



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

Office of Native Affairs and Policy

From: Native <Native@fcc.gov>

Sent: Thursday, August 3, 2023 4:40 PM

To: Native-ITDirectors <native-itdirectors@info.fcc.gov>

Subject: FCC Gives Tribal Libraries Greater Access to E-Rate Program Funding

Greetings from the Federal Communications Commission's Office of Native Affairs and Policy.

In the Open Commission Meeting held on July 20, 2023 (<https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/events/2023/07/july-2023-open-commission-meeting>), the Commission adopted a Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Order) that provides Tribal communities and other E-Rate participants with greater access to the E-Rate program to provide high-speed internet to schools and libraries. The Order is available here: <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-bolsters-tribal-libraries-access-e-rate-program-funding>. A few of the major changes include:

- Allowing Tribal college and university libraries that also serve as the Tribal community's public library to be eligible for E-Rate support.
- Adopting a formal definition of "Tribal" within the E-Rate program to better identify Tribal applicants seeking E-Rate funding.
- Adding a Tribal community representative to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Board of Directors, which administers the program for the FCC.
- Directing USAC to provide increased outreach and training to Tribal applicants.

The Order builds upon the ongoing efforts to encourage increased Tribal library access to affordable broadband connectivity through the E-Rate program. The Order accompanies a Further Notice which seeks comment on additional ways to simplify the application process and other aspects of the E-Rate program.

Please also note that on **Thursday, August 10 at 2 pm EST**, FCC staff will join a webinar hosted by the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) and the American Library Association (ALA) to discuss these rule changes and how your library may be able to participate in the E-Rate program. Here is the link to register: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlpduGurT4qEtYXGN_kNAQDeVhBeQybFT8O#/registration

During the Open Commission Meeting, Chairwoman Rosenworcel also announced that the FCC is extending for an additional funding year, the Tribal Libraries Pilot Program, to provide one-on-one support for Tribal libraries seeking E-Rate support for equipment and services.

Please email the Office of Native Affairs and Policy at Native@fcc.gov with any questions or for more information about the Pilot Program.

Bambi Kraus

Chief

Office of Native Affairs and Policy

Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau