

It's Time to File Your Form 470 for FY 2008!

Mon 12/3/2007 1:13 PM

As of today, **1293** Form 470's have been posted by Texas applicants. If you cannot count yourself in those 1293, you'll want to post your E-Rate Form 470 in the next 2 weeks. Although the very last possible date to file a 470 is January 10 (29 days before the 471 window closes on Feb. 7, 2008), do not wait this long to file, as it will only give you one day to open bids, evaluate proposals, sign contracts, certify the forms 470 & 471 and file your 471 inside the window. So don't put it off any longer -- **DO IT NOW**, please!

Simply go to: <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/menu.asp> and click on 'Create Form 470.'

Below are some helpful reminders and answers to the most common questions I receive:

- 1) Check Item 7a and b.** There is no harm in checking 7 a and b and all of the boxes under 7b (that you are seeking MTM services and/or contracted services and/or multi-year contracts and/or multi-year contracts with voluntary extensions). In fact, if you intend to sign a multi-year contract or a contract with voluntary extensions, you **MUST** check 7b and its associated boxes.
- 2) File in both the Telecom and Internet categories.** If you are at all unsure which category of service you should choose on the 470, put the services in both. It never hurts to have your service description listed in too many places and provides you the maximum flexibility when selecting the correct category of service on your Form 471. If you are filing for Blackberry/Treo Internet/e-mail services, you **MUST** file in both categories.
- 3) Rebidding contracts and MTM services.** If you have a contract expiring on or before June 30, 2009, you must post a Form 470 to rebid that service. OR if you are receiving service under a month-to-month agreement and don't have a contract, you also must post a Form 470 to rebid that service.
- 4) Form 470's for multi-year contracts:** If you posted a Form 470 in a previous year, and then signed a multi-year contract that expires on or after June 30, 2009, you are not required to file a Form 470 for the remaining years of that contract. If you wish to exercise a voluntary extension of a contract without posting a 470, you may only do so if BOTH of these conditions are met: a) You notified bidders on the 470 or RFP that you were seeking a contract that contained voluntary extensions, and b) Your contract contains the terms of the voluntary extensions (meaning the exact number of years or dates that the extensions can be exercised and it's not just open-ended). Otherwise, you must post a Form 470 to extend the contract.
- 5) File online, even if you don't have a PIN.** If you haven't received a PIN, file online, and then mail in your signature/certification page after you hit submit. The SLD will then mail you a PIN in a few weeks. There is no way to request a PIN unless you have first signed a paper certification.
- 6) Include all of your services on a single 470.** There is no maximum number of 470's that you may submit, although it is a good idea to place all of your services on a single Form 470 because then you only have a single 470 number to keep track of for your 471. However, there is no harm in filing two or more 470's. Also, there is no way to amend a 470 after it's been submitted. If you need to change your services, you need to file a new Form 470 (in which case your 28-day clock restarts for the new 470).
- 7) Price must be the most heavily weighted factor.** Don't forget... you may have as many criteria as you wish, but price (alone) must be the heaviest weighted factor. For example, if you have 4 criteria that you are using to judge proposals, price must be at least 26% of the weight, will all others being 25% or less. You also must keep track of the evaluation process you used to select the winning proposal.
- 8) Instead of using the print preview feature,** after you've submitted your 470, go back to the "apply online" page and choose the "search posted" option. Then type-in your 470 number and print off a complete, clean copy of your application. At the top of the completed form it also will show you your allowable contract date (ACD), which is the first date you can sign contracts and file your 471.

If you have any questions, please contact me at: erate@esc12.net

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