Training	Denver, CO
June 30	ICLS Revenue Req. Revisions	FCC Form 508 for upcoming ICLS program year (7/1/10-6/30/11)
June 30	ICLS Revenue Req. Revisions	FCC Form 508 for ending program year (7/1/09-6/30/10)
June 30	IAS Certification	price-cap carriers; CETCs
June 30	ICLS Certification	rate-of-return carriers; CETCs

Low Income Program

Best Practices: Calculating Tier 1 Rates

USAC periodically reviews Tier 1 rates claimed by all competitive ETCs. In accordance with 47 C.F.R. 54.403(a)(1), competitive ETCs must claim Tier 1 support equal to the incumbent local exchange carrier's (ILEC's) End User Common Line Charge (EUCL) or Subscriber Line Charge (SLC).

If a competitive ETC serves in multiple ILEC areas, it must claim the appropriate Tier 1 support for each of the areas, based on where individual low-income consumer resides. Competitive ETCs should review ILECs' publically available tariffs to verify current EUCL and SLC rates.

Low Income Program

Frequently Asked Questions about the Online FCC Form 497

The FCC Form 497 is now available online through USAC's [E-File System](#). USAC has posted on its website links to the [online form and user instructions](#). The instructions include directions for establishing new user accounts, updating existing accounts, completing the online Form 497, and contacting USAC.

Q. I need help using the form, are there instructions available?

A. Yes. The most recent instructions are on [USAC's website](#).

Q. How often are the instructions updated?

A. USAC will update the instructions and FAQs on an as-needed basis. Please refer to the instructions posted on [USAC's website](#) for the most accurate information.

Q. I get an error message when I try to log into E-File through the link on the website. How do I access the Online Form 497?

A. Close your web browser and open a new browser. Cut and paste <https://forms.universalservice.org> into the address bar.

Q. I don't remember my password, how can I get a new one?

A. If you are the officer or general contact, you can call 888-641-8722 and select prompts #3, #1, #2 to reach customer operations. The customer operations team will reset your password over the phone. Everyone else will need his or her password reset by the officer or general contact listed on Form 498.

Q. Can I submit an online 497 for a new ETC or new service area (study area)?

A. No. All new companies must submit their first 497 by mail, fax, or email.

Q. Can I revise forms originally submitted offline?

A. Yes. Carriers can revise any form that was submitted offline as long as it falls within the current administrative window. For example, you can use the online 497 to submit original or revised forms for 2008 and 2009 data months.

Q. Do I need to re-enter all the data for a revised 497?

A. No. Only modify the data you wish to change. You will need to re-certify the form.

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USAC, 2000 L Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone (202) 776-0200 Fax (202) 776-0080

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USAC appreciates feedback on this newsletter. For any questions or comments, please contact Ed Rovetto, Program Manager, External Relations, at erovetto@usac.org.

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Low Income Program

Q. I saved my data but when I click *Exit to 497 Search* I get the following message: “Any unsaved data will be lost. Are you sure you want to return to the Form497 Search page?” Will I lose my data when I exit?

A. You will not lose your data if you received a “Save successful” message after you clicked *Save*.

Q. I certified my data but when I click *Exit to 497 Search* I get the following message: “Any unsaved data will be lost. Are you sure you want to return to the Form497 Search page?” Will I lose my data when I exit?

A. You will not lose your data if you received a “Form 497 certified successfully” message after you clicked *Certify*.

Q. I successfully certified my data. Will I receive a confirmation email?

A. No. You will receive a message on your screen that states: “Form 497 certified successfully.” You may save a copy of this screen for your records.

Q. I successfully certified my data. Should I send a paper copy to USAC as well?

A. No. With the exception of revisions, please provide only one 497 per data month—either offline or online—to USAC.

Q. Can I enter more than one 497 at a time?

A. Yes. You can use the Bulk Upload feature to upload multiple 497s however you will need to certify each form individually.

Q. How do I get a bulk upload template?

A. You can contact [Tanea Davis](#) for a template. Please include the applicable SPINs and SACs.

The screenshot displays a web form titled "Low Income" with a navigation bar containing "Contact", "Lifeline", "Link Up", "Toll Limitation Services(TLS)", and "Certify". The form is divided into several sections:

