



RHC 101

An Introduction to the Rural Health Care Program



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

USAC Staff

- **Carolyn McCornac**
Director, Operations USAC Rural Health Care Program
- **Rehana Mohammed**
Director, Program Development USAC Rural Health Care Program
- **Jennifer Contreras**
Senior Program Manager of Outreach, USAC Rural Health Care Program

Agenda

1. RHC Program Basics
2. Eligibility
3. Participation in the Program

The Basics



What Does the Rural Health Care Program Do?

The RHC Program discounts support getting the facility connected; the money goes directly to the service provider who then offsets the facilities' costs by applying the discount to their bill or a check.

Video: [What is the RHC Program?](#)



Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HCF	Healthcare Connect Fund
FY	Funding Year
HCP	Health Care Provider (your site)
SP	Service Provider (Telco Co)
FCL	Funding Commitment Letter
FRN	Funding Request Number

Overview of the RHC Program

- The RHC Program **provides discounts** for telecommunications and broadband services to *eligible* health care providers (HCPs).
- The RHC Program is authorized by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to commit over \$590M in funding for funding year (FY) 2019 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) and adjusts for inflation every year.
 - [FCC Order 18-82](#) released June 25, 2018 raised the RHC Program funding cap from \$400M.
 - The funding cap includes administrative expenses for the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) to administer the RHC Program each funding year.
- Read the RHC Program [Rules](#) and [Order](#) for complete information.

The Two Components of the RHC Program

There are two “subprograms” of the RHC Program:

- Telecommunications (Telecom) Program
- Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program

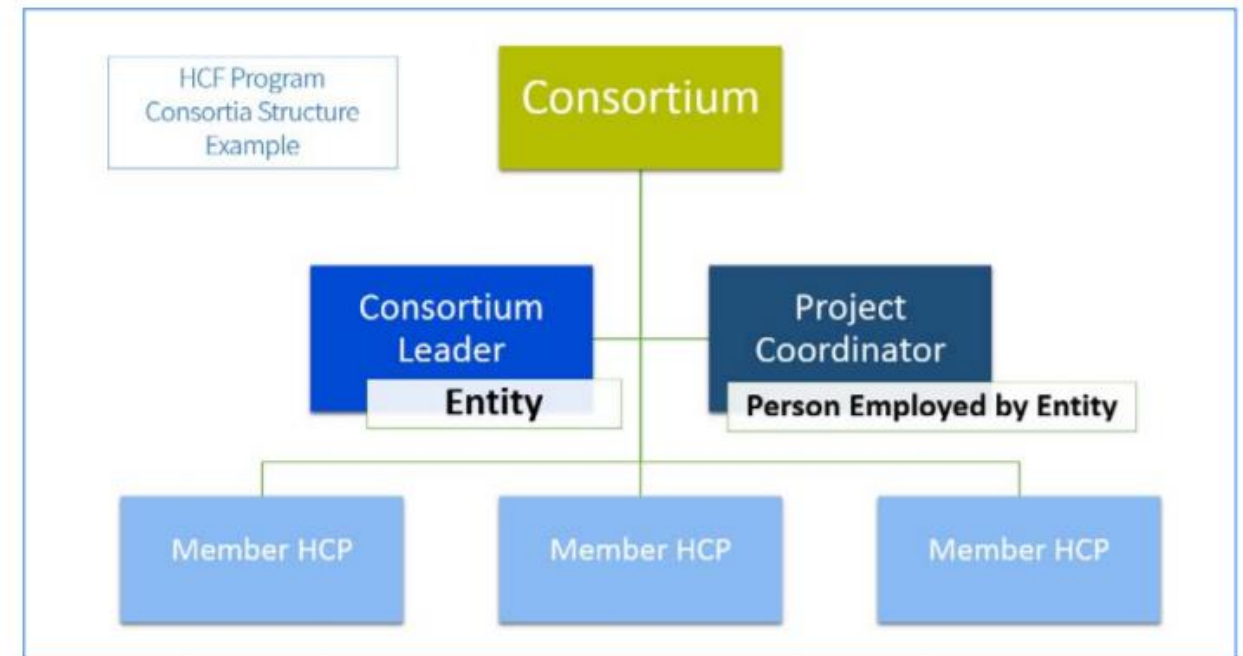
Telecom Program Highlights



- Funds **telecommunications services** related to the use of telemedicine and telehealth
- **Single year** funding requests
- **Funds up to the difference** between the urban and rural rates

