PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU ANNOUNCES APPLICATION WINDOW FOR BOTH THE YOUR HOME, YOUR INTERNET AND AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM NAVIGATOR PILOT PROGRAMS

WC Docket No. 21-450

By this Public Notice, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces that the Your Home, Your Internet and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Navigator Pilot Programs (collectively, Pilot Programs) application filing window will open November 21, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) and will close on January 9, 2023, at 9:00 p.m. EST. This Public Notice also provides additional information on the application process for the Pilot Programs.

Background

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) program that provides a discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households. Eligible households can receive a discount of up to $30 per month for broadband service and associated equipment rentals (or up to $75 per month discount for households on Tribal lands) and a one-time discount of up to $100 for a laptop, desktop, or tablet purchased through a participating provider, with a consumer co-pay of more than $10 but less than $50.

The FCC created two pilot programs—the Your Home, Your Internet Pilot Program and the ACP Navigator Pilot Program—to increase awareness of and facilitate enrollment in the Affordable Connectivity Program and to provide consumers assistance with ACP applications. The Your Home, Your Internet Pilot Program seeks to increase ACP awareness specifically among recipients of federal housing assistance[1] and to facilitate enrollment in the program by providing targeted assistance with completion of the ACP application.[2] The ACP Navigator Pilot Program will provide trusted, neutral third-party entities such as schools, school districts, or other local, state, or Tribal governmental entities with access to the National Verifier for purposes of assisting customers with applying for the Affordable Connectivity Program.[3]

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[1] Federal public housing assistance recipients include recipients of Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program (Section 8 Vouchers); Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)/Section 202/Section 811; Public Housing; and Affordable Housing Programs for American Indians, Alaska Natives or Native Hawaiians. *Affordable Connectivity Program,* WC Docket No. 21-450, Third Report and Order, FCC 22-64, at 5, para. 11 (2022) (*Your Home, Your Internet Order*).

[2] *Your Home, Your Internet Order* at 11-17, paras. 27-40.

[3] *Affordable Connectivity Program*, WC Docket Nos. 21-450, 20-445, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 22-2, at 37, para. 70 (2022) (*ACP Order*).

Application Deadline and Process for Submitting Pilot Programs Applications

The FCC seeks Pilot Programs applications from a broad range of eligible entities and diverse geographic regions. To be considered for the Pilot Programs, applicants must timely and properly submit an application in compliance with the application procedures and Pilot Program rules and requirements. The application window opens on November 21, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. EST and will close on January 9, 2023, at 9:00 p.m. EST. Applications will only be accepted in the Affordable Connectivity Pilot Programs Applications Portal, which is available at https://forms.universalservice.org/portal/login.

To complete an application, applicants will first need to register for the Affordable Connectivity Pilot Programs Application Portal at https://forms.universalservice.org/acppilotprograms/register. Registration will open on November 21, at 10:00 a.m. EST. Detailed information on the registration process will be included in the Pilot Programs application instructions, which will be posted at https://www.fcc.gov/acp-pilots. After completing the registration process, to start an application, applicants will log into the application portal at https://forms.universalservice.org/portal/login.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications as soon as possible after the window opens to ensure that they are able to complete and submit accurate applications before the close of the application filing window on January 9, 2023. Applicants bear full responsibility for submitting complete, accurate, and timely filed applications.[4]

Completing the Application

There is a single application for both Pilot Programs. Applicants may apply to one or both of the Pilot Programs at the same time. Some of the application questions will vary depending on the Pilot Program(s) for which the applicant is applying. The Bureau last month released a Public Notice describing the types of information applicants must provide in the Pilot Programs application.[5] In addition, detailed instructions for completing the application, a video walk-through of the application, and answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Pilot Programs will be posted at https://www.fcc.gov/acp-pilots by the application's launch.

The Bureau expects that Pilot Program participant selections will be made based solely on the information provided in the online applications and does not anticipate that applicants will have the opportunity to supplement their applications after submission. The Bureau has the discretion to permit applicants to remedy incomplete or deficient applications as needed after the close of the application window on January 9, 2023. Applicants that are selected by the Bureau to participate in either or both Pilot Programs will be notified via email.

Pilot applicants may also apply for a grant from the FCC to fund their Your Home, Your Internet and ACP Navigator Pilot projects. An applicant that is also seeking grant funding from the FCC for its Pilot Program activities will also need to submit the required standard grant form and budget materials through Grants.gov. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants will also be released on November 21, 2022. The NOFO will outline the requirements for seeking grant funding for pilot activities, and the terms and conditions

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[4] Applicants experiencing technical issues or issues relating to accessing or submitting the ACP Pilot Programs application should promptly contact the customer support line at: (888) 641-8722, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST, or email ACProgram@usac.org.

[5] *See Wireline Competition Bureau Provides Additional Information Concerning The Your Home, Your Internet and Affordable Connectivity Program Navigator Pilot Program*, WC Docket No. 21-450, Public Notice, DA 22-1076 (WCB Oct. 11, 2022) (*October Public Notice*), available at: https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-provides-additional-information-concerning-acp-pilot-programs.

and requirements for eligibility and receipt of grant funding. Applicants applying for grant funding for their Pilot Program activities will include their Pilot Program application number on the grant application they submit to Grants.gov.

