

The Term	Our Definition
28-Day Posting Period	The time period an applicant is required to wait after posting the FCC Form 465 or FCC Form 461 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL) before entering into any contract with a service provider. The purpose is to ensure a fair and open competitive bidding process for service providers.
498 Company Officer	The officer of a service provider company who is authorized to certify that data set forth in the FCC Form 498 is true, accurate, and complete. The 498 Company Officer has access to certify forms through the E-File system and occupies a position specified in the corporate by-laws (or partnership agreement), and would typically be president, vice president of operations, vice president of finance, comptroller, treasurer, or a comparable position. If the reporting entity is a sole proprietorship, the owner must sign the certification.
499 Company Officer	A person who occupies a position specified in the corporate by-laws (or partnership agreement), and would typically be president, vice president for operations, vice president for finance, comptroller, treasurer, or a comparable position. If the reporting entity is a sole proprietorship, the owner must sign the certification. This person must review and certify the information reported on the FCC Forms 499-A/Q. The latest 499 Company Officer on file has access to certify forms through the E-File system.
appeal	An appeal is a request to reconsider a USAC decision. Appeals can be made to either USAC or the FCC. Appeals must be filed within 60 days of the original USAC decision. Requests for waivers of rules must be filed directly with the FCC.
applicant	The entity applying for universal service support. In the Schools and Libraries Program the entity is a school, library, consortium, or other eligible entity that files program forms. In the Rural Health Care Program the entity is a health care provider or consortium.
audit	A review of documentation and resources that verify the state of compliance with program rules.
Automated Clearing House (ACH)	An electronic clearing house and settlement system for exchanging electronic transactions among banking institutions.
Beneficiary and Contributor Audit Program (BCAP)	Run by USAC, and carried out by auditors trained in universal service and program audit requirements, these audits of beneficiaries and contributors serve to identify noncompliance with program rules and amounts of recoverable funds.
bid	A response from a service provider (bidder) to a request for services.
Billed Entity	The entity that receives the bill and pays for the supported service. A Billed Entity may be different from the physical location being supported.
Billing Account Number	Telephone number or customer account code associated with the service supported by USAC (each Billing Account Number is attached to a customer/billed entity).
Board of Directors	USAC Board of Directors
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	Corporate officer responsible for financial operations.
Commission	The short name for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). See "FCC."
common carrier	An organization recognized by a regulatory authority (such as a state public utility commission) to provide telecommunications services to all requesting parties, or an organization that holds itself out to provide such services generally to the public for a fee.
competitive bidding process	A requirement for applicants participating in the Rural Health Care or Schools and Libraries programs. The applicant conducts the process to select a service provider and order products and/or services. This process must be a fair and open competitive procurement.
consortium	A consortium (plural consortia) is a group of entities that apply together for funding.
consultant	A company or individual (non-employee of the entity) selected to perform certain activities related to the application process on behalf of the applicant or service provider for a fee. A Letter of Agency (LOA) or consultant agreement must be in place before the consultant undertakes these activities.
contract award date (CAD)	The date the contract is awarded to the service provider and signed by the applicant. Program rules state that this must be at least 28 days after an applicant posts FCC Form 465 or FCC Form 461 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL).
Contract Expiration Date (CED)	The date the contract between the applicant and service provider ends.
contributor	A company that, based on the revenue reported on the FCC Forms 499-A/Q, is required to pay contributions directly to the universal service fund.
CORES ID	A 10-digit number that the FCC assigns to a business or individual that registers with the FCC. It is associated with an entity's Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and is required before filing FCC Forms 499-A/Q.
Data Collection Agent (DCA)	USAC is the FCC's agent responsible for the administration, processing, filing and distribution of carrier revenue data for the Telecommunications Relay Services Fund — the cost recovery mechanisms for numbering administration and local number portability, and the universal service programs.
Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA)	A law that requires federal agencies to transfer delinquent debts or claims to the Secretary of Treasury (Treasury) for further collection action. Unpaid obligations to the universal service fund are subject to the DCIA. In the event that a balance becomes over 120 days past due, (or 90 days past due for service providers), USAC will transfer the debt to the Treasury for further collection and enforcement actions.
delegated users	The employee(s) of a service provider company authorized to enter and modify company information on FCC Forms 498 and 499 through the E-File application. Also known as "authorized users," these individuals are established by the Company Officer or General Contact.
demarcation or demarc	A demarcation refers to the point where a service provider's network ends and where an applicant's local area network (LAN) begins.

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Detailed Audit Finding Worksheet (DAF)	A worksheet that contains background information and notes the basis of an exception during an audit.
e-certification (E-Cert)	Process that allows applicants to certify and submit forms online, eliminating the need for a paper form with an original signature.
