

# Get Started for Small Service Providers

## Affordable Connectivity Program

September 28, 2023



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Administrative Co.

# DISCLAIMER

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

# Housekeeping

- Audio is available through your computer's speakers
- The audience will remain on mute
- **Enter questions at any time using the “Questions” box**
  - We'll answer questions both verbally and through the questions feature
- If your audio or slides freeze, restart the webinar
- A copy of today's presentation is available in the handouts section

# Meet Our Team

**Elizabeth Dewey**

Communications Specialist | Lifeline

**Sarah Ferguson**

Senior Program Analyst | Lifeline

# Agenda

- Program Overview
- Register with SAM.gov
- Obtain an FCC Registration Number (FRN)
- FCC Approval Process
- ACP Election Process
- Stay Informed About the ACP

# Program Overview



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# Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) benefit program that helps low-income households pay for broadband service and connected internet devices

Eligible households can receive:



## **\$30 Standard Discount**

Up to \$30/month discount for broadband services



## **\$75 Tribal Discount**

Up to \$75/month discount for broadband services for households on qualifying Tribal lands



## **Device Discount**

A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet (consumer co-pay of \$10-\$50 required)

ACP benefit is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household

# Get Started in ACP

## Register with SAM.gov

- **Est. Time:** Allow up to **60 minutes** to complete a new registration
- Register with [SAM.gov](#)\* using this [guide](#)
- USAC cannot process reimbursement without an active SAM.gov registration

## Obtain an FRN

- **Est. Time:** Allow up to **15 minutes** to complete a new registration
- Obtain a [Federal Communications Commission Registration Number](#) (FRN)\*

## Get FCC Approval

- **Est. Time:** **1 – 3 business days** for approval
- Submit an application for [FCC approval](#) to participate in the program
  - Only applicable to non-ETCs; ETCs can submit their ETC designation directly to USAC with their election

## Submit Election Notice

- **Est. Time:** **10 minutes** to fill out; **3 – 5 days** to process
- Submit an ACP [election notice](#) to USAC

\*Service providers only need to register with SAM.gov and obtain an FRN once – if these steps were previously completed, service providers **do not** need to repeat them for the ACP



# Register with SAM.gov



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# Obtain a Unique Entity Identification (UEI) Number

- Register with [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) to obtain a Unique Entity Identification Number (UEI)
  - Registration is free
  - UEI is a 12-character alphanumeric ID used in SAM.gov to identify a unique entity
  - UEIs do not expire, but registrations must be updated and renewed annually to remain in “active registration” status
    - USAC will check to verify the UEI is active when reviewing a provider’s election notice
  - A UEI is required for the FCC approval process and to file an election notice

# Registering with SAM.gov

- When selecting the purpose of the registration select the “Financial Assistance Awards Only” option
- Use the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) to walk you through the process
- You will need the following information to get a UEI
  - Legal Business Name
  - Physical Address (A post office box may **NOT** be used as your physical address)
  - Date of Incorporation
  - State of Incorporation (Entities outside the U.S. may need to provide alternate information)
  - National Provider Identifier (NPI) – this is for Non-U.S. entities only

# Registering with SAM.gov

- You will need to create an account by clicking the “Sign In” button in the top right corner of the SAM.gov [home page](#)

Home Search Data Bank Data Services Help

**SAM.GOV®**

Official U.S. Government Website  
100% Free

**The Official U.S. Government System for:**

<b>Contract Opportunities</b> (was fbo.gov)	<b>Assistance Listings</b> (was cfda.gov)
<b>Contract Data</b> (Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)	<b>Entity Information</b> Entities, Disaster Response Registry, and Exclusions
<b>Wage Determinations</b> (was wdol.gov)	<b>Entity Reporting</b> SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting
<b>Federal Hierarchy</b> Departments and Subtiers	

**NEW** [Learn More](#)

**Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID**

Register your entity or get a Unique Entity ID to get started doing business with the federal government.

