

Survey Comments: FY 2015 Filing Window Extension



Because it is a new form, we knew it would take time to manage. However, it has been harder than we thought.

Too many rule changes in one year

It's just daunting.

Need to be able to print the completed form when reviewing. If you can, I didn't see it.

I don't know if I can get my 471 filed on time.

This e-rate funding could greatly impact our programs but I was unable to get the help I needed from our Support Services people to get the forms completed. If there was an extension, it would be very welcome.

Due to rule changes, we need to be very sure the application for category 2 services are filed correctly; we are investigating the benefit of working with a consortium; however, it appears the discount will not improve and the specific brands we requested received no response, therefore no benefit to a consortium. Which means funding is unlikely, but we need the funds for the project especially due to projected 60% decrease in local tax revenues which will further limit funds available for the project...Wireless network in new school. This is very frustrating because it appears the sole purpose of the new legislation has been to make it harder to apply, harder to keep records, and to remove schools like ours from the application process...not help us!!!

The forms are too hard, too much information required. Make it simple

It is very difficult to review the 471's before we submit them because of the Print Preview button not working. We have to go in and review all information while we're actually in the form. It's very difficult to look it over for review. Please fix this ASAP

471 online discount calculations are not correct. A case with USAC has been filed, but no response yet.

The changes in the online Form 471 have made the process go much more slowly.

There are HUGE and VAST changes!! We should have an extension this year because of the simple fact that so much has changed. Changes are confusion and overwhelming. NEED MORE TIME!!!!

We are a very small district with limited help and I do all the E-Rate for All Internet Service, Priority 2 funding, phones. With our discount figures being so late here in Wisconsin, I think to demand a March 26th date especially with how new everything is just unrealistic and unfair.

An extension will only result in delayed decisions. We need to close the application process so the review process can be completed.

I've worked with this organization since 2009 on E-Rate. This is the latest we have ever filed our forms. The stress is considerable.

USAC is trying to simplify e-rate and they just have made it extremely more complicated!

We used to have a great relationship with our local internet provider. They provided us with Internet service when nobody else would. They used to give us little technology grants from time to time. Now that we are in this program we can't accept any gifts from them. Now it's all about money. If somebody else comes along cheaper we have to go with them.

Erate is always hard to fill out, but this year I felt like crying.

They should have done more training. They shouldn't have opened the window until their own staff were trained. They haven't even posted all the instruction videos yet, and the window is nearly closed. They aren't prepared, but they expect us to be. How unfair is that!

Everyone knows the timeline and the folks that are not proactive in their planning should not be entitled any extension

It is critical to receive funding on time. Delaying the process will be counterproductive. There has been enough time allowed already.

Trying to decipher eligible and ineligible for Category 1 is crazy. When cellular is bundled with unlimited text/data, how do you figure the actual cost of voice and taxes???

I am a consultant handling more than 50 schools. Revising a program this large right before the filing window was not good.

I really feel like USAC didn't have everything together when they first released the new Form 471. They were issues and this has caused me to fall behind and not be able to quickly complete my forms. With all of the districts wanting to file for Category 2, this has increased my workload and also having to break out each cost per school will definitely be more time consuming than in year's past. I really feel it's necessary to have extra time this year considering all these factors. Plus, the week of the deadline is spring break for us so all of my schools will be out of the office and will make it difficult to get info from them.

We are worried what will happen if all the category 2 items we have filled for are not funded.

Limited time with new rules to research and consider applying for category 2.

New processes are being performed.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our opinions.

There is a lot of confusion in the new rules across the board

Some of our libraries are in a different school district from the main library and it puts them in a rural category. Its giving us an urban status

when most of our libraries are truly rural is a disadvantage when it comes to our funding percentage.

I took an in person training for the new processes and watched a webinar with line by line instructions for the new 471 and I still was not able to navigate it successfully without timing out twice. On my third try I finally understood what I had not changed and was able to proceed and finish the form. To the best of my ability it is correct but I am not really sure of that.

