



Federal Communications Commission

EMERGENCY CONNECTIVITY FUND PROGRAM

JULY 22, 2021

The Emergency Connectivity Fund

Overview

- The **\$7.171 billion Emergency Connectivity Fund** was created as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.
- Congress established the Fund to help schools and libraries provide connected devices (laptop and tablet computers) and broadband connectivity to students, school staff, and library patrons during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- On **May 10, 2021**, the FCC adopted a Report and Order ([FCC 21-58](#)), establishing the rules for the distribution of funding to eligible schools and libraries.
- Funding must be used for the purchase of eligible equipment and/or advanced telecommunications and information services for use by students, school staff, and library patrons with unmet needs at locations other than a school or library, during the COVID-19 emergency period.

Eligible Entities

Eligible Entities include:

- Schools, libraries, and consortia of schools and libraries that are eligible for support under the E-Rate Program.
 - Elementary and secondary schools are defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
 - States define elementary and secondary schools under ESEA.
 - Section 254 of the Communications Act also specifies:
 - ❖ For-profit schools are *not* eligible for support
 - ❖ Schools with an endowment of \$50 million or more are *not* eligible.
- Libraries eligible for support under Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).
 - Tribal libraries are eligible for support under LSTA and are therefore eligible for Emergency Connectivity Fund Program support.
- Schools and libraries do not need to be participants in the E-Rate Program to participate in the Emergency Connectivity Fund.
 - Eligibility will be verified during the application review process.

Eligible Equipment and Services

Eligible equipment includes:

- Connected devices (laptop computers and tablet computers)
 - Desktop computers and smartphones are *not* eligible for funding.
- Wi-Fi hotspots
- Modems (including aircards)
- Routers
- Devices that combine a modem and router

Eligible Equipment and Services

Eligible services include:

- Commercially available fixed or mobile broadband Internet access services
 - Dark fiber is ineligible for support.
 - Construction of broadband networks and customer premises equipment for receiving datacasting services are also ineligible, *except* in the limited case where there is no commercially available Internet access service sufficient for students, school staff and library patrons to engage in remote learning.

Reasonable Support Amounts

Applicants may seek funding for:

- Up to **\$400** for each connected device (laptops and tablets).
- Up to **\$250** for each Wi-Fi hotspot provided to a student, school staff or library patron.
- The Order also provides a framework to determine reasonable costs for other eligible equipment and services, directing USAC to carefully review the requests and the Wireline Competition Bureau to provide guidance to USAC for assessing reasonability.

Application Process

- USAC opened the initial 45-day application filing window on June 29, 2021 and will close the filing window on August 13, 2021.
- Schools and libraries can request funding for **eligible equipment and services to be received between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.**
- Schools and libraries must certify that they are only seeking support for eligible equipment and services for use by students, school staff, and library patrons who would otherwise lack access to devices or connectivity sufficient to meet their remote learning needs.

Application Process

- Applicants must certify to compliance with all applicable local, state, and Tribal procurement requirements, but are *not* subject to a program-specific competitive bidding process, like in the E-Rate Program.
- To apply, schools and libraries must complete the **ECF FCC Form 471**, which they can access by going to:

<https://www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org/>

- For additional assistance, you can contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund Customer Support Center at (800) 234-9781, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. E.T.

Resources

- Application Guide:
<https://www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org/ecf-fcc-form-471/>
- FAQs:
<https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-connectivity-fund-faqs>
- Register for USAC's office hours:
<https://www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org/training/live-sessions/>
- For additional assistance, you can contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund Customer Support Center at (800) 234-9781, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. E.T.

Questions?