**Get Started**

**Renew Entity**

**Check Registration Status**


**Sign In**

# Registering with SAM.gov

- You will be taken to Login.gov to sign in
- If you have a login and password enter your email address and password, then click “Sign In”
- If you do **NOT** have a login and password scroll to the bottom of the page to create an account

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ✓

LOGIN.GOV | SAM.GOV®



sam.gov is using Login.gov to allow you to sign in to your account safely and securely.

**i** SAM.gov only recognizes one email address on Login.gov accounts. Adding email addresses to your Login.gov account [may cause your SAM.gov login to fail](#).

Sharing your Login.gov password or using someone else's Login.gov account violates the [rules of use](#).

Email address

Password  Show password

**Sign in**

Email address

Password  Show password

**Sign in**

**Create an account**

[Sign in with your government employee ID](#)

[Back to sam.gov](#)

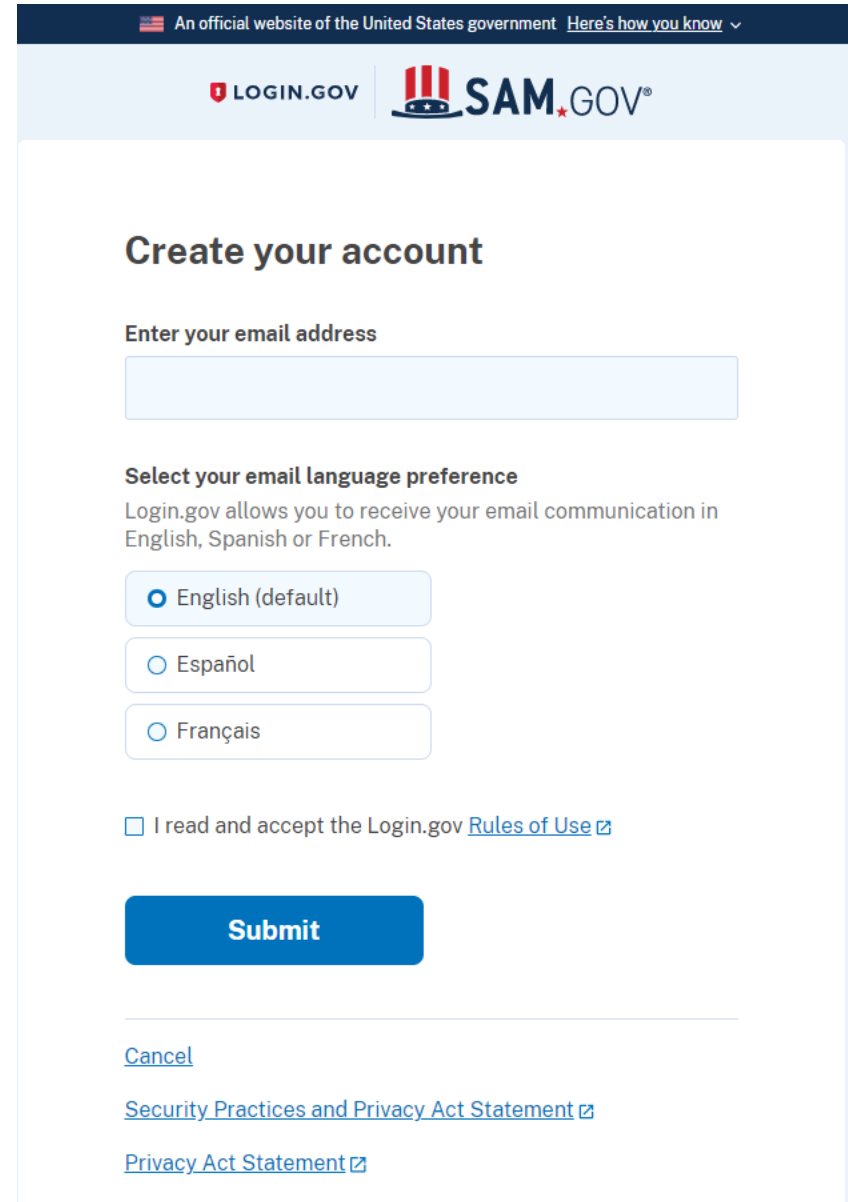
[Forgot your password?](#)

[Security Practices and Privacy Act Statement](#) ↗

[Privacy Act Statement](#) ↗

# Registering with SAM.gov

- Select “Create an Account”
  - Enter your email address
  - Select your email language preference
  - Review and accept Login.gov Rules of Use
  - Click Submit
- You will receive an email to validate the email address
- Follow the instructions in the email to continue the registration process
- Once you are logged in make sure you are on the “[Home](#)” page



The screenshot shows the SAM.gov registration page. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the text "An official website of the United States government" and a link "Here's how you know". Below this is a light blue navigation bar containing the "LOGIN.GOV" logo and the "SAM.GOV" logo. The main content area is white and features the heading "Create your account". Underneath, there is a section for "Enter your email address" with a text input field. Below that is a section for "Select your email language preference" with a brief description: "Login.gov allows you to receive your email communication in English, Spanish or French." There are three radio button options: "English (default)", "Español", and "Français". Below the language options is a checkbox for "I read and accept the Login.gov Rules of Use" with a link to the rules. A prominent blue "Submit" button is located below the checkbox. At the bottom of the form, there are three links: "Cancel", "Security Practices and Privacy Act Statement", and "Privacy Act Statement".

# Registering with SAM.gov

- Once you have finished creating an account, follow the instructions in the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) to complete the process
- The registration process will ask a series of questions about your entity
- Below are some examples of what will be asked while registering, but this list is not exhaustive:
  - Ownership Details
  - General Information
    - Country of Incorporation, State of Incorporation etc.
  - Financial Information
    - This is your standard Checking or Savings Account that accepts an ACH-EFT Credit; be certain that your bank provides the ACH-EFT ABA Routing Number for your account
    - No payments are issued by paper check, or WIRE Transfer



# Registering with SAM.gov

- Below are some examples of what will be asked while registering, but this list is not exhaustive:
  - Points of Contact (POCS) information
  - Size Metrics
    - Locations, number of employees etc.





# Registering with SAM.gov

- Service providers are solely responsible for keeping their financial/ACH-EFT information current within the system
- USAC recommends assigning at least two administrators to the registration
  - The admins should keep their accounts active by logging in every 30 days



# Registering with SAM.gov

- Can take up to 10 business days once you register for your registration to become active in SAM.gov
- Can check the status of your entity registration using the SAM.gov [status tracker](#)

## Check Entity Registration Status

This tool allows you to check the status of your entity registration.



**Non-federal users:** You may only check the registration status of entities linked to your SAM.gov account.

**Federal users:** If you need to view registrations that are not publicly available, use the **Search** link in the header menu of SAM.gov, while signed in.

### Sign In to Get Started

You must be signed in to check the status of your entity's registration.

Sign In

# Resources for Registering with SAM.gov

- Refer to the [Entity Registration Checklist](#)
- For help with the process visit the SAM.gov “[Help](#)” page
- To check the status of your registration use the SAM.gov [status tracker](#)

## Obtain an FRN

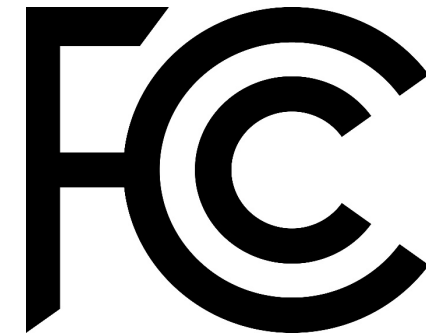


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# FCC Registration Number (FRN)

An FCC Registration Number (FRN) must be obtained by anyone doing business with the Commission

- The FRN is a 10 digit number which will be required for the FCC approval process and to file an election notice with USAC
- You must obtain an FCC Registration Number (FRN) using the FCC Commission Registration System ([CORES](#))
- If you do **NOT** have an account in CORES, you will need to set one up by creating a username and password





# Commission Registration System (CORES)

## FCC Registration

[FCC](#) > [FCC Registration](#) > [User Login](#)

< [FCC Site Map](#)

### FCC Registration - Login

You are accessing a U.S. Government Information System. Information system usage may be monitored, recorded, and subject to audit. Unauthorized use of the information system is prohibited and subject to criminal and civil penalties. Use of the information system indicates consent to monitoring and recording.

