ACP - June 2023 Newsletter

June 30, 2023

ACP Recertification

ACP Recertification began on June 27. Recertification is an annual requirement for Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) subscribers. Service providers with FCC-approved alternative verification processes or that use a school-based eligibility verification process for the Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch or School Breakfast Program must conduct recertification for those subscribers that are qualified through those methods. For all other ACP subscribers, USAC conducts recertification to ensure that ACP subscribers are still eligible for the benefit. Subscribers who participate in Lifeline and ACP that pass the USAC-conducted Lifeline recertification process will not need to undergo a separate ACP recertification process.

For more information on ACP recertification, please refer to the training USAC hosted on June 6 or the bulletin that was released on May 18. A detailed overview of the recertification process can also be found on USAC's website.

June Enhancements to the Online Consumer Application

In June, USAC released enhancements to the online consumer application to make the application and enrollment process easier for consumers. These changes build upon updates released in previous months and incorporate feedback from navigators and other stakeholders. USAC and the FCC will continue making improvements to the ACP system based on future feedback.

Proof of Eligibility Updates Released on June 29
On June 29, USAC released a simplified experience for consumers who need to provide proof of their eligibility. Consumers will now be asked if they have a document that shows their income **before being asked about their eligibility via a qualifying program**. If consumers have appropriate income documentation, they will be asked to answer a few questions about the size of their household and their annual income before getting to a new "Share proof of your income" page. This new page helps consumers understand the document requirements, common examples of acceptable documentation, how to upload documents, and what to do if they don't have proof of their income.

These changes were implemented based on USAC's understanding of how consumers most successfully complete their application, and they will offer a quicker path to uploading documentation for many. Visit our Community Resources page for the latest screenshots of the online consumer application.

New Enrollment Reminders Released on June 7
Consumers who qualify for the ACP will receive additional emails reminding them to contact an internet provider to get enrolled and start receiving their benefit. After a consumer's application is approved, they will receive up to four reminders if they have yet to enroll. These reminders will go out 3, 10, and 25 days after a consumer's application is approved and a final reminder will go out one week before their application expires.

Hidden CAPTCHA Released on June 7

The CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart) on the National Verifier portal has been updated so users no longer select the "I'm not a robot" checkbox or answer questions to indicate they are not a robot.

This enhancement reduces the steps a consumer must take to sign into their account and complete their online application. Service providers also no longer complete a CAPTCHA to enter the National Verifier portal.

Updates to Companies Near Me Tool

On June 29, USAC released updates to the Companies Near Me tool to make it easier for consumers to find providers in their area. Consumers have the option to filter the results by type of service (home internet vs. mobile internet) and provider offers ($0 with ACP and Device Discounts).

Updates to Acceptable Documentation Guide

On June 9, USAC released updates to the English version of the Acceptable Documentation Guide to make it easier for consumers to understand what documents they may need to provide when they apply for the ACP. The language and formatting have been simplified to help consumers understand the document requirements and common examples of acceptable documentation to confirm their eligibility, identity, or address.

An updated Spanish version of the acceptable documentation guide is coming soon.

Connected Device Selections

Since October 2022, providers have been required to select a device from a drop-down menu when adding a device to a subscriber record in the NLAD staging environment. This drop-down menu includes the device make, model, and model number fields. Providers can refer to the September 2022 Newsletter for further details on the device selection functionality. On June 7, the NLAD staging environment also began requiring providers to populate device market rate on transactions that involve a subscriber with a device.

On June 29, the NLAD production environment was updated and now requires providers to select the device from a dropdown menu and requires market value to be populated. When providers add or issue a device to a subscriber record in NLAD, they must select the device from a drop-down menu that contains device offerings, and this pre-populates with specifications based on the selected device and the service provider's device submission forms. They will also input the market value amount of the device they are issuing, since this field is required, however, it will not be pre-populated with an amount.

These device fields are now required for every transaction (enroll, transfer, update, etc.) in which a device is issued to a subscriber.

For more information on connected device selections, please refer to the May 2023 Newsletter.

New Device Eligibility Lookup Tool in ACP NLAD

On June 8, USAC released a new device eligibility lookup tool in the National Lifeline Accountability Database (NLAD). Service providers can use the tool to verify existing or prospective subscribers' eligibility for the one-time device benefit offered through the ACP.

This feature is available in the ACP NLAD user interface under the **ACP Subscriber Management** section or the ACP NLAD API through the new **Verify Device Eligibility** web service. To determine if a consumer is eligible to receive a device benefit, service providers must provide the consumer's personally identifiable information (PII). Upon a successful search, the service providers will receive a response stating whether the consumer is eligible to receive the device benefit. If the consumer is not eligible for a device, the response will include the date the consumer originally received a device.

ACP Support Center P.O. Box Transition

USAC reminds service providers that the ACP and Lifeline Support Centers have transitioned their P.O. Box mailing address for both the ACP and Lifeline to a new address. Mail sent to the old P.O. Box mailing address will continue to be forwarded for a period to ensure that there is no interruption in application/document processing. However, service providers should use the new P.O. Box.

New P.O. Box mailing address:
ACP Support Center
PO Box 9100
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18773-9100

USAC has released updated versions of the ACP application and recertification forms, with the new P.O. Box mailing address, on our website. The new P.O. Box has also been updated on all USAC web content. Service providers should also update their consumer outreach materials to reflect the new address of the current ACP and Lifeline Support Centers. For more information, please refer to the bulletin USAC released on March 28.

Claims for December 2022 Data Month Due by July 3

Providers must submit and certify original claims or revisions for the December 2022 data month (snapshot taken on January 1, 2023) by **11:59 p.m. ET on July 3, 2023**. As a reminder, the 6-month filing period for claims began with the March 2022 data month. Original claims or upward revisions submitted or certified after 11:59 p.m. ET on July 3, 2023, for the December 2022 data month will not be accepted. For more information on the claims deadline, providers can refer to the bulletin USAC released on September 15.

Outreach & Trainings
USAC will continue to distribute bulletins and conduct trainings to help service providers and other program participants understand all ACP Orders and their effect on current and new program processes. USAC will also continue to update its ACP service provider web content to reflect updated ACP rules and processes. Find upcoming trainings and other resources on the ACP Learn page on USAC's website.

Need Help? Contact Us!
For questions about the Affordable Connectivity Program, service providers can visit USAC.org, and consumers should visit AffordableConnectivity.gov. Consumers can apply for the ACP at GetInternet.gov, and Spanish speaking consumers can apply at AccedeaInternet.gov. For general program support, service providers should email ACProgram@usac.org and consumers should email ACPSupport@usac.org. Both providers and consumers may also call the ACP Support Center at (877) 384-2575 for assistance.