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# Emergency Connectivity Fund FAQs

[Español \(/preguntas-frecuentes-sobre-el-fondo-de-emergencia-para-la-conectividad-ecf\)](#)

**A [Second ECF Application Window](https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-announces-over-5-billion-emergency-connectivity-fund-requests) (<https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-announces-over-5-billion-emergency-connectivity-fund-requests>) *Opened on Sept 28 and Will Run Until October 13***

## What Is the Emergency Connectivity Fund?

- The [Emergency Connectivity Fund](https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-connectivity-fund) (<https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-connectivity-fund>) is a \$7.17 billion program funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to help schools and libraries support remote learning. The Program will provide funding to schools and libraries for the reasonable costs of eligible equipment and services that can be provided to students, teachers, and library patrons who lack connected devices, such as laptop or tablet computers, and/or lack broadband access during the pandemic.
- The Federal Communications Commission unanimously adopted a Report and Order on May 10, 2021 establishing the rules and procedures for the [Emergency Connectivity Fund Program](https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-21-58A1.pdf) (<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-21-58A1.pdf>).
- The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is the program administrator.

## Common Misconceptions

**Misconception #1: Schools cannot apply for funds unless they have surveyed all parents to determine need.**

This is false. Schools need only provide best estimates of unmet need in applying for ECF support. It is up to the school to determine how to estimate need – a school can choose to use a survey but is not required to use one.

Download the [full list of Common Misconceptions](/sites/default/files/ecf_common_misconceptions.pdf) ([/sites/default/files/ecf\\_common\\_misconceptions.pdf](/sites/default/files/ecf_common_misconceptions.pdf)) (PDF).

Also, view and download the [entire list of ECF FAQs](/sites/default/files/ecf_faqs_printable_pdf.pdf) ([/sites/default/files/ecf\\_faqs\\_printable\\_pdf.pdf](/sites/default/files/ecf_faqs_printable_pdf.pdf)) (PDF).



## Who Is Eligible to Receive Funds Through the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program?

- Schools, libraries, and consortia of schools and libraries that are eligible for support under the [FCC's E-Rate program \(https://www.fcc.gov/general/e-rate-schools-libraries-usf-program\)](https://www.fcc.gov/general/e-rate-schools-libraries-usf-program), are eligible to request and receive support through the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.
- In addition, the Order clarifies that Tribal libraries, which are eligible for support under the Library Services and Technology Act, are also eligible for the Emergency Connectivity Fund.
- Schools and libraries eligible for the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program do not need to be current E-Rate participants. Eligible entities that have not applied for E-Rate support should be prepared to demonstrate eligibility as a school or library under the Program rules during USAC's application review.

### What Equipment and Services Are Covered by the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program?

- The following types of equipment purchased for off-campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons who would otherwise lack sufficient connectivity to engage in remote learning are eligible for support:
  - Laptop and tablet computers
  - Wi-Fi hotspots
  - Modems (including air cards)
  - Routers
  - Devices that combine a modem and router.
- Schools and libraries can also receive funding for commercially available broadband internet service that provides a fixed or mobile broadband connection for off-campus use by students, school staff, or library patrons who would otherwise lack access to connectivity sufficient to engage in remote learning.
- In limited circumstances where a school or library can demonstrate that there are no available service options sufficient to support remote learning for its students, school staff, or library patrons, the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program may support the construction of new networks and the equipment needed for datacasting services.
- Review the [Eligible Services List \(/sites/default/files/ecf\\_esl.pdf\)](/sites/default/files/ecf_esl.pdf) for additional guidance on the equipment and services eligible for funding under the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.

### How Can Schools or Libraries Apply?

- A [second ECF application filing window \(/document/fcc-announces-over-5-billion-emergency-connectivity-fund-requests\)](/document/fcc-announces-over-5-billion-emergency-connectivity-fund-requests) will open on September 28, 2021 and close on October 13, 2021. During this second filing window, eligible schools, libraries, and consortia of eligible



schools and libraries can submit requests for funding to purchase eligible equipment and services between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

- The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is the administrator of the ECF Program and will review applications.
- Interested schools and libraries can find more information and apply at [emergencyconnectivityfund.org](https://www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org) (<https://www.emergencyconnectivityfund.org/>)
- The initial ECF Program application filing window opened on June 29 and closed on August 13.
- Applications that were certified and submitted after the close of the initial application filing window on August 13, 2021 **will be reviewed and processed during the second application filing window**. Applicants will not be required to resubmit these applications during the second application filing window, nor will they need to file a request for waiver of the initial 45-day application filing deadline with the Commission.

You can view and download the entire FAQ list [here \(/sites/default/files/ecf\\_faqs\\_printable\\_pdf.pdf\)](#).

*New or updated questions are marked with an asterisk (\*) before the question.*

Eligible Entities

Eligible Equipment and Services

Eligible Locations

Eligible Uses

Reasonable Support Amounts

Unmet Needs

Application Process

Record Retention Requirements

Invoicing Process

Children's Internet Protection Act

Duplicative Funding

### 1.1 Q: If my school or library is eligible for E-Rate support, is it eligible for the ECF program?

A: Yes.

### 1.2 Q: Are private schools eligible?

A: Yes, private schools are eligible if they meet the definition of elementary or secondary schools as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7801(19) and (45)), are non-profit, and do not have an endowment exceeding \$50 million.

### 1.3 Q: Are Tribal libraries eligible?



A: Yes. Tribal libraries are eligible for support from the ECF program. Tribal libraries may demonstrate their eligibility by providing (1) documentation from an authorizing Tribal government entity (such as a charter or ordinance or letter from the Tribal Council), (2) documentation from an authorizing entity that shows that the applicant has characteristics of a library, including regular hours, staff, and materials, or (3) a signed letter from a state library agency.

#### **1.4 Q: Is a college library (e.g., a Tribal college library) eligible?**

A: No. A library's eligibility depends on its funding as an independent entity. Only libraries whose budgets are completely separate from any schools (including, but not limited to, elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities) are eligible.

#### **1.5 Q: Do I need a SAM.gov account if I am an annual E-Rate applicant?**

A: SAM.gov registration is necessary for all applicants and service providers that are submitting requests for reimbursement (FCC Forms 472/474) and receiving funds from the U.S. government. Because this is not currently required to participate in the E-Rate program, applicants, who are planning to submit requests for reimbursement (FCC Form 472) and have not registered before should begin the process now. Service providers that agree to invoice on behalf of applicants also need to be registered with SAM.gov. ECF applicants whose service providers will file invoices for ECF reimbursement on their behalf (SPI invoicing) are not required to register in SAM.gov.

#### **1.6 Q: Do you need to participate in E-Rate to participate in the ECF Program?**

A: No, you do not need to be a current (or future) E-rate participant to be eligible for the ECF Program.

#### **1.7 Q: Are home-schooled students eligible for ECF supported devices and services?**

A: When home-schooled students who lack access to eligible equipment or services are considered to be enrolled in public or non-profit private schools that provide elementary or secondary education, under the law of the applicable state, those schools can seek support from the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program for funding to provide such students with eligible equipment or services.

Similarly, eligible libraries could purchase eligible equipment or services for library patrons, including home-schooled students with an unmet need using ECF support.

