

## **Online BEARs - Are You Ready?**

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*Are you ready to certify new Online BEARs?* The new E-Rate Online BEAR system is now operational and can be located on the USAC website at <https://www2.sl.universalservice.org/bear/>, but in order for schools to use it, their vendors must have a functional User ID and Password, and an updated e-mail address on file with USAC. Without these items, applicants will unknowingly file their Online BEARs, which will sit in SLD outer space until they are automatically rejected 15 days later for lack of vendor certification.

So before you begin to actively use the new Online BEAR system (which is amazingly easy, by the way), you'll want to make sure your vendors have their User IDs and Passwords in-hand and have updated e-mail addresses on file with USAC. I'd suggest you contact your vendors to make sure they are prepared for the Online BEAR before using this online function. If your vendors need assistance, tell them to seek additional help by calling the USAC Customer Support Group at 888-641-8722.

I've also been notified that if you have trouble submitting your forms due to the email section, it is probably because you have to type it in all caps. Not sure this will be the case all the time but for now, you may want to pay attention to this particular section.

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