Healthcare Connect Fund Program Highlights

- Funds eligible expenses related to **broadband connectivity** for both **individual sites** and **consortia**
- Provides a flat **65% discount**
- **Multi-year** funding



HCF Program: Benefits of the Consortium Approach

- Creation and growth of broadband HCP networks.
- Lower administrative costs.
- Sharing of medical, administrative, and technical expertise.
- Consortia can include ineligible HCP sites as part of the network and benefit from negotiated rates, but these sites cannot receive HCF Program support and must pay their “fair share” of the network costs.
- Improved quality and reduced cost of healthcare through leveraging broadband connections in consortia.

RHC Program: Funding Years & Filing Window Periods

- **Funding Year**

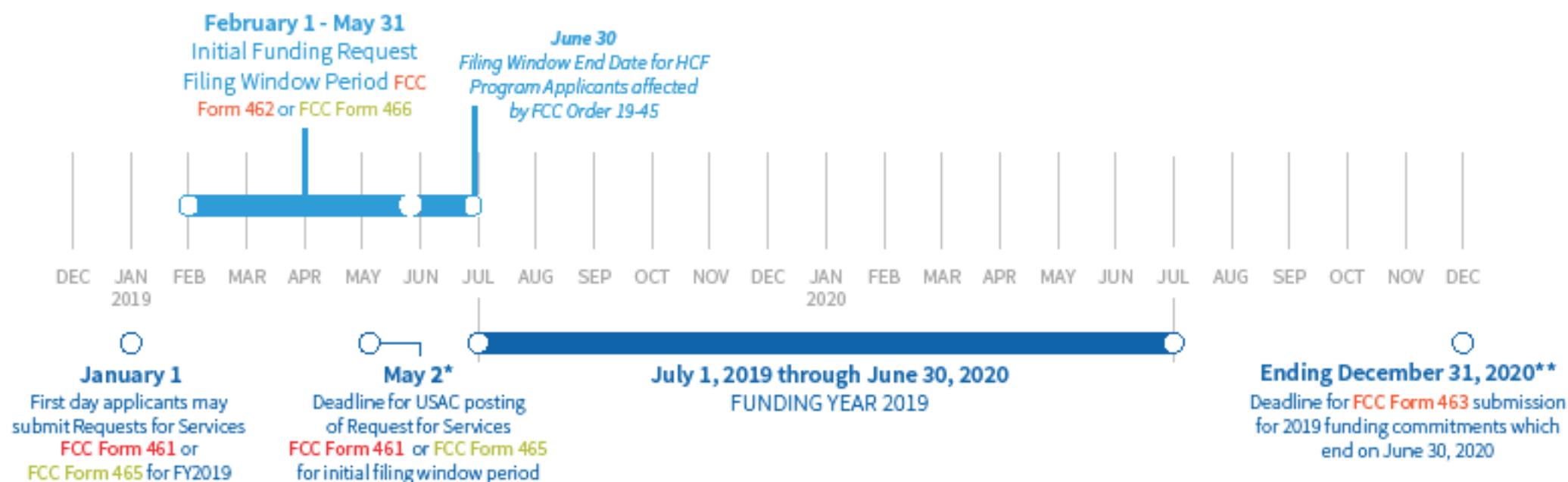
- From July 1 to June 30 of the subsequent calendar year
- FY2019 = July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

- **Filing Window Periods**

- A fixed period during which all qualifying funding requests that are received during a filing window period are treated as having been filed simultaneously for purposes of making funding commitment decisions.
- Each funding year can have multiple filing window periods.
- FY2019 Filing Window Period is February 1 – 11:59 p.m. ET May 31.
 - Extended filing window for some HCF applicants which ended June 30.

