

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Request for Review of the Decision of)	
the Universal Service Administrator)	
or Waiver by)	
)	
Washington County School District)	
Hagerstown, MD)	
)	
Schools and Libraries Universal Service)	CC Docket No. 02-6
Support Mechanism)	

To: Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OR WAIVER

The Washington County School District (“School District”), through its representative, E-Rate Elite Services, Inc. (EES), hereby respectfully requests that the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC” or “Commission”) review a decision of the Universal Service Administrative Company (“USAC”) that denied invoice deadline extension for FY 2012 FRN 2381218, and instruct USAC to grant the requested invoicing deadline extension. Alternatively, the School District requests that the Commission reach the same results by waiving its rules pursuant to §§ 54.719 through 54.723 of the Commission’s rules.¹

At issue is the School District’s contention that the invoice deadline extension request was submitted in compliance with the USAC invoice deadline extension procedures that were in place at that time.

Application Information

Billed Entity Number:	126412
FCC Form 471 Application Number:	843647

¹ 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.719 - 54.723

FRN Under Appeal:	2381218
Administrator's Decision on Invoice	
Deadline Extension Request:	January 16, 2015
Administrator's Decision on Appeal:	April 21, 2016
Service Provider:	AT&T Corp.
Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN):	143001192

I. Facts

On November 24, 2014 EES filed a request for invoice deadline extension for FRN 2381218, citing the condition "that documentation requirements necessitated third party contacts and certification", which we believed to fit the situation.

On January 16, 2015, EES received notification from USAC that the request for invoice deadline extension for the aforementioned FRN was dismissed because "Current deadline extension rules and procedures do not allow approval for the reason submitted."

In response, EES filed an appeal with USAC to reconsider the decision to dismiss the invoice deadline extension requests. EES's appeal was subsequently denied on April 21, 2015 citing the denial reason that:

"Administrative procedures related to the payment of support for discounted services establish deadlines for applicants or service providers to submit invoices to USAC. The administrator provides an extension of the deadline under certain conditions. Those Conditions are documented in the Reference area on the USAC website. (See Invoice Extension for more information.) Your request did not provide information that satisfied those conditions..."²

II Discussion

The School District and EES are submitting this Request for Review or Waiver to the Commission based on the following point:

- The request for invoice deadline extension was filed in accordance with the guidance posted on USAC's website

² Copy attached, see Exhibit A

Invoice Deadline Extension Request Filed in Accordance with Posted Guidance

Per USAC's website³, and included in the Administrator's Decision on Appeal, there are a number of conditions under which invoice deadline extension may be granted. Included in this list is "Documentation requirements that necessitate third-party contact or certification". It is our belief that this condition fits this situation because the service provider was required to sign the BEAR Form in order for the School District to receive its E-Rate reimbursement for FRN 2381218.

It appears that USAC's dismissal of the October 24, 2014 invoice deadline extension request because "Current deadline extension rules and procedures do not allow approval for the reason submitted" as well as the subsequent appeal denial because:

"...invoicing deadlines for earlier funding years, absent extraordinary circumstances justifying the failure to timely submit invoices, we expect the Bureau and USAC to deny any requests or appeals seeking an invoicing deadline extension of more than 12 months after the last date to invoice..."

are directly related to guidance and rule changes stated in the E-rate Modernization Order.

We respectfully suggest that the rules and procedures noted in USAC's dismissal and denial reasons noted above were not in effect at the time the invoice deadline extension request was submitted to USAC.

Paragraph 240 of the E-rate Modernization Order states:

"We adopt a rule allowing applicants to seek and receive from USAC a single one-time invoicing extension for any give funding request, provided the extension request is made no later than what would otherwise be the deadline for submitting invoices: 120 days after the last day to receive service, or the date of the FCC form 486 notification letter."⁴

This ruling codified USAC's existing invoice filing deadline; however, the amended rule, 47 C.F.R. §54.514, did not become effective until December 18, 2014.⁵ Notwithstanding, the invoice deadline extension was submitted within the relevant invoice period, in compliance with the invoice deadline guidelines and procedures cited by USAC in its appeal denial reason.

³ <http://www.usac.org/sl/applicants/step07/invoice-extension.aspx>

⁴ *Modernizing the E-rate Program for Schools and Libraries*, WC Docket No. 13-184, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 29 FCC Rcd 8870 (2014), ¶ 240

⁵ *Modernization of the Schools and Libraries "E-Rate" Program*, 79 Fed. Reg. 68632 (November 18, 2014)(to be codified at 47 C.F.R. pt. 54).

III Conclusion

Throughout its application process, the School District has complied with all E-Rate program rules and regulations. No waste, fraud, or abuse of E-Rate funds has occurred, and it would serve the public interest for the Commission to grant the requested invoice deadline extension for FRN 2381218 and would alleviate financial hardship for the School District. Furthermore, we believe there were no violations of E-Rate program rules or regulations that warranted denial of the invoice deadline extension or the subsequent appeal. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Commission grant this appeal and find that the School District's invoice deadline extension request for FRN 2381218 was submitted in compliance with the invoice deadline guidelines and procedures that were in place at the time of the request.

Alternatively, the Commission has previously established that a rule may be waived where the particular facts make strict compliance inconsistent with the public interest.⁶ In addition, the Commission may take into account considerations of hardship, equity, or more effective implementation of overall policy on an individual basis.⁷ Therefore, in the event that the Commission does find that the School District's invoice deadline extension request for FRN 2381218 was not submitted in compliance with the invoice deadline guidelines and procedures that were in place at the time of the request, we request that the Commission grant the School District a waiver of the invoice deadline for FRN 2381218.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher Lenhardt, CFE
E-Rate Elite Services, Inc.

⁶ Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990) (Northeast Cellular)

⁷ WAIT Radio v. FCC, 418 F.2d 1153, 1159 (D.C. Cir. 1969); Northeast Cellular, 897 F.2d at 1166