Affordable Connectivity Program – Enhancements to the Online Consumer Application

June 8, 2023

Thanks to our collective efforts, the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is now reaching over 18.5 million households.

On May 22 and June 7, 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 recent months.

These changes incorporate feedback from navigators and other stakeholders, and USAC and the FCC will continue making improvements to the ACP system based on future feedback.

Enhancements Released on May 22

New Connection with the U.S. Department of Education
On May 22, 2023, the FCC and USAC implemented a new federal connection with the U.S. Department of Education to verify an applicant's participation in the Federal Pell Grant program. An ACP applicant who received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year and who applies online through the National Verifier may now benefit from this connection. Consumers that select the "Federal Pell Grant" for their qualifying program will be asked to complete additional consent required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is required to check their information against the connection with the Department of Education. Consumers will complete the FERPA consent on the "Review your information" page of the online application.

Simplified Household Certifications – Initials No Longer Required
If a consumer's address is identified as already receiving the ACP benefit, they will be asked to answer questions about their household to determine if the household qualifies for more than one benefit. The language for the household certification statements has been simplified so that it is easier for consumers to understand. With this enhancement, consumers will only have to sign to affirm they agree to the statements regarding eligibility.

Updates to "Pending Review" Page
The language on the "Pending Review" page has been streamlined so that it's clear to consumers what happens after they submit their documentation. The revised pending review page explains that we are reviewing a consumer's documents and provides information on how long reviews typically take and how we will notify them when the review is complete.

Take a Photo
Consumers accessing the online application through a mobile device are now prompted to take a photo instead of being asked to choose a file on relevant document upload pages.

Enhancements Released on June 7

New Enrollment Reminders
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
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-in to their account and complete their online application. Service providers also no longer complete a CAPTCHA to enter the National Verifier portal.

Training & Resources
Find upcoming trainings and other resources on the ACP Learn page on USAC's website.

To make sure you are receiving the latest information, please sign up for USAC's newsletter and, if you would like to be an outreach partner, sign up at fcc.gov/acp.

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.