



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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## WIRELINER COMPETITION BUREAU ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF UNUSED FUNDS TO INCREASE RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM FUNDING FOR FUNDING YEAR 2019

### WC Docket No. 02-60

In June 2018, the Commission adopted rules to address increasing demand in the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the Commission: (1) increased the annual RHC Program funding cap; (2) provided for the annual RHC Program funding cap to be adjusted for inflation;<sup>2</sup> and (3) established a process to carry-forward unused funds from past funding years for use in future funding years.<sup>3</sup> The Commission also directed the Wireline Competition Bureau to announce a specific amount of unused funds from prior funding years to be carried forward to increase available funding for future funding years.<sup>4</sup>

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) projects that, as of the third quarter of this calendar year, \$83.22 million in unused funds is available for use in future funding years beginning in funding year (FY) 2019.<sup>5</sup> Pursuant to the Commission's direction and section 54.675(a)(4)-(5) of the Commission's rules, we direct USAC to carry-forward unused funds from prior funding years to the extent necessary to cover FY 2019 RHC Program demand as of the close of the FY 2019 filing window on June 30, 2019.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Promoting Telehealth In Rural America*, WC Docket No. 02-60, Order, 33 FCC Rcd 6574 (2018) (*RHC Program Funding Cap Order*).

<sup>2</sup> The RHC Program funding year runs from July 1 to June 30.

<sup>3</sup> 47 CFR § 54.675(a).

<sup>4</sup> *RHC Program Funding Cap Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 6584-85, para. 27 ("The Bureau will announce the availability and amount of carryover funds during the second quarter of the calendar year."); 47 CFR § 54.675(a)(5).

<sup>5</sup> See USAC, Federal Universal Service Support Mechanisms Fund Size Projections for Third Quarter 2019 (May 2, 2019), [https://www.usac.org/about/tools/fcc/filings/2019/q3/USAC%20Q2019%20Federal%20Universal%20Service%20Mechanism%20Quarterly%20Demand%20Filing\\_Final.pdf](https://www.usac.org/about/tools/fcc/filings/2019/q3/USAC%20Q2019%20Federal%20Universal%20Service%20Mechanism%20Quarterly%20Demand%20Filing_Final.pdf), at 24-30.

<sup>6</sup> 47 CFR § 54.675(a)(4)-(5).

The RHC Program funding cap for FY 2019 is \$594,066,116, which represents a 2.2% inflation-adjusted increase from the \$581,278,000 funding cap for FY 2018.<sup>7</sup>

For further information, please contact William Layton, Wireline Competition Bureau at (202) 418-7400 or TTY (202) 418-0484.

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<sup>7</sup> Due to an administrative error, the RHC Program FY 2019 funding cap previously announced by the Bureau was underreported by \$284,116. See *Wireline Competition Bureau Announces E-Rate and RHC Programs' Inflation-Based Caps for Funding Year 2019*, CC Docket No. 02-6, WC Docket No. 02-60, Public Notice, 2019 WL 1123173 (2019).