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# PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

News media information 202 / 418-0500
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830
Internet: http://www.fcc.gov
ftp.fcc.gov

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## FCC REQUESTS NOMINATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### CC Docket 96-45

On May 8, 1997, the Commission released the *Universal Service Order* creating the universal service support mechanisms that will provide support for designated services in high cost, rural, and insular areas, for low-income consumers and rural health care providers, and for discounts to eligible schools and libraries for telecommunications services. In the *Universal Service Order*, the Commission also announced its intent to establish a Universal Service Administrator Advisory Committee (Committee) to recommend a permanent neutral, third-party administrator of the universal service support mechanisms. *See* Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, *Report and Order*, CC Docket 96-45, FCC-97-157 (released May 8, 1997). The Committee will be organized under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C.,App. 2 (1988) (FACA), and will recommend a neutral, third-party administrator of the universal service support mechanisms within six months of the Committee's first meeting. The administrator of the support mechanisms will be responsible for the duties that were assigned to the Universal Service Administrative Company in Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc. and Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, *Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration*, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45, FCC 97-253 (released July 18, 1997). The administrator of the support mechanisms will be appointed for a five-year term. In addition, after the administrator has served for two years, the Commission will review the administrator's performance to ensure that it is fulfilling its responsibilities in an impartial manner.

The Committee will include representatives of: state public utility commissions; school and library groups; rural health care providers; low-income consumers; and the telecommunications industry, including wireless telecommunications carriers, incumbent local exchange carriers - rural and non-rural, competitive local exchange carriers, interexchange carriers, and private network operators. Because the Committee will include representatives from the telecommunications industry, the states, and consumers, the Committee's membership will be impartial and well balanced, as required by the FACA.

The Commission has directed that, in executing its responsibilities, the Committee shall consider the following policy objectives: (1) quality services should be available at

just, reasonable, and affordable rates; (2) access to advanced telecommunications and information services should be provided in all regions of the Nation; (3) consumers in all regions of the Nation, including low-income consumers and those in rural, insular, and high cost areas, should have access to telecommunications and information services, including interexchange services and advanced telecommunications and information services, that are reasonably comparable to those services provided in urban areas and that are available at rates that are reasonably comparable to rates charged for similar services in urban areas; (4) all providers of telecommunications services should make an equitable and nondiscriminatory contribution to the preservation and advancement of universal service; (5) there should be specific, predictable and sufficient Federal and State mechanisms to preserve and advance universal service; (6) elementary and secondary schools and classrooms, health care providers, and libraries should have access to advanced telecommunications services; and (7) the universal service support mechanisms and rules should be applied in a competitively neutral manner.

The Committee must recommend an administrator that: (1) is neutral and impartial; (2) does not advocate specific positions to the Commission in proceedings unrelated to the administration of the universal service support mechanisms; (3) is not aligned or associated with any particular telecommunications industry segment; and (4) does not have a direct financial interest in the support mechanisms established by the Commission.

## FORMATION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### A. Procedure for Establishing an Advisory Committee

The Commission may establish a Federal Advisory Committee only after consultation with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and General Services Administration (GSA) and the filing of a charter with Congress. The Commission is preparing a charter and will initiate the requisite consultation process prior to the formation of the Committee.

### B. Participants

The Commission must be satisfied that it has attained fairly balanced membership on the Committee. Entities may apply for, or nominate another entity for, membership on the Committee. Each application or nomination must include:

(a) the name and title of the applicant or nominee and a description of the interests that the applicant or nominee will represent;
(b) the applicant's or nominee's mailing address, e-mail address (where applicable), telephone number, and facsimile machine number;
(c) evidence that the applicant or nominee is authorized to represent parties related to the interests the applicant or nominee proposes to represent;
(d) the reasons why the applicant or nominee is an interested party; and
(e) a written commitment that the applicant or nominee shall actively participate in good faith in the objectives of the Committee.

Nominations must be submitted by August 22, 1997. After receiving nominations, the

Commission will select the members and the Chairman of the Committee.

C. Agenda

The Committee's first meeting should take place within 90 days after approval of the Committee's charter. At this initial meeting, the Committee will begin the process of identifying a neutral, third-party that the Committee will recommend to become the permanent universal service administrator; such recommendation shall be made to the Commission in writing no later than 180 days from the initial meeting of the Committee.

D. Meetings and Compensation

The Federal Communications Commission will provide facilities needed to conduct the meetings, if the Commission has meeting facilities available. Otherwise, private sector members of the Committee will provide facilities. Members of the Committee will serve without any government compensation, and will not be entitled to travel expenses or per diem subsistence allowances. Members will not be considered special government employees for any purpose.

F. Record of Meetings

As required by FACA, the Committee will keep a record of meeting minutes, and a Designated Federal Official will be present at all Committee meetings. This record of the minutes will be placed in CC Docket 96-45. The Commission will announce Committee meetings in the Federal Register. These meetings will be open to the public.

**CONCLUSION**

**Nominations must be submitted by August 22, 1997.** Original applications and nominations and one copy should be sent to the Office of the Secretary, CC Docket No. 96-45 Federal Communications Commission, Room 222, 1919 M. Street, NW, Washington, DC 20554. An additional copy should be sent to the Sheryl Todd, Federal Communications Commission, Universal Service Branch, CC Docket No. 96-45, 8th Floor, 2100 M. Street, NW, Washington, DC 20554. Parties should send one copy of their applications and nominations to the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc., 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Applications and nominations will be available for public inspection during regular business hours in the Commission's Reference Center, Room 239, 1919 M. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.

For further information pertaining to membership on the Committee, contact:

Frances Downey, (202) 418-7371.

-FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION-