



Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554  
Office of Native Affairs and Policy

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**Date: September 17, 2024**

**Title: FCC Native News Digest-September 2024**

Greetings from the Federal Communications Commission.

To make it easy for Tribal Communities to engage with the FCC, we will be publishing a monthly digest with updates and reminders that may be of interest to Tribal leaders, governments, businesses and other organizations. This list is not comprehensive of all FCC deadlines, programs, and initiatives, but does represent items that the Office of Native Affairs thinks might be important to the communities that you serve.

Please visit the FCC's website at <https://www.fcc.gov/>, go to "Proposed FCC Rulemakings" at <https://www.fcc.gov/proposed-rulemakings> for more information, or reach out to ONAP at [Native@fcc.gov](mailto:Native@fcc.gov) with any questions. A copy of this news digest is available at [www.fcc.gov/Native](http://www.fcc.gov/Native).

### **NEWS AND REMINDERS**

#### **Lifeline Benefit for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Related Crimes**

- On September 10, 2024, the FCC announced the implementation of a key provision of the Safe Connections Act that will help survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and related crimes get discounted phone, internet, or bundled services through the FCC's Lifeline program. Survivors can now make a request with their service provider to separate their mobile phone lines from family plans where the abuser is on the account. Impacted survivors experiencing financial hardship can then receive up to six months of emergency Lifeline support. For more information, visit the Survivor Benefit page: [Survivor Benefit Page](#).

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#### **Cybersecurity Pilot Program for Schools and Libraries**

- On **September 17**, the FCC opened the application window for its Cybersecurity Pilot Program for Schools and Libraries. The Pilot will provide up to \$200 million in Universal Service funding to selected participants over a three-year term to purchase a wide variety of cybersecurity services and equipment. To target Pilot funds to the populations most in need of cybersecurity support, the Bureau will award support with an emphasis on funding proposed Pilot projects that include Tribal and low income applicants. The filing window opened on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 8 a.m. E.T., and closes on

Friday, November 1, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. E.T. For more information, visit the [Cybersecurity Pilot Program Website](#).

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### **Off-Premises Wi-Fi Hotspots and Mobile Services Newly Eligible for E-Rate Funding in Funding Year 2025**

- The FCC Form 470 for Funding Year 2025, which is used to start the competitive bidding process, the first step of the E-Rate application process, will be available starting **September 19, 2024** in [USAC's E-Rate Productivity Center](#) (EPC). The updated form will include options to request bids for newly eligible Wi-Fi hotspot devices and mobile wireless Internet services for off-premises use, as well as an option to seek bids for school bus Wi-Fi services and the equipment needed to make the services functional. For more information about the E-Rate program, visit USAC's [E-Rate website](#).

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### **Renewal of Public Safety Licenses with FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau**

- The Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) issued a reminder to part 90 and part 101 public safety licensees (Wireless Radio Services) to update their license contact information with an email address. Public Safety radio licenses must be renewed every ten years. There is no charge to renew a public safety radio license for governmental entities, but filing a renewal after the expiration date will require a waiver.

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### **FCC Adopts New Alert Code for Missing and Endangered Persons**

- This summer, the FCC voted unanimously to authorize the use of a three letter Missing and Endangered Persons (MEP) event code for alerts sent through the Emergency Alert System (EAS), to better and more widely disseminate information regarding missing and endangered persons across multiple jurisdictions. This rule change will be effective September 8, 2025. The FCC encourages Tribes to become Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) alert originators so that they can use the MEP code to send missing persons alerts rapidly across multiple jurisdictions.

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### **FCC Facilitates the Transition to Next Generation 911**

- In July, the FCC voted unanimously to adopt the first nationwide Next Generation 911 (NG911) transition rules. Besides expediting the deployment of NG911, this action will help first responders save lives and lead to faster call delivery and improved service reliability. When ready, 911 Authorities, which may be Tribal entities, will work

together with originating service providers to implement NG911 across the nation. As part of the transition, legacy 911 technology will be replaced with Internet Protocol-based infrastructure that will improve 911 interoperability, security, and system resilience, as well as lead to other advanced 911 capabilities.

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### **5G Fund to Target Investments in Rural Communities Using Improved Broadband Map**

- Through a reverse auction, the FCC will distribute up to \$9 billion, including a \$765 million Tribal reserve budget, to bring voice and 5G mobile broadband service to rural communities. Additionally, the 5G Fund includes up to \$900 million in incentives for incorporating Open RAN in 5G Fund-supported networks. The FCC will announce the expected start of the auction at a later date. The FCC is also requesting public comment on whether winning bidders in the 5G Fund Phase I auction must demonstrate they have obtained consent to deploy network facilities using its 5G Fund support on Tribal Lands. Comments are due on or before October 17, 2024; reply comments are due on or before November 1, 2024.

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### **FCC Adds Tribal Specific Entity Types to Certain Universal Licensing System (ULS) Forms**

- The FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau announced an enhancement to the Universal Licensing System (ULS) by adding Tribal specific entity types to certain ULS forms. This enhancement will improve identification of how and where Tribal Nations are directly accessing licensed wireless spectrum, and use of the new entity types will exempt applications filed by Tribal Nations and Tribally controlled business entities from related FCC Application Fees.

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### **FCC Lowers Phone & Video Call Rates for Incarcerated Persons**

- The FCC significantly lowered existing per-minute incarcerated people's communications services (IPCS) rate caps for out-of-state and international audio calls from any type of correctional facility, and applied those rate caps to in-state audio calls. And, for the first time, the FCC set interim per-minute rate caps for video communications, including video visitation. The new call rates will be \$0.06 per minute for prisons and large jails, \$0.07 for medium jails, \$0.09 for small jails, and \$0.12 for very small jails, and as low as \$0.11/minute for video calls – with a requirement that per-minute rates be offered.

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## OPEN COMMENT PERIODS

*Interested parties may file comments and reply comments on FCC proceedings through the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) at <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings>. Please check the docket number for the proceeding and refer to it in your submission.*

### **FCC Seeks Further Comment on Implementation of E-Rate Funding for Off-Premises Hotspots (WC Docket No 21-31)**

- The FCC seeks further comment on how to maximize use of E-Rate-supported Wi-Fi hotspots and services and ensure E-Rate-supported Wi-Fi hotspots do not introduce additional cybersecurity vulnerabilities. Comments are due on or before October 4, 2024, and reply comments are due on or before November 4, 2024.

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### **FCC Extends Comment Period on Enhancing the National Broadband Map (WC Docket No. 19-195, WC Docket No. 11-10)**

- The has granted a three-week extension of time to file comments and reply comments on a [Fourth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) that sought comment on modifications to enhance the precision of National Broadband Map. The FCC originally established deadlines as September 16, 2024, for comments and October 15, 2024, for reply comments. The dates to file comments and reply comments in this proceeding were extended to October 7, 2024, and November 5, 2024, respectively.

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### **FCC Seeks Comment on Tribal Consent Requirement as Part of 5G Fund Proceeding**

- As mentioned above, the FCC is requesting public comment on whether winning bidders in the 5G Fund Phase I auction must demonstrate they have obtained consent to deploy network facilities using its 5G Fund support on Tribal Lands. Comments are due on or before October 17, 2024; reply comments are due on or before November 1, 2024.

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## UPCOMING TRIBAL ENGAGEMENTS

### **NTIA 2024 Joint Cohort Summit: September 17–19**

- FCC staff from the Office of Native Affairs and Policy and the Broadband Data Task Force will be presenting at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) 2024 Joint Cohort Summit. The Summit will take place from September 17 - 19, 2024 at the Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront in Portland, Oregon.

[>>> More About this Event](#)

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