

Federal Communications Commission

Explanation of Non-Substantive Changes to OMB Control Number: 3060-0806:

- FCC Forms 470 and 471
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Purpose of this Submission: This submission is being made for non-substantive changes to an existing information collection pursuant to 44 U.S.C. § 3507. This submission will alleviate the current 10-year document retention and production requirement for service providers and applicants of the schools and libraries universal service support program, commonly known as the E-Rate program. This submission also seeks to add checkboxes and/or fields applicable to the Schools and Libraries Universal Service Description of Services Requested and Certification FCC Form 470 and FCC Form 471.

Background: On April 30, 2026, the Commission adopted the Competitive Bidding Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration (WC Docket No. 21-455, FCC 26-30 (*Competitive Bidding Order*)), that established a competitive bidding portal and document repository for the E-Rate program. Beginning in funding year (FY) 2028, service providers will be required to respond to applicants' FCC Form 470 requests for services by submitting their bids into a Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)-managed system, and applicants will be required to upload all bid evaluation and vendor selection documents, including contracts, to the portal after they select their service providers. Communications between service providers and applicants must be conducted through the USAC-managed system, unless prohibited by state or local laws. Currently, service providers submit bids in response to the FCC Form 470 directly to the applicant. If the service provider has questions about the FCC Form 470, the provider may reach out to the applicant. However, the Commission's rules require that the applicant conducts a fair and open competitive bidding process and that all bidders and prospective bidders have access to the same information requiring the applicant to share information provided to one bidder with all bidders. To allow applicants to set specific deadlines for the submission of bids and questions about the FCC Form 470 or Request for Proposal (RFP), we are adding two data fields to the FCC Form 470 to allow the applicant to include a deadline date for bids and for questions. In addition, applicants must upload their contracts to the USAC-managed system at the time they file their FCC Form 471. This requirement applies to state master contracts and existing multi-year contracts. However, once a contract has been uploaded once, the applicant will not be required to upload the contract if used for additional funding years. Service providers and applicants are currently required to retain bids, competitive bidding documentation, and contracts for at least 10 years and to provide upon request from the Commission or its Administrator. This new requirement to require the bids, competitive bidding documentation, and contracts to be uploaded into the USAC-managed electronic system will alleviate the requirement for service providers and applicants to separately retain this documentation. In addition, the Commission and its Administrator can retrieve the documentation from the system in lieu of requiring the service provider and/or applicant to respond to requests to produce the documentation during reviews and audits. The new bidding portal will be integrated into the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC), the current online account and management system for the E-Rate program. Additionally, in the *Competitive Bidding Order*, the Commission adopted changes to further streamline and simplify the E-Rate program. Consistent with the *Competitive Bidding Order*, we seek to add a field to the FCC Form 471 that gives schools, libraries, and consortium the option to submit a service substitution request to increase bandwidth during the funding year. This change creates a limited exception to the competitive bidding rules, allowing applicants to submit a service substitution request to increase bandwidth during the funding year at the existing commitment amount (i.e., total price of the current bandwidth service). Under this exception, applicants will be responsible for any corresponding cost increase for the expanded bandwidth for the remainder of the funding year. Furthermore, applicants transitioning services can file a post-commitment request that

changes the service start and end dates and permits, if the applicants meet certain criteria, increases in the commitment amount. Applicants will file partial year funding requests for both the old and new services, estimating the cutover dates not to exceed twelve months. The applicant must indicate on the FCC Form 471 application that the services are transitioning. Once the dates are known, the applicant may file a post-commitment request, which USAC will be permitted to grant even if the change results in a higher funding commitment amount. Accordingly, we add a check box on FCC Form 471 for applicants to indicate if they are requesting funding for transitioning services. The *Competitive Bidding Order*, also adopted the proposal to remove the requirement that applicants file the FCC Form 486 (Receipt of Service Confirmation and Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) Certification Form) beginning in funding year 2028, finding that the notification that an applicant makes that their services have started to be duplicative. The remaining CIPA compliance certifications from Form 486 will be transfer to the FCC Form 471. Therefore, we add the CIPA certifications from Form 486 to FCC Form 471 starting in funding year 2028. Finally, we add a certification based on the Modernizing Suspension and Debarment Rules Report & Order (FCC 26-18), adopted on March 26, 2026, that revised the suspension and debarment framework for the Commission to exclude or limit bad actors from participation in the USF.

Summary of Proposed Updates to the FCC Forms 470 and 471:

- We propose to require service providers to upload bids to the posted FCC Form 470 through a USAC-managed system and require applicants to upload their competitive bidding documentation and contracts into the system. In addition, communications between the service provider and applicant must be conducted through the USAC-managed system from the time the FCC Form 470 is posted and the contract is awarded or the contract award date, unless prohibited by state or local law. The documentation will be retrievable and available to the Commission and the Administrator. This will reduce the current 10-year documentation retention and production burden on E-Rate service providers and applicants.
- We propose to add two data fields to the FCC Form 470 to allow the applicant to set a deadline for the submission of bids and to set a deadline for the submission of questions about the form or the RFP.
- We propose to add an option to the FCC Form 471 for schools, libraries, and consortium to submit a service substitution request to increase bandwidth during the funding year at the existing commitment amount.
- We propose to add a check box on FCC Form 471, for schools, libraries, and consortia to indicate that they are requesting funding for transitioning services during the funding year.
- We propose to add the CIPA certifications from FCC Form 486 to FCC Form 471 starting in funding year 2028.
- We propose to add a certificate to FCC Form 471 based on the revised suspension and debarment framework for the Commission to exclude or limit bad actors from participation in the USF.
- The proposed changes will not increase the burden hours.