

Pre-Application Process

- DO** create or write your technology plan before filing the Form 470 for Internal Connections and/or Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections services (or update your existing plan if it doesn't cover these services).
- DON'T** allow a service provider to help write your technology plan.
- DO** make sure your technology plan covers the upcoming funding year and contains the four required elements: Goals, Professional Development, Needs Assessment, and Evaluation Process.

Form 470 and Competitive Bidding

- DO** list your requested services on your Form 470 — and on your RFP if you have one.
- DO** list your requested services in the correct categories of service.
- DO** ensure a fair and open competitive bidding process.
- DO** select the most cost-effective service provider, with the price of the eligible products and services as the primary factor in your bid evaluation.
- DO** keep ALL records relating to the bid evaluation process (correspondence with potential service providers, winning and losing bids, worksheets, evaluation criteria, contract, etc.).
- DO** note in a memo to your files if one bid – or no bids – are received.
- DO** remember to sign and date contracts before filing the Form 471.
- DON'T** allow a service provider that may bid on your services to fill out your Form 470.
- DON'T** sign a contract until after the Form 470 (and RFP, if applicable) has been posted for 28 days.
- DON'T** accept gifts from service providers or potential providers that exceed \$20 per gift and/or \$50 annually.

Form 471

- DO** verify that the category of service featured on each Funding Request Number (FRN) on your Form 471 matches the category of service requested on the establishing Form 470.
- DO** review the Eligible Services List and request discounts only on eligible services.
- DO** complete your Item 21 Attachment – online if possible – when you file your Form 471.
- DO** check your math. The Form 471 and the Item 21 Attachment totals should match.
- DO** file electronically and **DO** certify online before the close of the window.
- DO** keep a record of postmark or electronic submission.

Form 486 and Invoicing

- DO** have your technology plan approved by a USAC-certified technology plan approver before services start.
- DO** file your Form 486 no later than 120 days after the date of your Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) or 120 days after your Form 486 Service Start Date, whichever is later.
- DO** file your Form 486 prior to submitting invoices.
- DO** invoice only for services that were approved on your Form 471 Item 21 Attachment.

* While this is not an exhaustive list, the intent is to provide guidance on many of the most common activities that involve applicants.