On-Tech Consulting, Inc.
53 Elm Place
Red Bank, NJ 07701
Voice: (732) 530-5435
Fax: (732) 530-0606
www.on-tech.com
info@on-tech.com

Introduction to the Form 472

Dan Riordan

On-Tech Consulting, Inc.

dan@on-tech.com

Introduction

On-Tech is a technology consulting firm focused on managing the E-Rate process for schools and libraries. We provide a full range of E-Rate services for applicants, including: handling the entire application process; consulting on construction projects to ensure maximum E-Rate funding; and reviewing proposals to ensure E-Rate compliance. In addition, On-Tech obtains E-Rate funding for school and library construction projects. On-Tech is not associated with any service provider.

Dan Riordan has been involved with the E-Rate since 1997, when he was trained by the New Jersey Department of Education to offer assistance to school districts in completing the application. Since then, he has worked on the E-Rate as a trainer, a district technology coordinator, and now a consultant.

Why

The Form 472 is an invoice submitted when you have paid the full amount for services covered by an E-Rate funding request, and you request the E-Rate share of the amount paid.

When

You can file a BEAR as often as you like. Most applicants file one BEAR per year.

Note that you are certifying that you have already paid the amounts listed, so you should wait until all bills are paid (though we've never heard of anyone losing funding for filing a BEAR before the check for the phone bill is cut). At On-Tech, we generally wait until August to file BEARs, to make sure that the June bills have been paid.

The deadline for filing the Form 472 is 120 days after the last date of service. For most 2012-2013 FRNs, this is October 28, 2013. If you miss the deadline, an extension is possible, but you should plan to file well before the deadline.

How

The BEAR is the one form we sometimes file on paper is not too disadvantageous. First of all, if you make an error, you can simply file another form, so no error is fatal. Second, many service providers are not familiar with or set up for the online certification process, so they will only be able to certify on paper. Finally, if you file on paper, you will have evidence of completion in front of you, whereas with the online form, you will have to log on to get the status.

The online form is easier, faster, and will catch many errors, so if you can use the online version, we recommend it.

We'll look at both formats.

Where

Go to http://www.sl.universalservice.org/menu.asp, click on the "BEAR Online" button.

You can download a paper form and instructions at
http://www.universalservice.org/sl/tools/forms.aspx

Who

The Form 472 must be filed by the billed entity, and a separate form must be filed for each service provider (though if you have more than one funding request with a service provider, you can combine both FRNs on one Form 472). The billed entity must be the billed entity from the Forms 471 and Form 486. In addition, your service provider must sign Block 4.

Block 1: Billed Entity (Organization Paying the Bills)

The Form 472 must have a single billed entity. For libraries, this may be the library or library system, or it may be the municipality. The BEN must match the BEN on the Forms 471 and 486.

Applicant Form Identifier

This can be anything that will help you remember what form this is. This ID is never used, but it can make it easier for you to find the form, so you might want to put, for example, the name of the service provider and the funding year.

Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)

The SPIN should be taken from the 471 or 486. Remember, you must prepare a separate BEAR for each service provider.

Contact

Who should you show as a contact? The contact person will be responsible for answering any questions about the application. It is possible that the contact will have to respond to questions during USAC review. In addition, if service providers have questions, they may contact this person for clarification. In our experience, contact from USAC or the service provider is rare.

Total Reimbursement Amount

If you fill out the form on your computer, this amount will autofill from page 2.

What

The Form 472 is the Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form. It certifies to USAC that the billed entity has paid for the services in the funding requests listed, and is an invoice for reimbursement of the E-Rate share of those costs.

Block 2: Line Items for Reimbursement

This is the page where you list your expenses. You can use one line per FRN (in which case you will usually use only one line). If you prefer, you can also list each bill on a separate line, but that creates unnecessary work and opportunity for typos.

Column 7 and 8

Take the 471 number and FRN from your 471 or 486. If you have more than one line from the same 471, you must repeat the 471 number on each line.

