



PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU REMINDS SECURE AND TRUSTED COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM RECIPIENTS OF THE JULY 17, 2023 DEADLINE TO FILE AN INITIAL REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM

WC Docket No. 18-89

By this Public Notice, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) reminds recipients in the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Reimbursement Program (Reimbursement Program) of the deadline to file at least one reimbursement claim by July 17, 2023.¹

Federal Communications Commission (Commission) rule 1.50004(g)(1) requires that “[w]ithin one year of the approval of its Reimbursement Program application, a recipient must file at least one reimbursement claim.”² The Bureau approved all Reimbursement Program applications on July 15, 2022.³ Because July 15, 2023 falls on a Saturday, the deadline for Reimbursement Program recipients to file at least one reimbursement claim is July 17, 2023.⁴ Pursuant to the Commission’s rules, failure to meet this deadline “will result in the reclamation of all allocated funding from the Reimbursement Program recipient and revert to the Reimbursement Program fund for potential allocation to other Reimbursement Program participants.”⁵

Per Commission rule 1.50004(g), the Bureau will “review and grant or deny” all submitted reimbursement claims.⁶ Pursuant to the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act, a recipient has one year from the date that the Commission first distributes reimbursement funds to that recipient to

¹ The Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019, as amended, defines “recipient” as “any provider of advanced communications service the application of which for a reimbursement under the [Reimbursement] Program has been approved by the Commission, regardless of whether the provider has received reimbursement funds.” Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-124, 134 Stat. 158, § 9(11) (2019) (codified as amended at 47 U.S.C. § 1608(11)) (Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act); *see also* 47 CFR § 1.50001(h) (“The term ‘Reimbursement Program recipient’ or ‘recipient’ means an eligible advanced communications service provider that has requested via application and been approved for funding in the Reimbursement Program, regardless of whether the provider has received reimbursement funds.”).

² 47 CFR § 1.50004(g)(1).

³ *See Wireline Competition Bureau Announces the Grant of Applications for the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Reimbursement Program*, WC Docket No. 18-89, Public Notice, DA 22-774 (WCB Jul. 18, 2022).

⁴ *See* 47 CFR § 1.4(e)(1), (j) (describing the computation of Commission deadlines that would fall on a holiday, and defining “holiday” to include weekend days).

⁵ 47 CFR § 1.50004(g)(1).

⁶ 47 CFR § 1.50004(g).

complete the permanent removal, replacement, and disposal of any covered communications equipment or services in its network.⁷

We encourage Reimbursement Program recipients that have not yet submitted at least one reimbursement claim to do so in advance of the July 17, 2023 deadline to familiarize themselves with the submission, review, and approval process. Recipients should also submit any modification request required for the recipient to submit its initial reimbursement claim as soon as possible. For instance, recipients who relied solely on the Catalog of Eligible Expenses and Estimated Costs to submit cost estimates in their applications must first file a modification request to supply a vendor quote before submitting a reimbursement claim for a particular cost.

We expect full, good faith compliance with the Commission's requirements for the reimbursement claim process and with the July 17, 2023 deadline in light of the shared goal of timely removing, replacing, and disposing of covered communications equipment and services in the network.⁸ Accordingly, we expect recipients to file materially complete reimbursement claims⁹ and timely cooperate with the Bureau and Fund Administrator as we review submissions.¹⁰ Failure to submit at least one reimbursement claim in good faith by July 17, 2023 will result in reclamation of all allocated funding from the Reimbursement Program recipient.¹¹

Additional Information and Resources. Recipients with questions may contact the Fund Administrator Help Desk by email at SCRPFundAdmin@fcc.gov or by calling (202) 418-7540 from 9:00 AM ET to 5:00 PM ET, Monday through Friday, except for Federal holidays. General information and Commission documents regarding the Reimbursement Program are available on the Reimbursement Program webpage, <https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain/reimbursement>.

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⁷ 47 U.S.C. § 1603(d)(6)(A); *see also* 47 CFR § 1.50004(h) (implementing this provision of the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act).

⁸ *See Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply Chain Through FCC Programs*, WC Docket No. 18-89, Second Report and Order, FCC 20-176, 35 FCC Rcd 14284, 14354, para. 170 (2020) (*2020 Supply Chain Order*) (explaining that, in the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act, Congress “made clear its intent” to ensure timely removal, replacement, and disposal of covered equipment and services, and consequently establishing the Commission’s goal to “ensure the efficient and expeditious use of funding to facilitate network transitions”).

⁹ Under Commission rule, a reimbursement claim must show “actual expenses reasonably incurred for the removal, replacement, and disposal of covered communications equipment or service.” 47 CFR § 1.50004(g). Additional information about the content requirements for reimbursement claims and the submission process is available in the Fund Administrator’s FCC Form 5640 Part G and Modifications of Part C User Guide, available at <https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/supply-chain-user-guide-09122022.pdf> (last visited May 17, 2023).

¹⁰ The Fund Administrator may be required to issue Requests for Information if the information submitted with a modification request or reimbursement claim is insufficient for the Bureau to approve or deny it.

¹¹ *See* 47 CFR § 1.50004(g)(1); *2020 Supply Chain Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 14354, para. 170 (“Failure to file for an initial disbursement within one year of receipt of funding allocation approval will result in the automatic reversion of the funding allocation to the program fund for reallocation to other or future program participants.”).