E-File	USAC's online forms submission tool, available at https://forms.universalservice.org .
eligible entity	An entity, in the Rural Health Care Program or Schools and Libraries Program, that meets the requirements for eligibility to participate in the program.
eligible health care provider	A health care provider (HCP) that meets the requirements for eligibility to participate in the Rural Health Care Program.
eligible services	Products and services that are eligible for universal service support.
eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC)	A designation given to telecommunications service providers by their state public utility commissions or the FCC, enabling them to participate in universal service programs.
ETC	See "eligible telecommunications carrier."
evergreen contract	A contract is considered evergreen if both parties to the contract have signed and dated the agreement, the type, terms of service and duration are specified. Having evergreen status means that for the life of the contract (without any optional extension), they need not re-compete the service (by posting an FCC Form 465 or FCC Form 461), and may annually apply for support of the contracted service (by filing the FCC Form 466, FCC Form 466-A, and/or FCC Form 462). If an HCP submits a contract that does not meet these FCC requirements, it is considered to have month-to-month status and must post an FCC Form 465 or FCC Form 461 and select the most cost-effective service and service provider each year.
evidence for rural rate	For FCC Form 466, the telecommunications carrier or the HCP must provide supporting evidence for the rural rate (see definition below). Evidence may include telephone bills, signed and dated statements on letterhead from an eligible telecommunications carrier, invoices, or contracts that show services and charges for the rural rate. Include summary pages where possible, and textual explanations as necessary for USAC to substantiate the claimed rural rate. Always include the HCP number and name.
FCC Form 460	The Eligibility and Registration Form is an FCC form used to obtain an eligibility determination for an applicant of the HCF Program. This form must be completed by an individual HCP applicant for their physical location and by a consortium applicant for the physical location of each entity and for the consortium leader.
FCC Form 461	The Request for Services Form is an FCC form that health care providers complete to request services in the HCF Program. This form initiates the competitive bidding process and must be posted to USAC's website for no fewer than 28 days.
FCC Form 462	The Funding Request Form is an FCC form that health care providers complete to identify the selected service and service provider in the HCF Program. This form provides USAC with information necessary to evaluate an applicant's funding request.
FCC Form 463	The Invoice and Request for Disbursement Form is an FCC form that serves as the request to USAC for disbursement of funding from the HCF Program for the services, equipment, and/or facilities set forth in the applicant's funding commitment letter.
FCC Form 465	The Description of Services Requested and Certification Form is an FCC form that health care providers complete to request services and establish program eligibility for the Telecom Program. This form initiates the competitive bidding process and must be posted to USAC's website for no fewer than 28 days.
FCC Form 466	The Funding Request and Certification Form is an FCC form that health care providers complete to identify the selected telecommunications service and service provider in the Telecom Program. This form provides USAC with information necessary to evaluate an applicant's funding request.
FCC Form 466-A	The Internet Service Funding Request and Certification Form is an FCC form that health care providers complete to request support for reduced Internet service rates in the Telecom Program. This form provides USAC with information necessary to evaluate an applicant's funding request.
FCC Form 467	The Connection Certification Form is an FCC form that serves as the request to USAC for disbursement of funding from the Telecom Program for the services, equipment, and/or facilities set forth in the applicant's funding commitment letter.
FCC Form 498	The Service Provider Identification Number and Contact Information Form is an FCC form that service providers must fill out in order to participate in any of the universal service programs. The form is used to collect contact, remittance, and payment information for service providers that receive universal service support.
FCC Form 498 Company Officer	See "498 Company Officer."
FCC Form 498 delegated users	See "delegated users."
FCC Form 498 General Contact	See "General Contact."
FCC Registration Number	See "CORES ID."
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)	The U.S. government agency that regulates interstate and international communications and oversees the universal service fund. In 1997, the FCC designated USAC to be the independent not-for-profit corporation to administer the universal service fund in accordance with its rules.

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Federal Financial Management Improvement Act 1996 (FFMIA)	This act defines the financial operations requirements for government entities and this act would apply to the universal service fund as a result of the FCC Government Accounting Order.
Federal Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (Federal GAAP)	The standards for government agencies that will apply to the fund effective with the Government Accounting Order.
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)	The federal statute requiring access to information. Through the FCC, USAC is often called upon to respond to Freedom of Information Act requests.
Funding Commitment Letter (FCL)	Letter sent to the HCP (with a copy to the service provider) after USAC approves an FCC Form 466-A, notifying the HCP that the service will be supported contingent upon the completion of an FCC Form 467. The letter also estimates the support amount for the funding year based on the number of months the service is expected to be in place.
Funding Request Number (FRN)	A unique number that USAC assigns to each funding request in a completed FCC Form 466 (RHC), FCC Form 462 (RHC), or FCC Form 471 (SL) application. This number can be found in an applicant's FCDL or FCL.
funding year (FY)	In the Rural Health Care and Schools and Libraries programs, the funding year is a time during which program support is being provided. The FY begins July 1 and ends June 30 of the following calendar year.
