

E-Rate Pre-Commitment Process

2022 Applicant and Service Provider Training

October 20, 2022



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

DISCLAIMER

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

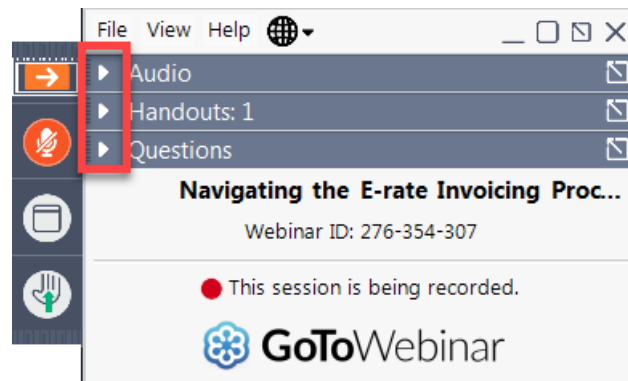
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Housekeeping – Webinar Panel

- The webinar panel is located on the right-hand side of the screen.
- Open the panel by clicking the orange arrow.

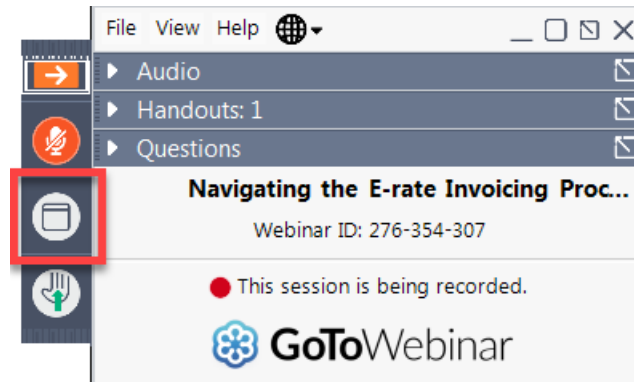


- Use the white arrows to open the sections in the panel.

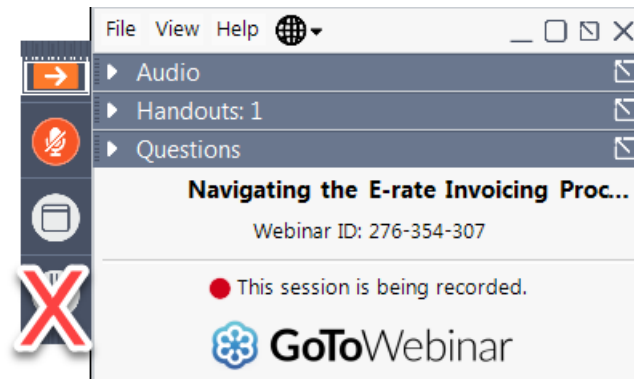


Housekeeping – Webinar Panel

- You can use the panel to view the presentation in full screen or window mode.

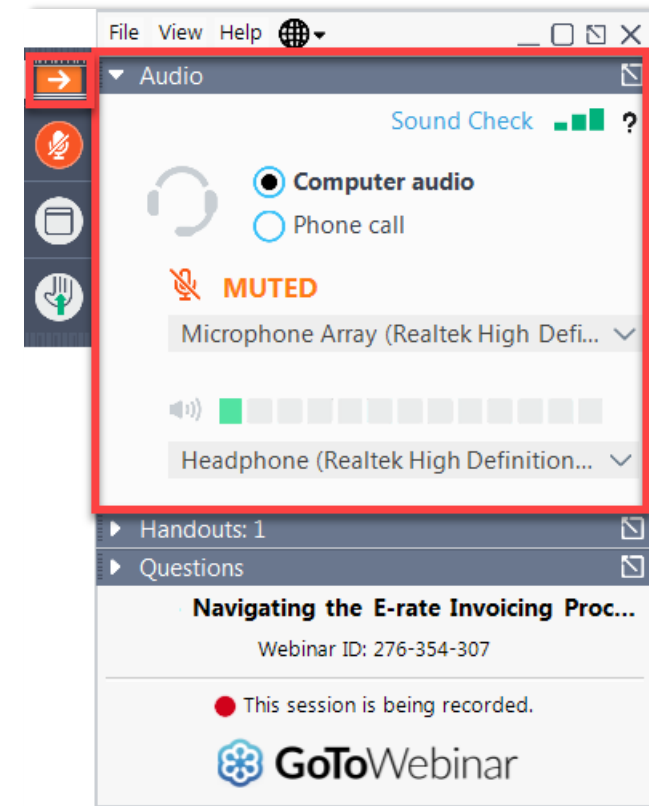


- We are not using the hand raise function.



