

TOPIC: E-RATE

QUESTION: What is the first step in the e-rate application process? (Form 470 and the 28 day posting period)

“The e-rate application process begins with a district filing a Form 470 application. This form and all other e-rate forms can be found on the e-rate website at www.universalservice.org/sl. The Form 470 is simply an application which allows an applicant to indicate that they would like to participate in the e-rate program. And, it asks that applicant to list those services that they’re interested receiving a discounted rate on for the funding year. For example, a Form 470 for Jones School District would say that “I am interested in applying for telecommunications services, local telephone service, cellular service, internet access services, internet connectivity, and we are planning to purchase a new router to support internal connections.” Once these services are listed on the Form 470, it is then posted on the e-rate web site for 28 days. This posting becomes almost a de facto competitive bidding process.

During this 28 day period, service providers will review these postings and contact applicants to offer their services. As an applicant, you are not required to purchase any of the services you listed on the Form 470, but rather this is an opportunity for you to receive pricing from a variety of service providers. Posting the Form 470 is a required preliminary step for applying for the actual discounted service at a later date.”

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