General Accounting Office (GAO)	An agency that reports to Congress, who asks the GAO to study the programs and expenditures of the federal government. It studies how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars, evaluates federal programs, audits expenditures and issues legal opinions.
General Contact	The employee of a service provider company who filled out the FCC Form 498. This individual is listed on Line 8. The latest General Contact on file has access to submit and modify data in the E-file system, and to create delegated or authorized users.
Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAPP)	Uniform minimum standards of and guidelines to financial accounting and reporting. The Financial Accounting Standards Board and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board are authorized to establish these principles.
Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)	Standards promulgated by the Auditing Standards Board (ASB) of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) These standards are recognized by state boards of accountancy and the SEC. GAAS consists primarily of 10 standards and accompanying statements on auditing standards or "SAS."
Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS)	The standards that apply to all government audits and will apply to audits of the fund and fund recipients effective with the Government Accounting Order.
HCP Support Schedule (HSS)	Schedule of support by month for the funding year provided to service providers and HCPs after an FCC Form 467 is approved, signaling the service provider to begin providing support.
health care provider (HCP)	Entity seeking support for telecommunications and/or Internet services under the Rural Health Care Program.
Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA)	A law passed in 2010 to amend IPIA and enhance the federal government's practices to measure and recover improper payments.
Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA)	A 2002 law that requires USAC to provide the FCC with accurate, timely information about improper payments to program beneficiaries. To comply, USAC created its Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program, which assesses specific payments made to beneficiaries in all four programs to determine if these payments were made in accordance with FCC rules. Using results of these assessments, USAC calculates estimates of improper payment rates and provides this information to the FCC.
Information Request	A request sent by the Rural Health Care Program through MyPortal that asks account holders to clarify information submitted on an application form or to provide missing supporting documentation.
Internet service provider (ISP)	A company that provides Internet access service (also referred to as a service provider).
invoice	A statement or document that service providers submit to USAC after they have provided or completed service to the applicant. Invoices are submitted using FCC Form 474 (SL) or an FCC Form 463 invoice template (RHC).
invoice status report	A USAC-generated report sent to service providers upon receipt of the service provider's invoices. The report breaks out which invoice line items were accepted and denied.

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Letter of Agency (LOA)	A Letter of Agency (LOA) authorizes a consortium leader to apply for program support on behalf of each consortium member or a consultant to conduct specified activities on behalf of an applicant or service provider.
maximum allowable distance (MAD)	The distance from the HCP, in whole miles, to the far side of the largest city in the HCP's state. The MAD is the maximum distance for which USAC will support a telecommunications service. The MAD is listed on the FCC Form 465 posted on the USAC website.
Memorandum Opinion and Order (MO&O)	Order issued by the Commission to deny a petition for rulemaking, modify a decision, grant or deny a petition for reconsideration, or grant or deny an application for review of a decision. A second or third Memorandum Opinion and Order (2 nd MO&O/3 rd MO&O) may be issued.
mileage-based charges (also called distance-sensitive charges or monthly mileage charges)	The charges for a telecommunications service that are based on the circuit distance for interoffice channels, and in some cases for local channels. If there are no mileage-based charges (such as for ISDN), this number is zero. Mileage-based charges should include any taxes that are applied as a percentage of the per-mile charge, but should not include taxes, surcharges, non-recurring (set-up) charges, or other fixed charges such as channel terminations, that are not mileage sensitive. If carriers use banded mileage rates (where the rate varies by circuit length, for example \$50 for the first half mile and \$20 for subsequent miles), the entire mileage-based charge should be recorded in FCC Form 466, Block 5, and divided by the circuit mileage to yield the average per-mile rate.
multiple-bill circuit	If more than one telecommunications carrier is required to complete a health care provider's circuit, and each bills separately for their share of the circuit, it is a multiple-bill (multi-bill) circuit.
National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA)	Parent company of USAC. Formed by the FCC as a not-for-profit corporation, NECA plays an important role in administering the FCC's access charge plan, which helps ensure telephone service remains available and affordable in all parts of the country.
National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)	Part of the Department of Commerce, NTIA is responsible for telecommunications policy and provides telecommunications grants to various entities.
non-recurring support (NRS)	One-time support for installation of service under the Rural Health Care Program.
Notice of Apparent Liability (NAL)	An order issued by the FCC that provides a penalty will be imposed on a carrier for violating an FCC rule or procedure.
Notice of Inquiry (NOI)	Adopted by the Commissioners primarily for fact-gathering; which is a way to seek comments from the public or industry on a specific issue.
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)	An announcement issued by the FCC to detail proposed changes to FCC rules and policies and seek public comment on the changes.
Office of Inspector General (OIG)	A division of the FCC that provides independent and objective audits and investigations relating to agency programs and operations.