Welcome to the Commission REGistration System (CORES).

If you DO NOT have an FCC Username, please click the "REGISTER" button below to register an FCC Username.

CORES allows you to:

- Register and Manage the 10 digit FCC Registration Number (FRN).
- View financial standing (RED or Green Light Status) with the FCC and make payments.
- Retrieve payments awaiting completion.
- Enter and pay Application fees manually.
- Retrieve and pay ULS fees.
- File and pay annual Regulatory Fees.
- Manage Incentive Auction financials.

Click [Here](#) for CORES Tutorial Videos.

[News releases](#) related to the FCC Registration Number.

Username Login

*Note: The Username is the email address associated with your FCC Username Account.*

Username:

Password:

[LOG IN](#)

Need a Username?

[REGISTER](#)

Forgot/Reset your [Username Password?](#)

Check [Username Availability](#)

Search for public FRN information

[SEARCH](#)

# Timeline to get an FRN

- The registration process takes around 15 minutes to complete once you have created an account
- The below information will be asked while registering:
  - The name of the business
  - Type of business
  - Contact Information
  - Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)
    - For businesses this is an Employer Identification Number (EIN)
  - Password and personal security question/answer for your account

# Resources for Obtaining an FRN

- FCC page for [Getting an FCC Registration Number](#)
- FCC [FAQ page](#) for FCC Registration Numbers
- [CORES Tutorial Videos](#) are available to walk you through the process
  - Getting Started With the New CORES
  - How to Register an FRN
    - This video includes a step-by-step guide on how to navigate CORES
- Can call the CORES/FRN Help Line at (877) 480-3201 (Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET)



**Questions?**

# FCC Approval Process



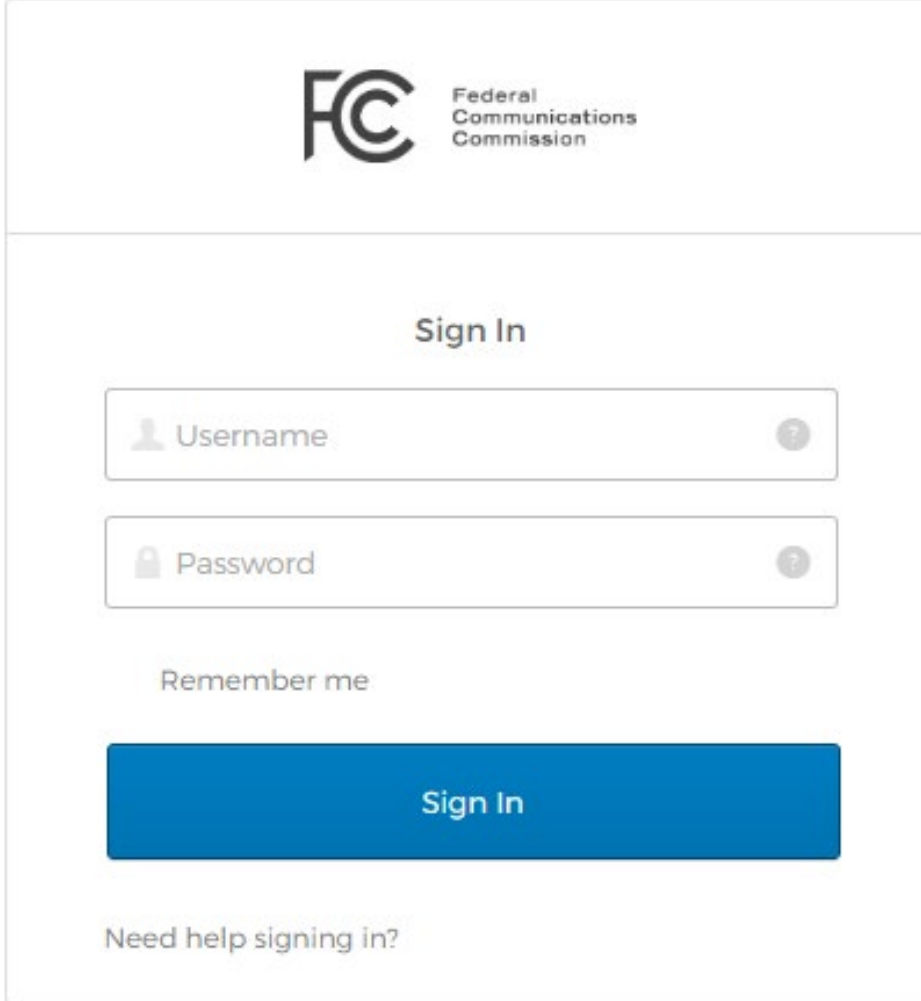
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# FCC Approval Process

