

May 15, 2025 ACTEM Business Meeting

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E-Rate Updates

1. FY2025 Funding Waves

The first FY2025 Funding Wave was released on April 26.

Wave 3 of funding commitment decision letters for FY2025 was released on Thursday, May 8.

To date, 32 of the 163 FRNs filed by Maine applicants have received a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL).

Another funding wave is scheduled for today and waves will continue to be released on a weekly basis. FCDLs will be issued via email with a PDF attachment for each wave and will also be available in your EPC profile. Additionally, after every wave rolls out, I will email a notice and instructions to each applicant in that wave.

Reminders

Be sure to respond to PIA inquiries. I have already seen a request denied due to lack of response.

Program rules permit early installation for Category Two Non-Recurring Services.

Installation of Category Two non-recurring services may begin on the April 1 prior to the July 1 start of the funding year. No invoices (FCC Form 472 or FCC Form 474) can be certified prior to July 1 of the funding year.

2. Upcoming Forms and Deadlines

a. FY2025 Form 486

After you go through PIA review and receive a Funding Commitment Decision Letter, you will need to file a Form 486 to indicate the start of services and certify CIPA compliance. The Form 486 must be certified no later than 120 days after the service start date or 120 days after the date of the FCDL, whichever is later. Each funded FRN must be included on a Form 486 in order to receive E-Rate monies for it.

Unless you want to do early installation for a project – ie. per the early installation rule I mentioned – I would recommend waiting until services actually start on July 1 to file this form simply because it is easy to screw up the early filing certifications.

b. FCC Form 498

This only applies to you if this is the first year your school district or independent school filed for E-Rate:

You will need to have a Form 498 for the organization on file before you can receive any BEAR reimbursements via direct deposit.

In addition to providing banking information on the form, you will also be required to enter your SAM.gov UEI. However at least for the time being, entering your UEI on the 498 only applies to applicants that need to submit a new Form 498 or make other changes to their existing Form 498.

If you have an approved 498ID that was sent to you after you both filed a Form 498 and the form was approved by USAC, you do not need to complete another Form 498 at this time. You will continue to use your existing 498ID when filing BEARs. At some point later this year, all applicants will need to enter their SAM.gov UEI on the Form 498 so it would be beneficial to ensure that you have an active UEI.

If you are already registered in SAM.gov, you also already have a UEI. To find your UEI, log into SAM.gov and select the Entity Management widget in your Workspace or log in and search Entity Information. Ensure that your SAM.gov registration is active and the EIN for your UEI, the FCC Registration Number, and the FCC Form 498 numbers match. Once you have completed these steps, you can add your UEI to your FCC Form 498 ID. Entities' registrations in SAM.gov require annual renewal or the accounts will be deactivated. Make sure that your organization annually renews its SAM.gov registration prior to the expiration date listed in your entity's record in SAM.gov.

If you are not registered in SAM.gov, register now to obtain your UEI. You may need to allow up to six weeks for the registration to be completed for SAM.gov. Once you register with SAM.gov, you will be automatically assigned a UEI and can add your UEI to your FCC Form 498 ID when that becomes a requirement.

c. BEAR Forms

Once you have received an FCDL, have filed a Form 486, and have paid the bill(s) associated with the BEAR request for reimbursement, you may file your BEARs as often as you desire (monthly, quarterly, once a year) up to your funding commitment dollar amount.

FY2024 BEARs (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)	FY2025 BEARs (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)
Deadline = October 28, 2025	cannot be filed until after the items mentioned have all been completed
	Deadline = October 28, 2026

3. Senate Vote to Overturn FCC Hotspot Order

You may have heard about two actions last week on S.J. Res. 7 in which the U.S. Senate voted to employ the Congressional Review Act to overturn the FCC order that was adopted last August declaring Wi-Fi Hotspot Devices eligible for E-Rate funding effective FY2025 – this vote thereby declared hotspots as ineligible. The final Senate vote was 50-38 strictly along party lines. A similar measure (H.J. Res. 33) is pending in the House of Representatives that, if approved and signed by the President as expected this week, will effectively and permanently kill E-Rate eligibility of hotspots that had been scheduled to become effective. Presumably any pending hotspot applications for FY 2025 would then be canceled. Once killed by CRA action, hotspots cannot be reinitiated by the FCC under a future administration without an authorizing act of Congress.

It should be noted that Congress' CRA actions to overturn the FCC's hotspot rules does not affect — as has been misreported — the eligibility of school bus Wi-Fi that was also enacted earlier by the FCC and is, therefore, not subject to the current CRA action. However, given the current makeup of the FCC Commission, it is subject to FCC support which is questionable at best. If a Republican majority on the FCC decides to reconsider the eligibility of school bus Wi-Fi, it would presumably do that by initiating a Notice of Public Rulemaking subject to public comment.

Networkmaine Update

1. Zoom Subscriptions

If you have not already responded to the emails about renewing your Zoom subscriptions, please do so as soon as possible. We asked for lists to be returned by today, May 15.

Or if you don't currently have subscriptions through us but would like to, drop me a note.

We anticipate that each one year Zoom subscription for the period July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 will cost \$30.