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	Part of the Executive Office of the President, OMB reviews and approves FCC forms that are used by universal service contributors and universal service program participants, contributors and service providers.
Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program	USAC's own program, created to comply with IPIA, which assesses specific payments made to beneficiaries in all four programs to determine if these payments were made in accordance with FCC rules. Using results of these assessments, USAC calculates estimates of improper payment rates and provides this information to the FCC.
Preparer	The employee of company that filed an FCC Form 499-A/Q. This individual is listed on the FCC Form 499-Q Line 108 and FCC Form 499-A Line 203. The latest preparer on file has access to submit and modify data in the E-File system.
Public Notice (PN)	A notice issued by the FCC to notify the public of an action taken, a change made, or an upcoming event.
Red Light Rule	A requirement that the FCC withholds action on an application, payment, and/or other requests for benefits when the universal service program participant is delinquent in non-tax debts owed to the FCC or other federal governmental agencies. This rule extends to applications for support and disbursements from the universal service fund, and requires that USAC suspend support to any company that shares a Tax Identification Number with a company that has a delinquent debt.
Red Light status	An entity is considered in Red Light status when the Red Light Rule goes into effect (the entity is delinquent). See "Red Light Rule." USAC will not make any disbursements until the delinquency has been satisfied or payment arrangements are made. USAC takes into consideration the Red Light status of each entity at the FCC and will hold disbursements until the Red Light status is resolved.
Request for Proposal (RFP)	A form of solicitation for products or services that provides detailed information regarding those products or services and any additional details necessary for potential bidders to respond. Program applicants may incorporate RFPs in addition to the FCC Form 465 (RHC) or FCC Form 470 (SL).
Rural Health Care Program (RHC)	One of the four universal service programs administered by USAC. This program provides reduced rates for telecommunications services and broadband to eligible health care providers.
rural rate	The rate charged by a telecommunications carrier for services in the rural area where the HCP is located.
Service End Date	The date that services will end for an FRN. USAC may adjust this date if a program violation is identified or a deadline is missed.

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service provider	A company that participates in one of four universal service programs and provides telecommunications or Internet services, equipment, hardware, or software. Types of companies include but are not limited to: competitive access/competitive local exchange carriers (cellular, personal communications, or specialized mobile radio providers), incumbent local exchange carriers, interexchange carriers, Internet service providers, interconnected VoIP, local resellers (coaxial cable, non-traditional, operator, paging, messaging, payphone, prepaid card, private and satellite service providers), shared-tenant service providers or building local exchange carriers, SMR (dispatch), toll resellers, or wireless data providers.
Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)	A unique number that USAC assigns to each service provider once that service provider has submitted the FCC Form 498 to USAC. Every service provider is required to have a SPIN in order to participate in any universal service programs and to receive payments from USAC.
Service Start Date	The date that services will start for an FRN. USAC may adjust this date if a program violation is identified or a deadline is missed.
service substitution	A change in the products and/or services originally requested in an FRN for the HCF or Pilot programs.
Study Area Code (SAC)	A unique number that USAC assigns to ETCs that uniquely identifies that company based on its service area. Companies must have at least one SAC per state in which they operate, but can have more than one SAC within a state if they have more than one service area.
support months	Number of months the service is supported during the funding year (Note: support during the first and last month is calculated by pro-rating the amount of support based on the number of days the service was in place during the month—e.g., five days of service in a month with 31 days will be equal to 5/31 or 0.16 months).
telecommunications	The transmission, between or among points specified by the user, of information of the user's choosing, without change in the form or content of the information as sent and received.
telecommunications carrier	Common carrier, as defined by the FCC, is an entity that provides telecommunications service including interexchange carriers, wireless carriers, and competitive local exchange carriers (also referred to as service provider).
universal service	Under the authority of the 1996 Telecom Act, the FCC created universal service as well as the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the organization charged with administering universal service. Companies make contributions based on revenues from providing international and interstate telecommunications services.
Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)	An independent, not-for-profit corporation created by the FCC in 1997 to administer the four universal service programs which help provide communities across the country with access to affordable telecommunications services.
universal service fund (USF)	Money collected from telecommunications companies and dedicated to fulfilling the goals of universal service. Under the authority of the 1996 Telecom Act, the FCC created the USF as well as the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the organization charged with administering universal service. Companies make contributions to universal service based on revenues from providing international and interstate telecommunications services.
urban rate	The rate charged by a telecommunications carrier for the same or similar service in a city within the state with a population of 50,000 or more. The urban rate should be for the same or similar terms and conditions as the rural rate.
Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)	A technology that allows users to make phone calls using the same line as an Internet connection.
Whistleblower Alert/ "Code 9 Call"	This hotline allows members of the public to report suspected violations of program rules to USAC. These reports can be made anonymously and toll free by calling (888) 203-8100.