



Universal Service Application Process

Applying for universal service support requires a Health Care Provider (HCP), telecommunications carrier(s), and RHCD to complete a multi-step process.

- 1. HCP completes Form 465 and submits it to RHCD.** In Form 465 the HCP provides a description of services requested and certifies that the HCP meets the program's eligibility requirements.
- 2. RHCD processes Form 465 and verifies eligibility of HCP.**
- 3. RHCD posts Form 465 on the USAC web site for 28 days.** RHCD also sends the HCP a posting letter verifying that Form 465 has been posted on the USAC web site. (Posting is necessary to satisfy the FCC requirements for competitive bidding.)
- 4. The 28-day competitive bidding period begins.** Vendors bid on services. No contracts can be signed during this period.
- 5. The HCP selects the vendor with the most cost-effective solution after the 28-day competitive bidding period is completed.** The most cost-effective method is defined by the FCC as the method of least cost after consideration of the features, quality of transmission, reliability, and other factors relevant to choosing a method of providing the required services. This process may take weeks or months depending on the response of the vendor.
- 6. The HCP completes Form 466 (Funding Request and Certification Form).** Form 466 specifies the type of service ordered, the cost, the service provider(s), the terms of the service agreements, and certifies that the vendor that was selected was the most cost-effective offer received.
- 7. HCP submits its Form 466 packet to RHCD.**
- 8. RHCD reviews the Form 466 packet submitted by the HCP.**
- 9. If packet is approved, RHCD issues a Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) to the HCP and the vendor.** The FCL shows the amount of Universal Service Fund support that has been reserved for an applicant's discounted service.
- 10. HCP completes and submits Form 467 to RHCD.** After the HCP begins to receive services from the vendor, it submits Form 467 to RHCD. **The HCP must submit Form 467 to RHCD to receive discounted services. RHCD will not process Form 467 unless a Funding Commitment Letter has been issued to the HCP.**
- 11. RHCD reviews Form 467 and issues HCP Support Schedule** to the HCP and its vendor. At this point, the vendor can start to credit the HCP's bill with the monthly recurring support amount or issue a check for the discount.

Adapted from "Funding Year 2003 Process Overview," on the Universal Service Administrative Company, Rural Health Care Division web site, www.rhc.universalservice.org/overview/process_2003