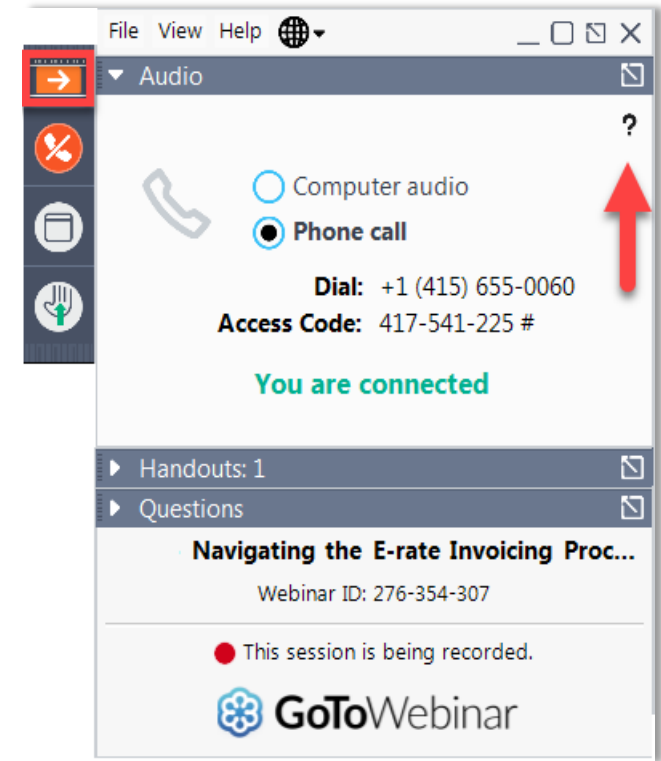
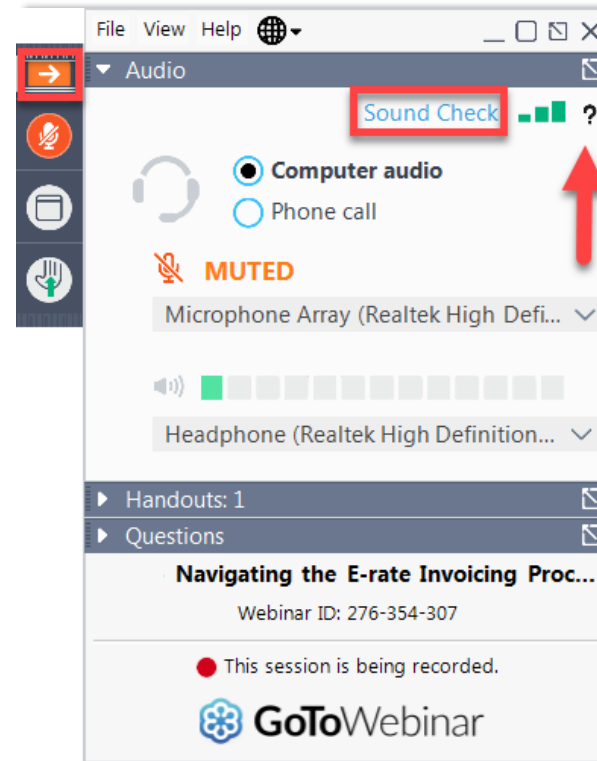
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- Use the “Audio” section of your control panel to select an audio source.
- Choose one of the audio options:
 - Your computer's audio
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- The audience will remain on mute.