FUNDING YEAR (FY) 2019

FILING CALENDAR



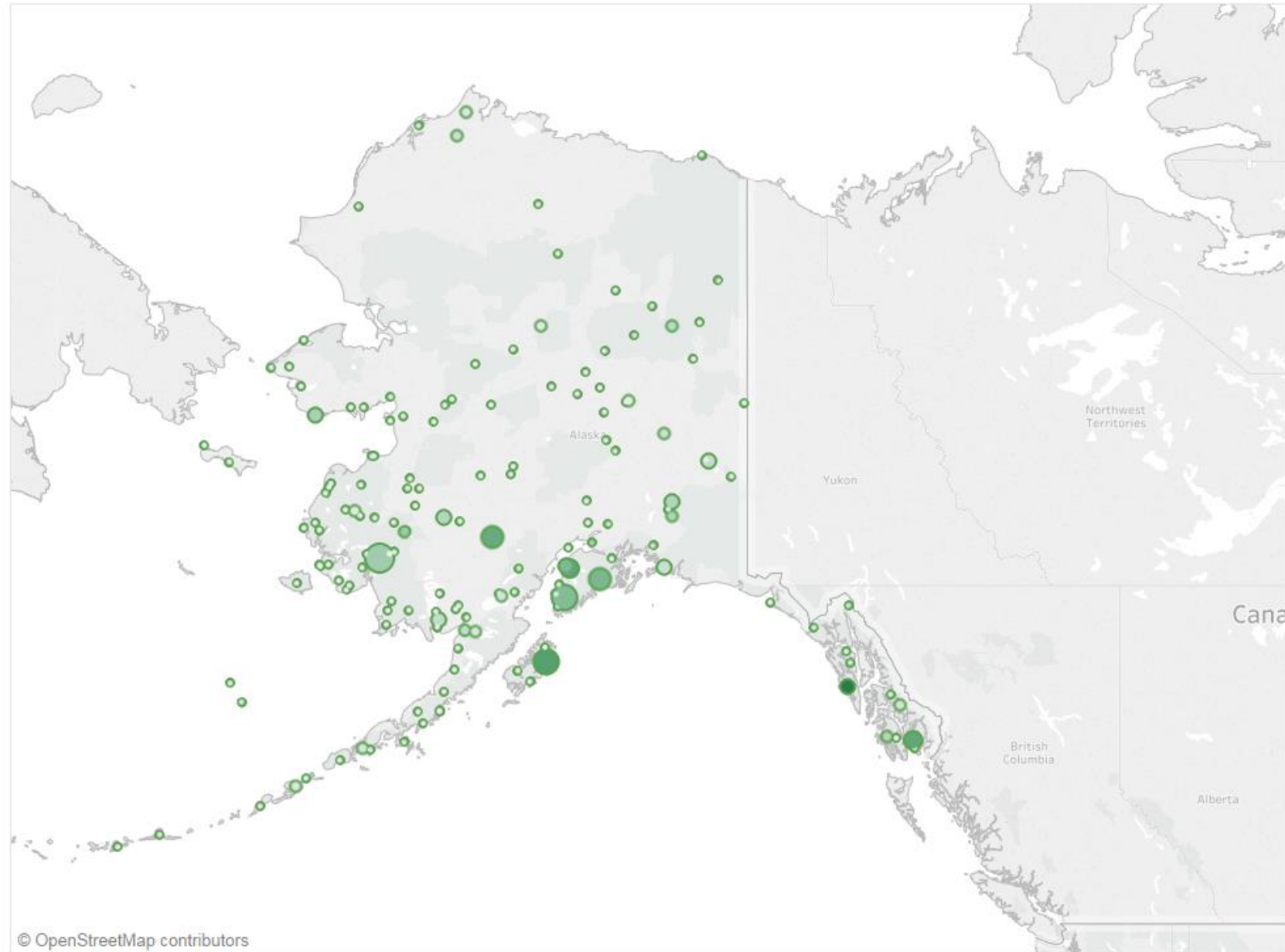
- Funding Request Filing Window Period
- General Funding Year Deadlines
- Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program
- Telecommunications Program

*Applicants should allow for processing time between their submission and USAC posting of the form.
by this day

**An invoice must be submitted to the service provider and approved by the deadline.

Participating HCPs in Alaska FY2017

- **218** Healthcare Providers in Alaska received funding in the Telecom Program for Fund Year 2017.
- **24** Healthcare Providers in Alaska received funding in the HCF Program for Fund Year 2017.