- If your entity is designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC), then you do **NOT** have to go through the FCC approval process
  - You will need to send your ETC designation to USAC when filing an election notice
    - An ETC is designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier by either their respective state regulatory commission, or in some cases, by the FCC
- If your entity is **NOT** an ETC you must complete the FCC approval process
- Once you have started the application you can **NOT** save a draft
  - Prepare all the required materials before submitting the application

# How to Apply – Login

- Applications must be submitted through the FCC’s ACP Application [online portal](#)
  - Log into the system using your CORES username and password
- You can also access the application online by visiting the [Provider FCC Approvals](#) page
  - The “Submit an Application Online” button is at the bottom of the page



The screenshot shows the login interface for the FCC's ACP Application online portal. At the top left is the FCC logo (the letters 'FC' in a circle) and the text 'Federal Communications Commission'. Below this is a 'Sign In' heading. There are two input fields: the first is labeled 'Username' with a person icon on the left and a question mark icon on the right; the second is labeled 'Password' with a lock icon on the left and a question mark icon on the right. Below the password field is a 'Remember me' checkbox. A large blue button with the text 'Sign In' is positioned below the checkbox. At the bottom of the form is a link that says 'Need help signing in?'.

# How to Apply – Start an Application

- After you log in you will be directed the ACP landing page
  - To begin an application, click the “Start a New Application” button

## Affordable Connectivity Program

Information on the Affordable Connectivity Program and how to file an application can be found here:

- [Filing Instructions](#)
- [FCC EBB Program & Affordable Connectivity Program webpage](#)

In order to file an application, each applicant must obtain an FCC Registration Number (FRN) from Commission Registration System (CORES).

If you have questions, please email [EBBprovider@fcc.gov](mailto:EBBprovider@fcc.gov).

[Privacy Act Notice](#)

[Start a New Application →](#)

### Applications

Submitted **2**

Need More Information **0**

Completed **23**

# How to Apply – Enter Company and Contact Information

- Company Information
  - Legal Entity Name
  - FCC Registration Number (FRN)
  - Holding Company
  - Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
  - Jurisdiction(s) Seeking Approval–applicants can select multiple choices
  - Address
- Company Contact Information
  - Contact name (First and Last) for the individual that will be responsible for the application
  - Phone number
  - Email address

\*More detail on these fields is available on page 11 of the [ACP Provider Application Instructions](#)

# How to Apply - Enter Company and Contact Information

## Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Broadband service providers should complete this form to obtain FCC approval to participate in the ACP.

The purpose of this form is to allow broadband service providers to submit an application to participate in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Providers deemed eligible to participate in the ACP will need to submit a separate election to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) prior to being able to receive reimbursement for providing discounts to eligible households during the emergency period related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Provider eligibility for the ACP will be determined only after successful submission of this form. Once your application has been reviewed and processed, you will receive an email notification with your FCC approval determination. A member of the FCC may reach out to you for additional information during the review process.