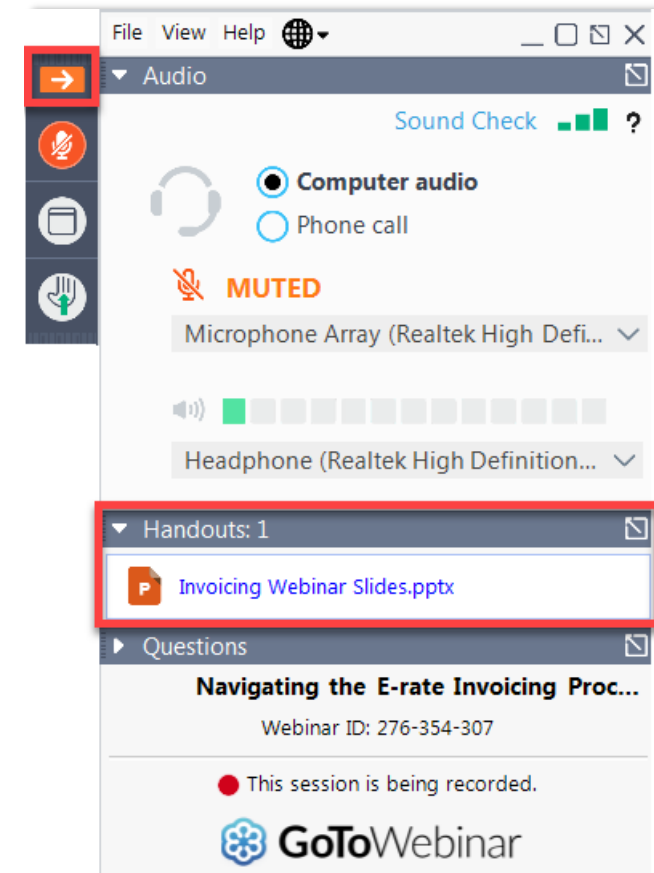
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- Use the “Sound Check” link and click question mark icon for audio help.
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- If issues persist, call 833-851-8340 to troubleshoot with GoToWebinar.



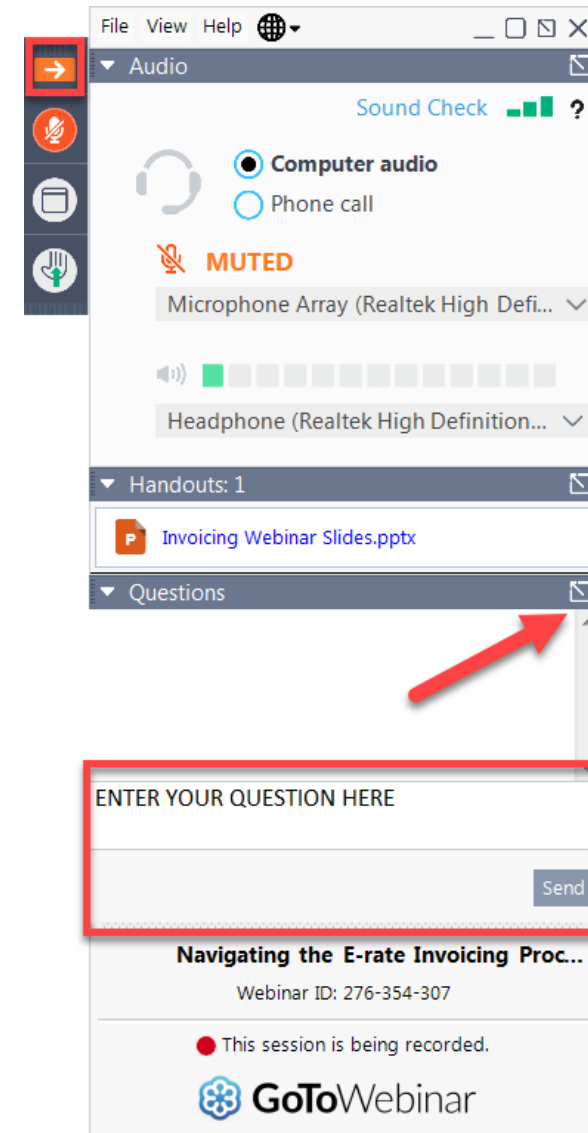
Housekeeping – Resources

- The **slide deck** is available when you click the arrow to expand the “**Handouts**” tab.
 - Links within the deck are clickable
- A recording of this webinar will be available after the event.



Housekeeping – Q&A

- **There will be a live Q&A session focused on today's topics.**
- Tips for submitting questions:
 - Use the “Questions” box in your webinar control panel anytime during the presentation.
 - Click the box with the arrow above the questions box to expand it and see all written answers.
 - Write in full sentences.
 - Ask one question at a time.
 - Ask questions related to webinar content.



The screenshot displays a webinar control panel with several sections:

- Audio:** Includes a "Sound Check" indicator, a "MUTED" status, and options for "Computer audio" (selected) and "Phone call". It also shows microphone and headphone settings.
- Handouts:** Lists "Invoicing Webinar Slides.pptx".
- Questions:** A section with a red arrow pointing to a box containing the text "ENTER YOUR QUESTION HERE" and a "Send" button.
- Footer:** Displays the webinar title "Navigating the E-rate Invoicing Proc...", the ID "Webinar ID: 276-354-307", a recording status "This session is being recorded.", and the "GoToWebinar" logo.

E-Rate Customer Service Center (CSC)



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Create a customer service case in the
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1. Log in to EPC.
2. Select the **Contact Us** link from the upper right menu on the landing page.

Meet Our Team



Lisette LaForge

Program Analyst | E-rate program



Nkeshi Free

Communications Specialist | E-rate

Agenda

- Application Process
- Competitive Bidding (FCC Form 470)
- Requesting Funding (FCC Form 471)
- Application Review
- Funding Commitments
- Document Retention

Application Process

Know Your Role

Applicants	Service Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine services needed, file FCC Form 470 and a Request For Proposal (RFP) if one is needed. • Run competitive bidding process. • Select winning bidder, with price of eligible products and services as primary factor. • File FCC Form 471 and Respond to Program Integrity Assurance (PIA). • File other applicant forms (FCC Forms 486, 472, 500, etc.). • Document compliance with FCC rules on an ongoing basis. • Retain documentation for at least ten years from last date of service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to FCC Form 470 and RFPs. • Know the E-Rate eligibility percentage of products and services • After selection, may assist with responding to PIA on technical services questions (but not competitive bidding). • File other service provider forms (FCC Form 473, 474, etc.). • Document compliance on FCC rules on an ongoing basis. • Retain documentation for at least ten years from last date of service delivery.

Application Process - Overview

Pre-Commitment Steps

Request services
(FCC Form 470),
run a competitive
bid process, and
select a vendor

Request funding
(FCC Form 471)
and undergo
application review

Post-Commitment Steps

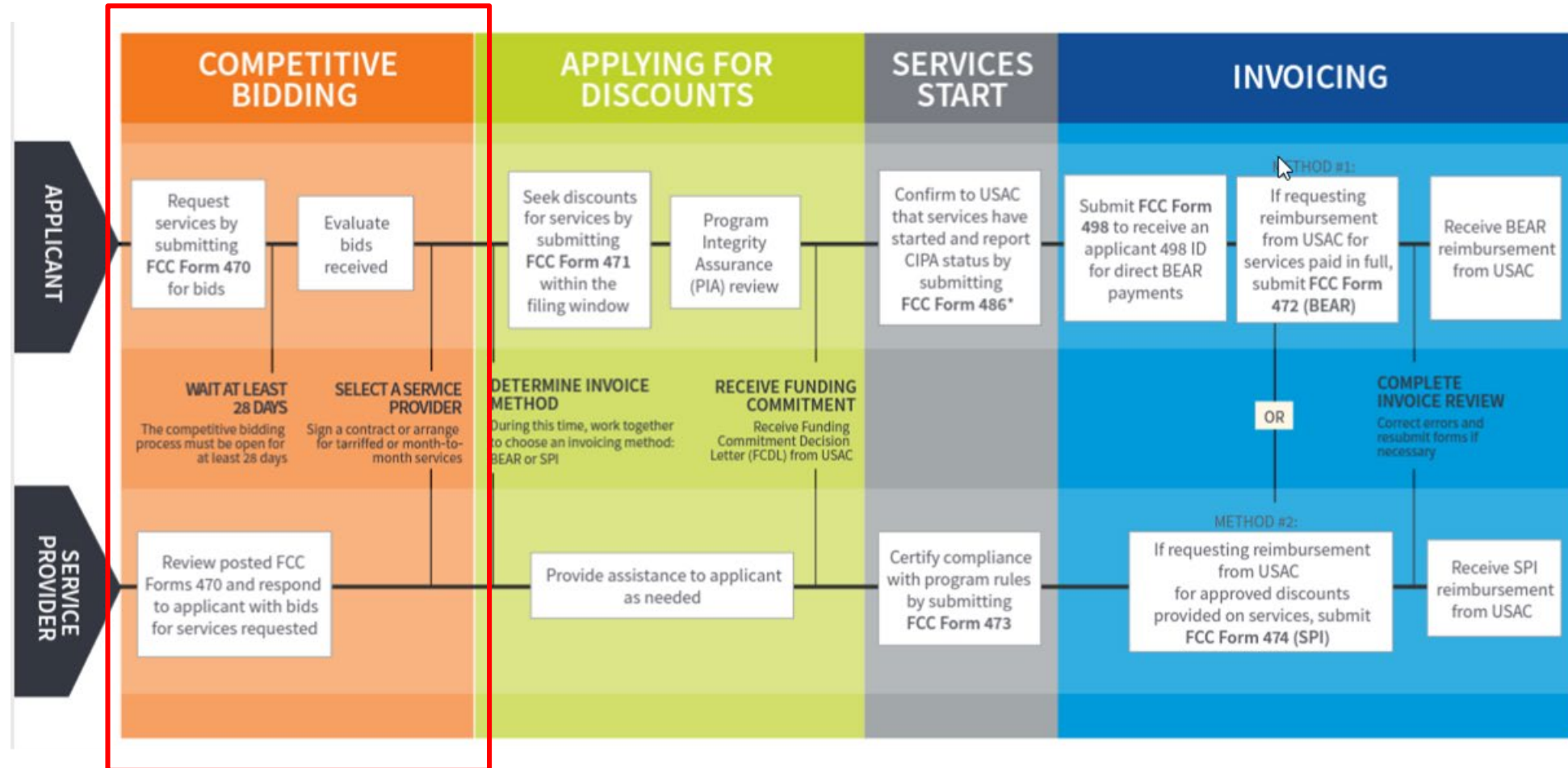
Confirm the start
of services and
status of CIPA
compliance
(FCC Form 486)

