THE FRONTIER
E-RATE
TOOLKIT

E-Rate at a Glance

More Opportunity For All

For schools and libraries facing funding gaps, E-Rate is the key that unlocks affordable devices for all. For more than 20 years, Frontier has been a trusted E-Rate provider, helping organizations secure the funding and connectivity they need to communicate, educate and inspire. Refer to our Important Reminders on the last page for a rundown on how E-Rate works and how it can benefit you.

About E-Rate

The Schools and Libraries Program, more commonly known as E-Rate, is a federally funded program established in 1998 that provides discounts on Internet access and managed internal connections for eligible schools and libraries. Service discounts can range from 20% to 90%.

Administration

E-Rate is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Eligibility

Schools

- Must operate as a nonprofit business
- Must provide K–12 education, not college
- Includes Head Start, Pre–K, Juvenile Justice and Special Education
- Cannot have grants exceeding $50 million
- Includes support facilities for school use only
- Includes consortia of schools

Libraries

- Must operate as a nonprofit business
- Budget must be separate from any school budget
- Includes support facilities for library use only
- Cannot gain assistance from state library agency via Library Services & Technology Act
- Includes consortia of libraries

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Eligible Services List

Each year, the FCC releases the Eligible Services List (ESL) for the upcoming funding year. The list includes a description of the products and services that are eligible for E-Rate discounts and is divided into two categories of service:

Category One
- Data transmissions services and/or Internet access

Category Two
- Internal connections
- Managed Dedicated Internet or Managed Wi-Fi
- Basic maintenance of internal connections

The full Eligible Services List is available on usac.org. The list is updated each year by the FCC before the Form 471 application filing window opens.

Application Process

All funding applicants need to follow these six steps:

1. Open competitive bidding for desired services **(Form 470)**
2. Select service providers
3. Apply for discounts **(Form 471)**
4. Undergo application review
5. Start services **(Form 486)**
6. Two options for invoicing: BEAR for reimbursement or SPI for provider discounted invoicing **(Form 472 or Form 474)**

Choosing Your Internet Service Provider

To find a service provider, applicants for E-Rate funding must open a competitive bidding process by posting a Form 470 through the USAC website's E-Rate Productivity Center. Applicants then receive and evaluate bids from service providers.

Quick Links

- ⊘ **Frontier E-Rate**
- ⊘ **E-Rate Blog**
- ⊘ **USAC E-Rate Fund Administration**
- ⊘ **FCC E-Rate Page**

Frontier and E-Rate

At Frontier, we combine high-speed connectivity with deep E-Rate know-how. The result?

Frontier customers save an average of 76%* on our high-speed data connectivity.

Our team of E-Rate specialists have guided many customers like you —and they're ready to help you, too.

Ask Us Anything

We know you've got questions. We're here to help you access the funding relief you need—and get back to what matters most.

- **How is the E-Rate program funded?** E-Rate is funded through the Universal Service Fund (USF). The E-Rate program is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and overseen by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

- **Is my organization eligible for E-Rate funding?** Public and private K-12 schools and nonprofit public libraries are eligible for E-Rate discounts. Not sure if your institution qualifies? A full list of eligibility requirements is available **on the E-Rate website.**

- **What kind of discount can my organization get through E-Rate?** E-Rate reimburses up to 90% of eligible technology expenses. Frontier customers see an average of 76%* savings on connectivity services.

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- **What services are eligible for E-Rate funding?** Internet access and related equipment are eligible for E-Rate discounts. Eligible products or services must be used for educational purposes. **A full list of eligible services** is updated each year on the USAC website.

- **How do I apply for E-Rate funding?**

  1. Create an account with USAC's **E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC).** This is the management portal for the E-Rate Program.

  2. File FCC Form 470 through the EPC to begin the bidding process.

  3. For more details on the **application process,** refer to the USAC website

- **How do I choose a service provider?** To apply for E-Rate funding, applicants must conduct a fair and open competitive bidding process. The bidding period must be open for at least 28 days. Once the bidding process is closed, applicants may evaluate the bids and select their service provider.

- **Can my current service provider be my E-Rate partner?** Yes. If you currently receive service, you can ask your provider to submit a bid in response to your FCC Form 470. If your current service provider is Frontier, get in touch!

E-Rate for Education

IMPORTANT REMINDERS: E-Rate at a Glance

As learning increasingly moves online, access to the internet is more critical than ever to student success. Not every school has the budget to secure the connectivity students need. That's where E-Rate comes in. This federally funded program is designed to fill the technology funding gap by providing discounts on internet and telecommunications services.

How E-Rate can help

Here's just a small sampling of the products and services E-Rate funding can help you cover:

- Internet access (Managed Dedicated Internet, Dedicated Internet Access, Fiber Broadband and Managed Wi-Fi)
- Managed Security (including web filtering)
- Firewall services
- Routers and switches
- Wireless access points
- Hardware upkeep and repair
- Software upgrades and patches

School eligibility requirements

Before you go any further, confirm that your school is eligible for E-Rate funding. According to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), schools applying for E-Rate funding must meet the following requirements:

- Operate as a nonprofit business
- Provide K–12 education, not college
- Include Head Start, Pre-K, Juvenile Justice and Special Education
- Cannot have grants exceeding $50 million
- Include support facilities for school use only
- Include consortia of schools

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E-Rate by the numbers

- **1998** – Year the E-Rate program was established
- **20% to 90%** – Range of discounts E-Rate offers on eligible services
- **131,139** – Number of sites that have received on-campus (Category 2) support, according to **the 2020 E-Rate Trends Report by Funds for Learning**
- **$4.15 billion** – Funding cap for FY 2021, according to the **FCC**
- **95%** – of E-Rate applicants who say E-Rate funding is vital to their Internet connectivity goals, according to the 2020 E-Rate Trends Report by Funds for Learning

Frontier and E-Rate

- **Remote learning** – High-speed bandwidth supports remote connectivity for pandemic response strategies, including HD streaming video and interactive content
- **Student safety** – Cloud security tools allow IT administrators to protect student data
- **Certified reliability** – Nearly 180,000 miles of fiber over our MEF 2.0 certified network
- **High performance** – 99.99% guanteed circuit availability service-level agreement
- **Dependable partner since 1935** – Empowering communications for generations
- **Serious savings** – Frontier customers see an average of 76%* savings on data connectivity services

Frontier's top tips for E-Rate success

- **Plan for your technology future** – Outline a plan for your technological modernization over the next 3–5 years and decide when to apply for funding for each initiative.
- **Involve everyone** – It's crucial that IT and school leadership work together to identify top networking priorities.
- **Follow all the guidelines** – Make sure you understand every step of the E-Rate application process. To receive funding, you must adhere to all government guidelines. Don't leave money on the table by skipping a step!

"I'm passionate about helping schools close the digital divide. With a strategic E-Rate application and our high-speed connectivity, it's possible."

Denise McIntosh,
E-Rate Customer Success Manager, Frontier Business

Ready to contact a Frontier Business E-Rate expert directly?

The team at Frontier is ready to answer your questions. Reach out to us at **Fundingprograms@ftr.com** or visit our **website.**

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