"In trying to fill out the new Form 471, there are a number of new questions. If applicants were able to look ahead and see those questions, they would then know what information they had to gather. As it is, a few questions would get answered; then there would be a roadblock due to new questions. Then, a few more could be answered, followed by another roadblock. Way too time consuming!

Another option would be to allow applicants to go through the entire form, answering all the questions they are able, then go back later to answer the rest. Right now, you have to answer the questions sequentially. Again, way too time consuming.

So far, I don't feel that the new form is any improvement. I had to call USAC 3 separate times for help filling out the form."

Our Board of Education meetings are late in the month and due to the extreme weather, there was a delay from vendors and staff to complete the reviews for the February Board of Ed. meeting. The next regular Board meeting in March is on the 24th and of course the window closes March 26th... tight time frame to complete the 471's.

The SLD call help line is excellent this year!

The deadline should not be changed because it would delay funding for everyone.

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Form 471 deadline extension would be much appreciated!

Having to download the template is ridiculous. When I try to upload information it keeps giving me an error. It is NOT user friendly.

The change of rules make it hard to complete the 471. Vendors are not familiar with their part in the 471 as we were told in the training by USAC.

A deadline extension would help with the needed time to find answers to our questions and provide some certainty in an uncertain alliance with CENIC in California.

This form does not make it easier for the applicant to enter data. It is probably taking 3 or 4 times longer than last year per form 471. Requiring a separate 471 for C2 has doubled our work man hours to complete also.

I called the CSB this week and asked a question and the answer was basically look and the eligible service list. I need an answer to move forward with an application and I felt they should have been much more helpful.

Having difficulty getting Item 21 breakdown information, from the solicited bidder

I agree with an extension for category 2 as so many districts are filing C2 for the first time

SLD, while trying to be responsive, still doesn't know the answer too many filing questions. Too many of our Submit-a-Question answers have been "Schools and Libraries is currently researching your request."

Thanks for doing this.

We are a consulting firm helping school and library applicants in <redacted>. At the current rate we anticipate that we will fail to meet the deadline for about 1/3 of our clients. This will probably put us out of business.

I am in the process of preparing a list of suggestions for the 2016-2017 application season. It continues to be a work in progress. I will submit my list at a later date after conferring with colleagues.

The immaturity of the new 471 filing tool and a lack of a true bulk upload option has greatly increased the amount of work necessary to file consortium applications.

Between the new rules, new forms, buggy forms (and/or databases), and slow or no guidance there are lots of unanswered questions. The help desk does not know the answers, their supervisors don't know the answers, "ask a question" does not know the answers and even senior directors at SLD do not know the answers. It's a mess, and I hope PIA will be understanding and lenient when reviewing FY2015 applications.

This year has been so uncertain and different. We didn't have enough information and guidance to file our Form 470 sooner with all the changes & new rules implementation so late in the year which were and still are not real clear. Even now those who have done this for years are very nervous with all the changes. One of the most difficult years I have encountered and I've been doing this for many, many years. I can't imagine what a newbie is going through.

It is time consuming to select detailed entity information for Category 2 services and data/fiber services when you do not have an easy to use upload template that encompasses all required selections.

I would appreciate an extension for the Form 417 this year because of new rules and regulations. Next year will be better.

After reviewing all of new forms I realized that I needed help. This is the first year that I had to use a consultant, and I have been filing since the first year of the E-Rate program.

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We are severely limited in the resources we can apply to the E-Rate process, plus some rules are still not known. Some extra time would be extremely beneficial.

The RFP we submitted for the Category 2 funding took additional time, and we are working with vendors that are unfamiliar. This necessitates calling references, etc. Thanks for thinking of us.

In addition many rule changes and incomplete information regarding these rules, this has been a singular winter season keeping school, government and business offices closed for almost three weeks.

I'm very disappointed that this is the last year for our small rural library to get any discounts because you are eliminating phone only applications and are requiring us to have voice-over phone lines. If you really want to help small, rural Iowa libraries then you should let us continue to receive E-rate funds for telecommunications and not put restrictions on our requests.

It would be a huge help if the USAC website was updated fully to meet the new reform.