### Company Information

\* Legal Entity Name

\* FRN

### Company Contact Information

\* First Name

\* Last Name

# How to Apply - Enter Company and Contact Information

\* Holding Company

\* Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

\* Jurisdiction(s) Seeking Approval

Address

\* Street

\* City

\* Phone Number

\* Email

\* State

 ▼

\* Zip Code



# How to Apply – Service Provider Eligibility Questions

- Any broadband provider wishing to participate in the ACP must show an FCC Form 477 filing demonstrating it provided broadband service:
  - Providers that file FCC Form 477 should reference the most recent filing that shows broadband service in the jurisdiction
  - For providers that have not filed FCC Form 477, they should provide other documentation or certification from an authorized employee or representation demonstrating end-user broadband service was offered
    - This can include redacted subscriber bills, publicly available broadband advertising, broadband resale agreements and similar documentation showing the applicant offers end-user broadband service

# How to Apply – Service Provider Eligibility Questions

- Demonstration of authority to operate in the jurisdiction(s)
  - A provider seeking FCC approval to participate in the program must list each jurisdiction in which it seeks to be approved to offer ACP services
  - Providers only need to identify the state or territory where it plans to offer ACP service
  - Providers must submit documentation showing their authority to operate in a jurisdiction
    - Ex. Certificate of public convenience and necessity, annual filings to regulators, certificate of good standing, articles of incorporation, or any similar document showing they can provide broadband service in the jurisdiction

# How to Apply – Certification Statements and Signature Statement

- Once all the eligibility questions are complete and supporting documentation has been uploaded you must complete the certification statements
- Read all the certifications and check the required boxes
- Enter the required fields to complete the signature statement section
- When finished select “Submit” on the right side of the page

# How to Apply – Certification Statements and Signature Statement

## Certification Statements

- \*  The Applicant consents to the disclosure of the information included in this application, including the company contact information, with third-parties administering the Affordable Connectivity Program on behalf of the FCC.
- \*  The Applicant certifies and acknowledges, under penalty of perjury, that if approved will comply with all applicable ACP rules, requirements and procedures, including waste, fraud, and abuse protections. Specifically:
  - The provider will confirm a subscriber's eligibility through either the National Verifier or a Commission-approved eligibility verification process prior to seeking reimbursement for the respective subscriber.
  - The provider will follow all enrollment processes and obtain all certifications as required by the ACP. This includes providing eligible households with information describing the Program's eligibility requirements, one-per-household rule, and enrollment procedures.
  - The provider will interact with the necessary USAC databases including the National Verifier, NLAD, and RAD before submitting claims for reimbursement. This includes the necessary checks to ensure the household is not receiving duplicative benefits.
  - The provider will de-enroll any household it has a reasonable basis to believe is no longer eligible to receive the benefit consistent with ACP requirements.
  - The provider will comply with the ACP's document retention requirements and will make such documentation available as requested to the Commission or USAC.
- \*  The Applicant certifies and acknowledges, under penalty of perjury:
  - That it will comply with all applicable federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the False Claims Act, the Anti-Kickback Statute and the Civil Monetary Penalties Law.
- \*  The Applicant certifies and acknowledges, under penalty of perjury:
  - That neither the Applicant nor any other party to the Application is subject to a denial of Federal benefits that includes FCC benefits pursuant to Section 5301 of the Anti-Drug Act of 1988, 21 U.S.C. § Section 862, because of a conviction for possession or distribution of a controlled substance. See 47 CFR § 1.2002(b) for the meaning of "party to the application" for these purposes.
- \*  The Applicant certifies and acknowledges, under penalty of perjury:
  - That all of its statements made in this application and in the attachments or documents incorporated by reference are material, are part of this application, and are true, complete, correct, and made in good faith.

## Signature Statement

I, the individual identified as the applicant's certifying representative below, am authorized to make these certifications on behalf of the applicant and declare under penalty of perjury that, based on all the information available to the applicant, all the information provided in or with this application, including the certification statements above, are true and correct.

\* Name of Filer

\* Title

\* Signature

Date

2021-03-04

\* Title

Date

2021-03-04

Submit

# Common Mistakes – FCC Approval Process

- Providers will need to monitor notifications from the system regarding follow-up documentation requests
  - The email associated with the CORES account and the contact email listed in the application will receive email notifications
- If the documentation is difficult to understand a short (1-2 page) narrative may be required to clarify and solve and reviewer questions

# Timeline to Complete FCC Approval Process

- On average it takes less than an hour to complete the application
  - It's important that all the documentation is gathered beforehand
  - Follow the [ACP Provider Application Instructions](#) and review the [Provider FCC Approval](#) page before starting the application
- If the application is complete, it will be reviewed and approved in 1-3 business days

# Resources for FCC Approval Process

- Follow the [ACP Provider Application Instructions](#)
- Review the [Provider FCC Approvals](#) page
- Review the [FAQ page](#) for the application process
  - What do I need in order to apply?
  - How do I confirm that my application was received and is being reviewed?

