



Federal Communications Commission

Enforcement Bureau
Investigations and Hearings Division
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

April 7, 2026

DA 26-305

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Shawn Clemmons
c/o Steven S. Nolder, Esq.
Steven S. Nolder, Attorney at Law
65 E State St., Suite 200
Columbus Ohio 43215

**Re: Notice of Suspension and Initiation of Debarment Proceeding
File No. EB-IHD-25-00038475**

Dear Mr. Clemmons:

The Enforcement Bureau (Bureau) of the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC) received notice of your conviction for making false claims, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 287, arising out of activities associated with the federal schools and libraries universal service support mechanism (E-Rate program).¹ The crime involved knowingly submitting false statements to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) that the South Central Ohio Computer Association (SCOCA), an E-Rate program service provider of which you were the executive director, was in compliance with the rules and orders governing the E-Rate program.² Consequently, pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.8, this letter constitutes official notice of your suspension from the E-Rate program and all federal universal service support mechanisms.³ While suspended, you are prohibited from participating in or receiving any benefit associated with all federal universal service support mechanisms, including the E-Rate program.

¹ Any further reference in this letter to “your conviction” refers to your guilty plea and subsequent sentencing in *United States v. Shawn Clemmons*, Case No. 2:19-cr-00226-EAS, Judgment and Sentencing Order (S.D. Ohio, issued Jun. 7, 2021) (*Sentencing Order*).

² *United States v. Shawn Clemmons*, Case No. 2:19-cr-00226-EAS, Information (S.D. Ohio, filed Oct. 22, 2019) (*Information*).

³ 47 CFR § 54.8. On March 26, 2026, new rules were adopted allowing the Commission to take quicker and more comprehensive action to exclude bad actors from participating in Congressionally-mandated funding programs, such as the E-Rate program. See *Modernizing Suspension & Debarment Rules*, GN Docket No. 19-309, Report & Order, Direct Final Rule, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 26-18 (Mar. 27, 2026).

Additionally, in accordance with the Commission's rules, the Bureau is commencing a proceeding to debar you from future participation in all federal universal service support mechanisms for three years.⁴

I. Notice of Suspension

The Commission has established procedures to prevent persons who have “defrauded the government or engaged in similar acts through activities associated with or related to the [E-Rate program]” from receiving the benefits associated with that program.⁵ The statutory provisions and Commission rules relating to the E-Rate program are designed to ensure E-Rate funds are used for their intended purpose.⁶ Schools may receive E-Rate program funding for eligible goods and services by filing application forms, seeking competitive bids, and selecting the most cost-effective vendor.⁷ The E-Rate program rules prohibit an E-Rate vendor or anyone associated with an E-Rate vendor from participating in the application process or vendor selection.⁸ Solicitations for E-Rate services must be based on fair and open competitive bidding, free from any conflicts of interest.⁹

You pleaded guilty to making false claims that involved deceptively using the E-Rate invoicing and reimbursement process.¹⁰ As the executive director of SCOCA, you unlawfully withheld reimbursements to schools substantially longer than the 20 business days that SCOCA was permitted to hold the reimbursements.¹¹ You regularly used USAC reimbursements from one Funding Year to pay schools the reimbursements they were owed for the previous Funding Year, contrary to the rules governing the E-Rate program.¹² In E-Rate Funding Year 2014, you caused all but one of SCOCA's client public schools to not receive their reimbursements from SCOCA.¹³ As a result of your false claims activity, the public schools collectively were not reimbursed \$2,012,572.90, and collectively had to pay

⁴ 47 CFR § 54.8; *Id.* § 0.111 (delegating to the Enforcement Bureau authority to resolve universal service suspension and debarment proceedings). The Commission adopted debarment rules for the E-Rate program in 2003. *See Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism*, CC Docket No. 02-6, Second Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 18 FCC Rcd 9202 (2003) (*Second Report and Order*) (adopting section 54.521 to suspend and debar parties from the E-Rate program). In 2007, the Commission extended the debarment rules to apply to all federal universal service support mechanisms. *See Comprehensive Review of the Universal Service Fund Management, Administration, & Oversight*, Report and Order, 22 FCC Rcd 16372, 16410–12 (2007) (*Program Management Order*) (renumbering section 54.521 of the universal service debarment rules as section 54.8 and amending subsections (a)(1), (a)(5), (c), (d), (e)(2)(i), (e)(3), (e)(4), and (g)).