Eligible Entities

The Your Home, Your Internet Pilot Program. Entities eligible to apply for the Your Home, Your Internet Pilot Program include federal agencies and state, local, and Tribal housing agencies (including housing authorities), as well as tenant associations, and non-profit and community-based organizations working with federal housing assistance recipients that partner with such agencies.[6] For purposes of the Your Home, Your Internet Pilot Program, such tenant associations and non-profit and community-based entities that partner with an eligible agency may initiate a single application on behalf of the partnership, and both the agency and partner will be required to provide information in the application about their respective roles and responsibilities.[7] Regardless of which partner initiates a Pilot Program application on behalf of the partnership, both the eligible agency and the partner tenant association, non-profit or community-based entity will be required to designate a point of contact in the application, and the eligible agency will be required to provide the required certifications upon submitting the Pilot Program application. Initially, the Bureau expects to select up to 20 participants to participate in the Your Home, Your Internet Pilot Program.[8]

The ACP Navigator Pilot Program. Public and government entities, such as public schools and public school districts, and local, state, or Tribal government entities are eligible to apply for participation in the ACP Navigator Pilot Program. Examples of such eligible entities include, but are not limited to, state and local institutions of higher learning, state veterans affairs offices, state and community libraries, and Tribal schools and libraries. Non-profit organizations are not eligible to apply for the ACP Navigator Pilot Program. However, eligible government entities selected to participate in the ACP Navigator Pilot Program may enter into partnerships with neutral non-profit organizations, provided that the government entity informs the Bureau in its ACP Navigator Pilot Program application that it is partnering with one or more specific non-profit organization(s) and identifies any such partner organization(s). After reviewing applications, the Bureau expects to select up to 20 participants to participate in the ACP Navigator Pilot Program.

Applicant Duty to Comply with Rules and Requirements and Submit Accurate, Complete and Timely Filed Application

Applicants applying to one or both Pilot Programs should carefully review the *Affordable Connectivity Program Order*, the *Your Home, Your Internet Order*, and all Public Notices related to the Pilot Programs, including the *October Public Notice*, to familiarize themselves with the Pilot Programs rules and requirements. For additional information concerning both Pilot Programs, prospective applicants should also visit the FCC's website at https://www.fcc.gov/acp-pilots. Applicants bear full responsibility for submitting accurate, complete, and timely applications for the Pilot Programs and ensuring their compliance with the applicable Pilot Program rules and requirements.

Applications filed after the close of the filing window will not be considered. Thus, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications as soon as possible after the window opens. During the filing window, an applicant will be allowed to make any necessary modifications to its application until

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[6] *Your Home, Your Internet Order* at 7-13, paras. 18, 21, 33.

[7] *Id*.

[8] The Commission delegated to the Bureau the option to select more than 20 Pilot participants if doing so would further the goals of the Pilot. *Your Home, Your Internet Order* at 18, para. 45.

the application submission deadline. Pursuant to section 1.65 of the Commission's rules, each applicant has a continuing obligation to maintain the accuracy and completeness of information furnished in a pending application.[9] An applicant is obligated to amend its pending application to maintain accuracy and completeness even if a reported change may result in the dismissal of the application because it is subsequently deemed ineligible. If, at any time, an applicant needs to make changes to its application to maintain the accuracy and completeness of its application pursuant to section 1.65 of the Commission's rules, it must do so by contacting the Bureau via email at ACPpilots@fcc.gov.

Funding for Pilot Program Participants Through the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants

Pilot Programs participants may apply for a grant from the FCC to fund their Your Home, Your Internet and ACP Navigator Pilot projects through the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program**'s** Pilot Program Grants. The Commission has allocated up to $5 million per Pilot Program, to provide outreach grants to entities selected to participate in the Pilot Programs. Pilot Programs applicants may have independent sources of funding and are not required to apply for funding from the Commission in order to carry out their Pilot Program activities. An applicant's chance of being selected to participate in either or both Pilot Programs will not be impacted by its decision to seek grant funding. Applicants seeking to apply for a grant through the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants to support Pilot Program activities must submit both a Pilot Program application through the Affordable Connectivity Pilot Programs Application Portal AND the required grant application in Grants.gov by the deadline of January 9, 2023.

Applicants that intend to apply for grant funding for their Pilot Program activities must first obtain an FCC Registration Number (FRN) and register with the System for Award Management and Grants.gov.[10] Pilot Program applicants that intend to request grant funding can and are strongly encouraged to begin these pre-application processes before the Pilot Program application window and the opening of the application window for the related Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program**'s** Pilot Program Grants NOFO.

Pilot Program applicants seeking grant funding for their Pilot Program activities should review the NOFO for the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program**'s** Pilot Program Grants. The NOFO and application materials for the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants will be available at http://www.Grants.gov under CFDA no. 32.011 on November 21, 2022, the start of the application window. For more information regarding the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants, please email ACPgrants@fcc.gov or visit the FCC's website at https://www.fcc.gov/acp-grants.

Additional Information

Additional information concerning both Pilot Programs is available at https://www.fcc.gov/acp-pilots. Prospective applicants can also submit questions concerning the Pilot Programs to the FCC at ACPpilots@fcc.gov. For technical questions or issues relating to accessing or submitting the ACP Pilot Programs application, please email ACProgram@usac.org.

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[9] *See* 47 CFR § 1.65. For purposes of section 1.65 of the Commission's rules, Pilot Programs applications and associated attachments will remain pending until the announcement of the pilot projects selected for the Pilot Programs.

[10] Applicants needing technical assistance with Grants.gov can call the customer support hotline 24 hours per day, 7 days per week (except federal holidays) at (800) 518-4726 or email support@grants.gov.

Additional information on the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants, is available at: https://www.fcc.gov/acp-grants or https://www.fcc.gov/acp-pilots. For questions concerning the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program's Pilot Program Grants, please email ACPgrants@fcc.gov.

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