RHC Program Dollars in Alaska for Fund Year 2017

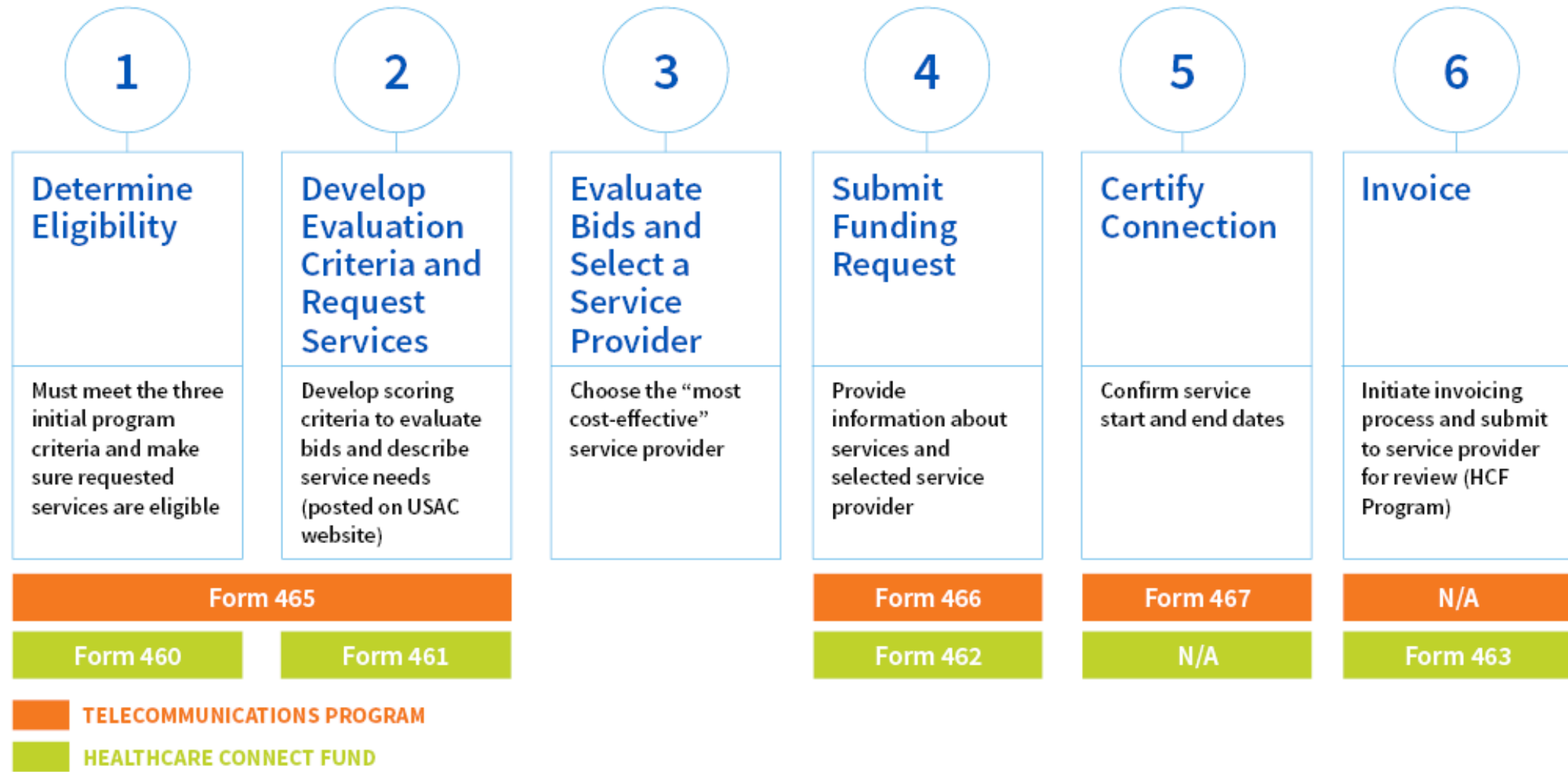
- Telecom Funding: **\$88.51** million
- HCF Funding: **\$1.16** million



Image of Anchorage, Alaska

Eligibility

Rural Healthcare Program Application Process



Three Criteria for Eligibility

1. Status

- Not for Profit
- Public

2. HCP Type

3. Rural Location

- Telecom Program: HCP applicants must be located in an FCC-approved rural location to be considered rural.
- HCF Program: Individual HCP applicants must be located in an FCC-approved rural location to be considered rural. Non-rural HCP applicants may apply as part of a majority-rural consortium.
- Use the [rural look-up tool](#) on the USAC website.