⁵ *Second Report and Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 9225, para. 66; *Program Management Order*, 22 FCC Rcd at 16387, para. 32. The Commission's debarment rules define a “person” as “[a]ny individual, group of individuals, corporation, partnership, association, unit of government or legal entity, however organized.” 47 CFR § 54.8(a)(6).

⁶ *NEC-Business Network Solutions, Inc.*, Notice of Debarment and Order Denying Waiver Petition, 21 FCC Rcd 7491, 7493, para. 7 (2006).

⁷ 47 CFR §§ 54.503, 54.504(a), 54.511(a).

⁸ *See id.* §§ 54.503, 54.511(a); *see also* Universal Service Administrative Company, *Open & Fair Process*, <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/competitive-bidding/open-fair-process/> (last visited March 13, 2026).

⁹ 47 CFR §§ 54.503, 54.511(a).

¹⁰ *Information*, *supra* note 2, at 4-5; *Sentencing Order*, *supra* note 1, at 1.

¹¹ *Information*, *supra* note 2, at 4.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

an additional \$1,218,401.50.¹⁴ During that time, you made a false claim to USAC that SCOCA was in compliance with the E-Rate program rules.¹⁵

In June 2021, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio sentenced you to sixty days in prison and thirty months of probation.¹⁶ The court also ordered you to pay a \$3,230,974.40 in restitution¹⁷ and a \$100 special assessment fee.¹⁸

Pursuant to section 54.8(d) of the Commission's rules,¹⁹ your conviction requires the Bureau to suspend you from: (a) participating in any activities associated with or related to the E-Rate program, including the receipt of funds or discounted services through the E-Rate program, or consulting with, assisting, or advising applicants or service providers regarding the E-Rate program; and (b) participating in any activities associated with or related to all federal universal service support mechanisms.²⁰ Your suspension becomes effective upon either your receipt of this letter or its publication in the Federal Register, whichever comes first.²¹

In accordance with the Commission's suspension and debarment rules, you may contest this suspension or the scope of this suspension by filing arguments, with any relevant documents, within thirty calendar days of your receipt of this letter or publication of notice of the suspension in the Federal Register, whichever comes first.²² Such requests, however, will not ordinarily be granted.²³ The Bureau may reverse or limit the scope of a suspension only upon a finding of extraordinary circumstances.²⁴ The Bureau will decide any request to reverse or modify a suspension within ninety calendar days of its receipt of such request.²⁵

II. Initiation of Debarment Proceedings

In addition to requiring your immediate suspension from all federal universal service support mechanisms, including the E-Rate program, your conviction is cause for debarment as defined in section

¹⁴ *Id.* at 4-5.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 5.

¹⁶ *Sentencing Order*, *supra* note 1, at 2.

¹⁷ *United States v. Shawn Clemmons*, Case No. 2:10-cr-00226-EAS, Restitution Order (Oct. 17, 2024).

¹⁸ *Sentencing Order*, *supra* note 1, at 5.

¹⁹ 47 CFR § 54.8(d); *see Second Report and Order*, *supra* note 4, at 9225–27, paras. 67–74.

²⁰ 47 CFR § 54.8(a)(1), (d).

²¹ *Id.* § 54.8(e)(1); *Second Report and Order*, *supra* note 4, at 9226, para. 69.

²² 47 CFR § 54.8(e)(4).

