

TOPIC: E-RATE

QUESTION: What is e-rate?

“The e-rate program is a federal program, which is administered by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This program provides discounts to eligible schools and libraries for telecommunication services, internet access services and internal connections equipment, such as routers, switches and other hardware that is necessary to support a building’s telecommunications network.

E-rate was created through the Telecommunications Act of 1996, to allow all schools and libraries to benefit from the Federal Universal Services Fund. Through this program, schools and libraries can access discounted telecommunications services. Discounts range from twenty to ninety percent discount depending on the wealth level of the applicant. These discounts can be applied to for technology services, local phone service, internet access, certain hardware and other elements. It is important to note e-rate is not a grant program. Rather, it is a discount program for telecommunications services.”

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