Each HCP site or location is considered an individual HCP for purposes of calculating support under the RHC Program. Each site must thus demonstrate that *by itself* it is an eligible entity.

Health Care Provider (HCP) Type

- Post-secondary educational institutions offering health care instruction, teaching hospitals, and medical schools
- Community health centers or health centers providing health care to migrants
- Local health departments or agencies
- Community mental health centers
- Not-for-profit hospitals
- Rural health clinics
- Dedicated emergency departments of rural for-profit hospitals
- Part-time eligible entities
- Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs)
- Consortia of the above entities

Participation in the Program



HCF and Telecom Programs Comparison

Category	HCF Program	Telecom Program
Discount	65% flat rate discount on all eligible expenses	Calculated as urban-rural differential of cost of services
Rurality	HCP can be located in a non-rural location as a member of an eligible consortium, as long as consortium is majority rural	HCP must be in a rural location
Off-Site Expenses	Connections associated with off-site data centers and off-site administrative offices used by eligible HCPs for health care purposes are eligible for funding	No off-site associated connections are eligible for funding

HCF and Telecom Programs Comparison

Category	HCF Program	Telecom Program
Eligible Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broadband services• Network equipment• HCP-constructed and owned network facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telecommunications services
Application Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply as an individual HCP or as a part of a consortium• Can obtain a multi-year funding commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply as an individual HCP• Must seek new funding commitment for each funding year

Submitting an FCC Form in the HCF and Telecom Programs

- All forms and supporting documentation submission is done online and forms are submitted to USAC for review.
- The RHC Program online application management system, My Portal, is used for both the HCF and Telecom Programs.
- Applicants will receive email correspondence about the status of form submission, decisions, and any additional information needed.

My Portal Access

- New applicants will not have access to our online application management system My Portal until their first form (either the FCC Form 460 or 465) is approved.
- You must complete the FCC Forms 460 and 465 in a single session.



Information Collected on the RHC Program Eligibility Forms

FCC Form 460 (HCF Program)

1. Site information
2. Contact information
3. Eligibility information
4. Certifications and signatures

Note: the FCC Forms 460 and 465 must be completed in a single session. You are unable to save a draft form and return to complete at a later time.

FCC Form 465 (Telecom Program)

1. Site information
2. Contact information
3. Eligibility information
4. Certifications and signatures
5. Services requested (Telecom Program only)

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Process Overview
Appeals & Audits
Program Calendar (FY2018)
Funding Commitments
(FY2017)
2018 Funding Cap Order
Glossary of Terms (PDF)
FAQs

RESOURCES & TOOLS

Forms
My Portal
Tools
Latest News
Sample Documents
FCC Resources
Trainings & Outreach
Contact Us

2018 Funding Cap Order Released

Find Out How Your FY2017 Funding
Commitment is Affected

[CLICK HERE](#)



INDIVIDUAL HCPS



CONSORTIA



SERVICE PROVIDERS



LATEST NEWS

My Portal System Updates Regarding FY2017 Site
and Service Substitutions (7/25/2018)

My Portal Outage Due To System Maintenance
Thursday, August 2 (7/25/2018)

Watch the 2018 Funding Cap Order Informational
Webinar Today! (7/18/2018)

Newsletter for July 2018 (7/9/2018)

FCC RHC 2018 Funding Cap Order (6/25/2018)

[Read more](#)

QUICK LINKS

Letter of Agency Information – Download a Sample
LOA

Third Party Authorization Information – Download a
Sample TPA

Urban and Rural Rate Information – Telecom Program



FY2018 Request for Services Best Practices Webinar
– Watch Now!

Funding Request Best Practices Webinar – Watch
Now!

[Read more](#)

Upcoming
Webinars and
Trainings



TRAININGS & OUTREACH

Online Learning Library
All Training Events

Handouts & Reference
Newsletter

Webinars

USAC offers a variety of Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program resources for individual health care providers (HCPs), current and prospective consortia, and service providers. In this section you can access publications, handouts, webinar recordings, educational tutorials, and other resources. All events and resources are offered free of charge.

Upcoming Events

- October 24, 2017 2:00pm ET – RHC Program Filing Window Update – [Register](#)
- See more outreach opportunities on the [Program Calendar](#)

Looking for a past event?

[View webinar recordings](#)
[View full event archive](#)

Resources

Learn at your own pace with our handouts, reference materials, online videos, and tutorials. You can also view recordings of past webinar events.



Handouts & Reference
Print resources, guides, and more
[View All Handouts](#)



Online Learning Library
Videos, tutorials, and webinar recordings
[View All Videos](#)

Webinar
recordings



Helpful materials
to guide you
through the
application
process



Upcoming trainings

- **September 4- FCC Order 19-78 Webinar**

- On August 20, 2019, the Federal Communications Commission released a Report and Order reforming the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program to promote transparency and predictability, and to further the efficient allocation of limited program resources while guarding against waste, fraud, and abuse. RHC Outreach staff will be providing a general overview of newly released FCC Order 19-78 during this webinar.

- **September 12- Consortia Webinar Training**

- Specifically for consortia who want to start and prepare for FY2020 Filing Window. Will go over general questions about forming and organizing a consortia, and how to get ready for Request for Services FCC Form 461/465 process
- Answer questions in regards to Consortia Annual Report, forming consortia, and best practices
- Register [HERE](#)

RHC Program Help Desk

- Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org
 - Email at any time to request a one-on-one appointment to learn more about the application process or ask specific questions.
- Phone: **(800) 453-1546**
 - Hours are 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. ET





Universal Service
Administrative Co.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Rural Development



USDA Rural Development Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

Jessie Huff

Energy Coordinator – Public Information Coordinator

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

The program provides or improves
Distance Learning and/or
Telemedicine Services in Rural
America by funding equipment
that allows rural residents to
access distance learning or
telemedicine services from hub
sites located in larger urban or
suburban areas

Overcoming the effects of
remoteness and low population
density.



Eligible Applicants

Prior to official submission of applications, applicants may request technical assistance or other application guidance from RUS, as long as such requests are made 15 days prior to the final application due date.



DLT Program Website

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>





Washington, Oregon, Idaho
and Wyoming

dd

Joe Bradley

104 E Fairview Ave, No. 291

Meridian, ID 83642-1733

joe.bradley@usda.gov

Cell Phone: (208) 401-8090



Alaska, Kansas, Oklahoma

Shekinah Pepper

P.O.Box 372

Wichita, KS 67201

shekinah.bailey@usda.gov

Voice: (316) 570-3249



Montana and Nebraska

dd

Roger A Meeks

3900 Old Cheney Road#201

Lincoln, NE 68516

roger.meeks@usda.gov

Voice: (402) 420-1467



California, Hawaii, Nevada
and the Islands

dd

Rocky Chenelle
9121 Atlanta Avenue # 758
Huntington Beach, CA 92646
rocky.chenelle@usda.gov
Voice: (530) 379-5032



Utah and Colorado

dd

Randall Dinogan
8200 S. Quebec Street
Suite A3 747
Centennial, CO 80112
randall.dinogan@usda.gov
Voice: (303) 514-6386

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Rural Utilities Service Telecommunications Key Contacts

Assistant Administrator

Chad Parker, Assistant Administrator, RUS Telecommunications
chad.parker@wdc.usda.gov / 202.720.7287

Deputy Assistant Administrators

Laurel Leverrier, Deputy Assistant Administrator, RUS Telecommunications
laurel.leverrier@wdc.usda.gov / 202.720.3416

Peter Aimable, Office of Portfolio Management & Risk Assessment
peter.aimable@wdc.usda.gov / 202.720.1025

Shawn Arner, Office of Loan (& Grant) Origination & Approval
shawn.arner@usda.gov / 202.720.0800

Kenneth Kuchno, Office of Policy & Outreach
kenneth.kuchno@wdc.usda.gov / 202.720.9424



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Rural Development



Thank You!

Jessie Huff
USDA Rural Development
Palmer, AK
907-761-7768
www.rd.usda.gov

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