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.* § 54.8(f).

²⁵ *Id.* § 54.8(e)(5), (f); *Second Report and Order*, *supra* note 4, at 9226, para. 70.

54.8(c) of the Commission's rules.²⁶ Therefore, pursuant to section 54.8(b) of the Commission's rules, your conviction requires the Bureau to commence debarment proceedings against you.²⁷

As with the suspension process, you may contest the proposed debarment or the scope of the proposed debarment by filing arguments and any relevant documentation within thirty calendar days of receipt of this letter or its publication in the Federal Register, whichever comes first.²⁸ The Bureau, in the absence of extraordinary circumstances, will notify you of its decision to debar within ninety calendar days of receiving any information you may have filed.²⁹ If the Bureau decides to debar you, its decision will become effective upon either your receipt of a debarment notice or publication of the decision in the Federal Register, whichever comes first.³⁰

If and when your debarment becomes effective, you will be prohibited from participating in activities associated with or related to all federal universal service support mechanisms, including the E-Rate program, for three years from the date of debarment.³¹ The Bureau may set a longer debarment period or extend an existing debarment period if necessary to protect the public interest.³² Pursuant to the Commission's rules, should you choose to contest the scope or length of any such debarment, you must file arguments and any relevant documentation within thirty calendar days of receipt of this letter or the publication in the Federal Register of such proposed debarment, whichever is earlier.³³

Please direct any response as follows:

If sent by messenger or hand delivery, or by commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail, Priority Mail Express, and Priority Mail), the response must be sent to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, to the attention of Christopher J. Sova, Chief, Investigations and Hearings Division, Enforcement Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD, 20701. Hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary are accepted between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. by the FCC's mailing contractor at 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD, 20701. All hand deliveries must be held

²⁶ "Causes for suspension and debarment are conviction of or civil judgment for attempt or commission of criminal fraud, theft, embezzlement, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice and other fraud or criminal offense arising out of activities associated with or related to the schools and libraries support mechanism, the high-cost support mechanism, the rural healthcare support mechanism, and the low-income support mechanism." 47 CFR § 54.8(c). Associated activities "include the receipt of funds or discounted services through [the federal universal service] support mechanisms, or consulting with, assisting, or advising applicants or service providers regarding [the federal universal service] support mechanisms." *Id.* § 54.8(a)(1).

²⁷ *Id.* § 54.8(b).

²⁸ *Id.* § 54.8(e)(3); *Second Report and Order*, *supra* note 4, at 9226, para. 70.

²⁹ 47 CFR § 54.8(e)(5); *Second Report and Order*, *supra* note 4, at 9226, para. 70.

³⁰ 47 CFR § 54.8(e)(5). The Commission may reverse a debarment, or may limit the scope or period of debarment, upon a finding of extraordinary circumstances, following the filing of a petition by you or an interested party or upon motion by the Commission. *Id.* § 54.8(f).

³¹ 47 CFR § 54.8(d), (g); *Second Report and Order*, *supra* note 4, at 9225, para. 67.

³² 47 CFR § 54.8(g).

³³ *Id.* § 54.8(e)(4).

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together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes and boxes must be disposed of before entering the building.

If sent by First-Class Mail, Priority Mail Express, or Priority Mail, the response must be sent to Christopher J. Sova, Chief, Investigations and Hearings Division, Enforcement Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, 45 L Street, NE, Washington, DC 20554.

You must also transmit an electronic copy of the response and all Documents produced with the response via e-mail to IHDTelecom@fcc.gov. The electronic copy shall be produced in a format that allows the Commission to access and use it, together with instructions and all other materials necessary to use or interpret the data, including record layouts, data dictionaries, and a description of the data's source. If you have any questions, please contact Jeffrey Brown at Jeffrey.Brown@fcc.gov or (202) 418-2527.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Sova
Chief
Investigations and Hearings Division
Enforcement Bureau