Column 9

Leave blank.

Column 10 and 11

Do **NOT** fill in BOTH columns. Fill in one or the other. In general, you will be using Column 10. For recurring services (like telephone service or Internet access), put the first date of service in the funding year in Column 10. For the BEARs you will be filling out soon, the date will be 07/2013, unless the service started in the middle of the funding year.

For non-recurring services, put the date that installation was complete in Column 11.

Column 12

Here you will put the total eligible charges. If, as we recommend, each FRN uses only one line, you will total your charges for eligible services covered by that FRN for the period 7/1/13-6/30/14.

For administrative convenience, you are allowed to use the amounts on bills sent out between July 1 and June 30. So if you receive a bill on July 15th, 2013, you can include the entire amount of that bill in Funding Year 2013-2014. You do NOT need to figure out how much of the bill is for services before July 1st.

USAC's instructions are to put in the total amount of the charges, even if it is more than the approved pre-discount amount on your Form 471. However, some service providers will not certify if the amount is more than the pre-discount amount. So our advice is to use the actual amount, but be prepared to reduce the amount to the approved pre-discount.

Column 13

On the online form, this amount will fill in automatically when you put in the FRN. For a paper form, enter the discount rate from the Form 471 Receipt Acknowledgement Letter. Note that you should enter the number as a decimal, not a percentage. So a 50% discount should be typed in as 0.5.

Column 14

For the online form, this calculates automatically. If you fill out the paper form on the computer, it will also calculate automatically. If you are completing a form by hand, multiply the amount in Column 12 by the amount in Column 13. So if you paid $1,000 under that FRN, and your discount is 70%, you would enter $700.

USAC's instructions are to put in the amount in Column 12 times the discount in Column 13, even if it is more than the approved funding amount on your Form 471. However, some service providers will not certify if the amount is more than the funding amount. So our advice is to use the actual amount, but be prepared to reduce the amount to the approved pre-discount. Note also that if you put in an amount greater than approved funding, your BEAR Notification Letter will say that the invoiced amount was reduced to remaining funding. This does not mean you lost funding, just that you hit your funding cap (which probably means you should request more next time).

At the bottom of column 14, you should see the total of all FRNs. If you have only one FRN (which will frequently be true), then just put the amount from that FRN at the bottom. That amount should also appear in Item 6 on the first page.

Block 3: Applicant Certifications

Fill out and sign this page.

Block 4: Service Provider Certifications

After you have completed and certified the paper BEAR, you will need to transmit it to the service provider for certification. You can fax, mail or scan-and-email the form to the service provider. You cannot mail the form to USAC until you have a signed page 4.

Note that if you are filing online, it is wise to notify your service provider that you have filed a BEAR online. Not all service providers monitor the online certification tool.

After You File

After you file the form (and, if submitted online, it has been certified by the service provider), it will be reviewed by USAC, and usually processed within 7 days.

Form 472 Notification Letter

Once USAC has process your BEAR, you will receive a letter with the results. Be sure to check the amounts on the later pages to be sure no unexpected amounts were taken out.

The Check

Within 20 days, USAC will send an electronic disbursement to the service provider. The service provider is then required to send a check within 20 days, though it is not unusual for service providers to miss that deadline.

More Resources

On-Tech

www.on-tech.com/erate

This handout and other E-Rate information and links are available at our Web site.

blog.on-tech.com

For a more informal discussion of the E-Rate, visit our blog. You can search for a topic of interest to you and get an insider's view.

If you have specific questions, contact us.
    Email: info@on-tech.com
    Phone: 732-530-5435

Schools & Libraries Division (SLD)

www.usac.org/sl

This Web site is a wealth of information, and the information is official. Start by pointing at the light blue "Schools and Library Applicants" button, and selecting the relevant step.

File online at: http://www.sl.universalservice.org/menu.asp

Download paper forms at: http://www.universalservice.org/sl/tools/required-forms.aspx