- Form Fields:**
 - SPIN: 143028363
 - Serving Area: 449004
 - State Reporting: TEXAS
 - Company Name: Cumby Telephone Cooperative Inc. - CLEC
 - Data Month: March 2010
 - Submission Date: 03/09/2010
 - Type Of Filing: Original
 - Mailing Address: Street (123 Main Street), City (Anytown), State (VA), Zip (22314)
 - Contact Name: Jane Doe
 - Telephone Number: 202-776-1111
 - Fax Number: 202-776-2222
 - E-mail Address: jane.doe1@cetcf.com
- Totals Section:**
 - Total Lifeline Support: 0
 - Total Link Up Support: 0
 - Total TLS Support: 0
 - ETC Payment: 0
- Buttons:** "Save" and "Exit to 497 Search"

High Cost Program

(IAS) for the upcoming program year (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011). This self-certification must state that all IAS provided will be used ONLY for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

An IAS self-certification sample letter can be found on USAC's [High Cost Forms](#) page and may be filed by an authorized representative for the carrier. Be sure to reference CC Docket No. 96-45 and file the self-certification with USAC and the FCC. After you file, go to the [Certifications Search Page](#) to see if your self-certification was received. If your self-certification is filed late, absent a waiver from the FCC, you will be eligible for IAS as follows:

By **9/30/10**, eligible for 4Q10, 1Q11, 2Q11.

By **12/31/10**, eligible for 1Q11, 2Q11.

By **3/31/11**, eligible for 2Q11.

See [File Certifications for IAS](#) for more information or call our Customer Service Center at 877-877-4925.

Addresses for Filing IAS and ICLS Self-Certifications

Karen Majcher
Vice President, High Cost & Low Income Division
Universal Service Administrative Company
2000 L Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

Marlene H. Dortch
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

ICLS Annual Self-Certifications due June 30, 2010

Each rate-of-return carrier, and CETCs serving lines in the service area of a rate-of-return carrier, must file an annual self-certification **by June 30, 2010** in order to receive Interstate Common Line Support (ICLS) for the upcoming program year (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011). This self-certification must be filed with USAC and the FCC, and must state that all ICLS provided will be used ONLY for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

An ICLS self-certification sample letter can be found on USAC's [High Cost Forms](#) page and may be filed by an authorized representative for the carrier. Be sure to reference CC Docket No. 96-45 and file the self-certification with both USAC and the FCC. After you file, go to the [Certifications Search Page](#) to see if your self-certification has been received. If your self-certification is filed late, absent a waiver from the FCC, you will be eligible for ICLS as follows:

By **9/30/10**, eligible for 1Q11, 2Q11.

By **12/31/10**, eligible for 2Q11.

After **12/31/10**, not eligible for ICLS.

See [File Certifications for ICLS](#) for more info or call the USAC Customer Service Center at 877-877-4925.

Upcoming Deadlines

All eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) have ongoing requirements to fulfill, usually on an annual or a quarterly basis, such as submitting certifications, updating line count information, and for incumbent local

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High Cost Program

exchange carriers, filing certain cost and revenue information in order to receive proper support.

Submitting Line Counts

Rural ILECs with competition in their study areas must submit line count information quarterly at the study area level or consistent with their [Disaggregation Plan](#). Rural ILECs without competition in their study areas may voluntarily submit updated quarterly information. Non-rural ILECs are required to submit updated line count data at the wire center level on a quarterly basis. Part 36 of the FCC rules outlines the filing requirements for ILECs.

Line count information for competitive carriers

Competitive ETCs (CETCs) must file line count data quarterly in the same manner as the ILEC in whose service area the CETC competes. CETCs can use the [online Form 525](#) (*Competitive Carrier Line Count Report*) to submit line count data to USAC.

IAS line count information

All price-cap carriers and CETCs serving lines in the service area of a price-cap carrier, or their agents, are required to file line counts for IAS with USAC **by June 30, 2010** for the number of lines served as of March 31, 2010. Lines must be reported by UNE zone and customer class.

ICLS line count information

ILECs with competition in their study areas must file line count information quarterly on [Form 507](#) (*Interstate Common Line Support Mechanism Line Count Report*) for each study area by customer class (residential/single-line business and multi-line business) as of 12/31/09 **by July 31, 2010**. Carriers must file disaggregated line count data, if such zones have been established within the study area.

The Part 54 data filings (Forms 507, 508, 525, IAS line counts) can be sent by mail, email, or fax to:

Universal Service Administrative Company
Customer Operations
2000 L Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Fax: (866) 873-4695
E-Mail: hcfilings@hcli.universalservice.org

If you have questions, please contact us at hcinfo@usac.org.

Presentation slide available from the High Cost Audit Webinar “Audits, Compliance, and Common Findings” on the USAC website

USAC’s High Cost Program hosted webinars on March 30 and 31 to discuss audit procedures, the “greatest hits” of audit findings, and how to use the Online Form 525. The presentation slides are posted on the [HCLI Training Events](#) page.