



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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## WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU RELEASES THE 2021 TELECOMMUNICATIONS REPORTING WORKSHEETS AND ACCOMPANYING INSTRUCTIONS

WC Docket No. 06-122

The Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces the release of the (1) annual Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet, FCC Form 499-A (FCC Form 499-A) and accompanying instructions (FCC Form 499-A Instructions) to be used in 2021 to report 2020 revenues,<sup>1</sup> and (2) quarterly Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet, FCC Form 499-Q (FCC Form 499-Q) and accompanying instructions (FCC Form 499-Q Instructions) to be used in 2021 to report projected and collected revenues on a quarterly basis.<sup>2</sup>

The Bureau has delegated authority to revise the FCC Forms and accompanying instructions to, among other things, ensure “sound and efficient administration of the universal service programs.”<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> The Communications Act of 1934 (Act), as amended, requires that the Commission establish mechanisms to fund universal service, interstate telecommunications relay services, the administration of the North American Numbering Plan, and the shared costs of local number portability administration. 47 U.S.C. §§ 151, 225, 251, 254. To accomplish these congressionally-directed objectives, the Commission requires telecommunications carriers and certain other providers of telecommunications (including Voice-over-Internet-Protocol (VoIP) service providers) to report each year on the FCC Form 499-A the revenues they receive from offering service. See 47 CFR §§ 52.17(b), 52.32(b), 54.708, 54.711, 64.604(b)(5)(iii)(B). The FCC Form 499-A is due on April 1 of each year. See Universal Service Administrative Company Schedule of Filings, <https://www.usac.org/service-providers/contributing-to-the-usf/when-to-file/> (last visited Nov. 10, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Sections 54.706, 54.711, and 54.713 of the Commission’s rules require all telecommunications carriers providing interstate telecommunications services, interconnected VoIP providers that provide interstate telecommunications, providers of interstate telecommunications that offer interstate telecommunications for a fee on a non-common carrier basis, and payphone providers that are aggregators to contribute to the universal service fund and file a FCC Form 499-Q on February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1 each year. 47 CFR §§ 54.706, 54.711, 54.713.

<sup>3</sup> *Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-21, Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration, 12 FCC Rcd 18400, 18442, para. 81 (1997) (“Because it is difficult to determine in advance precisely the information that will be needed to administer the new universal service programs, the [Common Carrier, now Wireline Competition] Bureau will have delegated authority to waive, reduce, or eliminate contributor reporting requirements that may prove unnecessary. The Bureau also will have delegated authority to require any additional contributor reporting requirements necessary to the sound and efficient administration of the universal service programs.”). Consistent with this authority, the Bureau annually revises the Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet Instructions to provide instructions and guidance for complying with existing rules and requirements. See 47 CFR § 54.711(c). The FCC Forms and accompanying instructions are modified based on experience in administering the universal service program and explicit rulings by the Commission. See, e.g., *Universal Service Contribution Methodology et al.*, WC Docket No. 06-122 et al., Report and Order and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 21 FCC Rcd 7518, 7533-50, paras. 24-62 (2006).

Bureau sought comment on the proposed revisions by Public Notice.<sup>4</sup> The Bureau submitted an extension without change of the information collection for the FCC Forms and the accompanying instructions (collection 3060-0855) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval pursuant to 44 U.S.C. § 3507 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.<sup>5</sup> This information collection was approved by OMB on November 4, 2020.<sup>6</sup>

The revisions to the 2021 FCC Forms 499-A and 499-Q and the accompanying instructions, as applicable, are summarized below. The revised FCC Forms and the accompanying instructions are also attached to this Public Notice for informational purposes only and will be available soon on Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) website at <https://www.usac.org/service-providers/contributing-to-the-usf/forms-to-file/>.

Changes to the 2021 FCC Form 499-A and FCC Form 499-Q, where applicable, and instructions:

- **Date Changes:** Dates were updated throughout the FCC Forms and instructions. References to "2020" were changed to "2021" and references to "2019" were changed to "2020."
- **Circularity Factor Update:** The circularity factor was adjusted and updated in the FCC Form 499-A and the FCC Form 499-Q instructions based upon the quarterly contribution factors.
- **Clarifications and Stylistic Changes:** In a number of instances, additional clarifications were made, and minor stylistic changes, such as typos and spacing, were corrected in the FCC Forms 499-A and 499-Q instructions, without changing the substance.

Updates to the 2021 FCC Form 499-A Instructions:

- **Clarifications:**
  - Page 32 was updated to clarify that SMS and MMS messaging are information services.<sup>7</sup>
  - Page 43 was updated to accommodate USAC's E-file system configuration requirements.

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For further information, please contact Veronica Garcia-Ulloa, Telecommunications Access

<sup>4</sup> *Wireline Competition Bureau Seeks Comment on Proposed Changes to the 2021 FCC Form 499-A, FCC Form 499-Q, and Accompanying Instructions*, Public Notice, DA 20-426 (rel. Apr. 17, 2020) (*2021 Form 499 Public Notice*).

<sup>5</sup> See OMB Website, OMB Control Number History, <http://reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAOMBHistory?ombControlNumber=3060-0855> (ICR Reference Number 202002-3060-025) (last visited Nov. 10, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> See Notice of Office of Management and Budget Action (NOA) (dated Nov. 4, 2020), <http://reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAOMBHistory?ombControlNumber=3060-0855> (ICR Reference Number 202002-3060-025) (last visited Nov. 10, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> *Petitions for Declaratory Ruling on Regulatory Status of Wireless Messaging Service*, Declaratory Ruling, 33 FCC Rcd 12075 (2018).

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**Attachments:**

Attachment A: 2021 FCC Form 499-A

Attachment B: 2021 FCC Form 499-A Instructions

Attachment C: 2021 FCC Form 499-Q

Attachment D: 2021 FCC Form 499-Q Instructions

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