



NEWS FROM THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

FCC Suspends Seven Convicted Criminals from Universal Service Fund Programs

Enforcement Bureau Moves E-Rate Program Criminals Closer to Debarment

WASHINGTON, April 7, 2026—Today, the Federal Communications Commission suspended seven individuals from participating in the agency’s Universal Service Fund programs. These individuals illegally enriched themselves through schemes to defraud the E-Rate program, including by lying in official filings with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and overbilling the E-Rate program. As part of the FCC’s efforts to combat fraud, waste, and abuse in Universal Service Fund (USF) programs, the FCC recently voted on updates to its suspension and debarment rules that enable the agency to take quicker and more comprehensive action against wrongdoers.

Chairman Brendan Carr issued the following statement:

“The FCC is committed to stopping bad actors from defrauding our USF programs, including those that target our E-Rate program as a way to line their own pockets. We must be good stewards of federal dollars. I want to thank our federal and state law enforcement partners for their work on these cases—and the FCC’s own Enforcement Bureau and Office of Inspector General for their commitment to ferreting out waste, fraud, and abuse from USF programs.”

Additional Background Information:

The FCC’s Enforcement Bureau issued Notices of Suspension and officially initiated debarment proceedings for seven individuals today. Each individual has been found guilty of crimes related to the USF-supported E-Rate program which is designed to enhance access to advanced telecommunications and information services for all public and nonprofit elementary and secondary school classrooms and libraries. Those who are being suspended today are:

- **Donatus Anyanwu and Donna Woods of Texas** – Knowingly conspired to defraud the E-Rate program of more than \$337,000 by using Woods’ position as CEO of a Texas school, Nova Charter School, to select Anyanwu’s company, ADI Engineering, as the school’s E-Rate provider.
- **Shawn Clemmons of Ohio** – As executive director of E-Rate program service provider South Central Ohio Computer Association, he unlawfully withheld reimbursements to schools longer than allowed; regularly used USAC reimbursements from one year to pay schools the reimbursements they were owed for the previous year; and one year, he caused all but one of the client public schools to not receive their reimbursements. A court ordered him to pay more than \$3.2 million in restitution.
- **Kenneth Collura of Ohio** – Knowingly submitted a false certification to USAC that a contract between the Diocese of Columbus Office of Catholic Schools and the South Central

Ohio Computer Association covered no ineligible services, when the charges under the contract were inflated and included expenses not eligible for E-Rate funding.

- **John Comito of New York** – Knowingly and intentionally devised a scheme to defraud USAC and 26 schools in New York City in order to obtain money and property from them. A court ordered him to pay more than \$505,000 in restitution and a fine of \$250,000.
- **Charles Jones of Tennessee** – Pleaded guilty to a conspiracy to commit wire fraud that involved submitting fabricated documents in Tennessee and Missouri to defraud the E-Rate program. For a decade, Jones and others siphoned more than \$6 million from the E-Rate program to benefit companies he owned.
- **Mark Whitaker of Tennessee** – Failed to report the knowing transmission of materially false communications and documents to the federal government with the intent of defrauding the E-Rate program.

The FCC recently voted to adopt rules to bolster its suspension and debarment program and align it with other agencies and seek comment on expanding the program to allow for the broader removal of participants that commit waste, fraud, and abuse. The FCC has also proposed applying its suspension and debarment rules beyond USF programs to other programs including its Rip and Replace program, and to a wider range of misconduct. The new rules promote greater accountability and policing among program recipients, including by requiring program participants, their board members, and other company executives to disclose prior misconduct and ensure that the parties with whom they do business under FCC programs are not currently suspended or debarred.

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