**Questions?**



# ACP Election Process



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# Submit ACP Election Notice and Documentation

Submit an ACP [election notice](#) and documentation including:

- FCC approval of your company's participation in the ACP (required for non-ETCs and ETCs that wish to participate in states outside their ETC designation)
- ETC designation(s) (required for ETCs)
- Connected device documentation (if applicable)
  - Review USAC's [Participate in ACP](#) page to find more information about connected devices
  - All service providers who offer a connected device must complete the [ACP Device Information Form](#)

# Filing an Election Notice

When filing an election notice:

- Refer to the ACP Election Form [Instructions](#)
- Read all sections of the form
- Fields are clickable within the pdf
  - Some have hyperlinks to share what information is needed
- All fields must be completed unless noted as “if applicable”
  - If the form is incomplete this will delay processing
- The FRN, Employer Identification Number(EIN)/Tax Identification Number (TIN) should all be associated with the same entity filing the election notice

# Filing an Election Notice

When filing an election notice:

- The DBA (doing business as) name entered on the election form will be the name that is listed on the [Companies Near Me](#) (CNM) Tool
  - The CNM tool helps consumer find service providers who participate in the program
  - If the DBA name field is left blank USAC will use the name listed in the Provider Name field
- Email the completed form and all required documentation to [ACProgram@usac.org](mailto:ACProgram@usac.org) with the subject line “ACP Election Form”

# Common Election Notice Mistakes

1. Make sure that your SAM registration status is active
  - USAC will be unable to process your election if your SAM registration is not active
  - Check to see if your registration is active using the SAM.gov [status tracker](#)
    - If your status says “Submitted” your application has been received but is still under review
    - SAM.gov will reach out to you by email when you have an “Active” status
  - USAC may ask for a SAM.gov screenshot showing your registration is active

## Entity Information

Entity Information

• Active Registration

Unique Entity ID

Your registration was activated on [redacted] which is one year after you submitted it for processing.

Core Data Completed

Assertions Completed

Reps & Certs Completed

POCs Completed

Submit Completed

Processing Completed

Active Completed

# Common Election Notice Mistakes

## 2. Include your FCC approval number if you are a non-ETC

- If you are a non-ETC or a provider expanding your service area to a new jurisdiction, you must list your FCC approval number
- All FCC approval numbers begin with EBBA000 followed by a four-digit number
- Once your FCC application to participate is approved, you will receive an approval letter by email from the FCC that includes the number next to where it says “Application Number”

## 3. Include a valid signature at the end of your election notice

- A valid signature for your election notice can be hand signed OR a valid digital/electronic signature

# Timeline to File an Election Notice

- If all of the documentation/information is prepared it will take around 10 minutes to fill out the election form
- If a fully complete election is submitted with no errors, it will take USAC up to 3-5 days to process
  - If the form is not completed correctly USAC will reach out to resolve any errors on the election form
  - If the form is missing information the processing will be delayed

# Resources for Filing an Election Notice

- Review USAC's [Participate in ACP](#) page
- ACP Service Provider [Election Form](#)
- ACP Election Form [Instructions](#)
- Email [ACPProgram@usac.org](mailto:ACPProgram@usac.org) with any questions about the form or the election notice process
  - Use the subject line “Election Form Question”



**Questions?**

## Stay Informed about the ACP

- For service providers:
  - Visit [USAC.org](https://www.usac.org) to follow ACP updates
  - Sign up for the [USAC ACP Outreach List](#) to:
    - Receive ACP email updates
    - Learn about [ACP trainings](#)
  - Visit <https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program> for information about the provider application process
  - Visit our [Community Resources](#) page for consumer outreach materials
- For consumers:
  - Visit [AffordableConnectivity.gov](https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov) to find consumer information and resources

**Thank You!**





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