Request
reimbursements
(FCC Form 472)
OR receive
discounts
(FCC Form 474)

- See the [E-Rate Program Registration checklist](#) for tips to get started
- Call our Customer Service Center at (888) 203-8100 to set up an account in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) and make sure your school or library has an entity number (also called a Billed Entity Number or BEN).

Competitive Bidding – FCC Form 470

Competitive Bidding Is The First Step In The E-Rate Application Process



What Is Competitive Bidding?

- Competitive bidding is the formal process for applicants to choose the vendors/service providers who will provide the requested products and services.
- Service providers review an applicant's FCC Form 470 for requested products and services, any procurement requirements and then submit bids.



Exemptions to Competitive Bidding

- Commercially Available Business class Internet Option (CABIO) services are exempt if they meet all of the following requirements:
 - **Commercially available:** This means that it is publicly available to non-residential in the same form and at the same rates that it is offered to schools or libraries.
 - **Low cost:** This means that the total annual pre-discount cost for the service, including any one-time costs such as installation, does not exceed **\$3,600 per year per school or library**.
 - **High-speed:** This means that the service must provide bandwidth speeds of at least 100 Mbps downstream and 10 Mbps upstream.
- An applicant utilizing CABIO services should:
 - Create your contract record (if applicable; see video “Creating a Contract Record for CABIO Services”)
 - File your FCC Form 471 funding application to request E-Rate support

Important to understand before filing

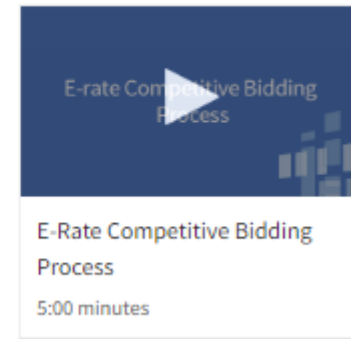
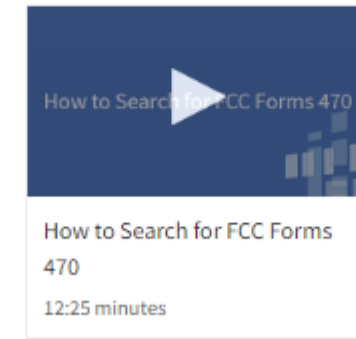
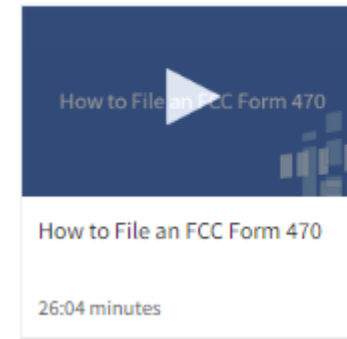
- What Category/ies of Service and Service Type(s) you are bidding for. These need to be consistent between your FCC Form 470 and FCC Form 471
- What equipment/services are **100% eligible** under E-Rate
- What equipment/services are only **partially eligible** under E-Rate
- What is “mixed bucket” eligibility?
- If you don’t understand, contact
 - Our [Customer Service Center](#)
 - The manufacturer (in the case of equipment)
 - Your service provider

More information on Competitive Bidding

For more information, see the following links:

- [FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding](#) webinar
- [Competitive Bidding Infographic](#)
- [Guiding Statements Reference Table](#)
- File and certify FCC Form 470 through the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) (for more detail, see [FCC Form 470 videos](#) entitled **E-Rate Competitive Bidding Process** and **How to file an FCC Form 470**)
- Service Providers – see video entitled **How to Search for FCC Forms 470**

FCC Form 470 and Competitive Bidding



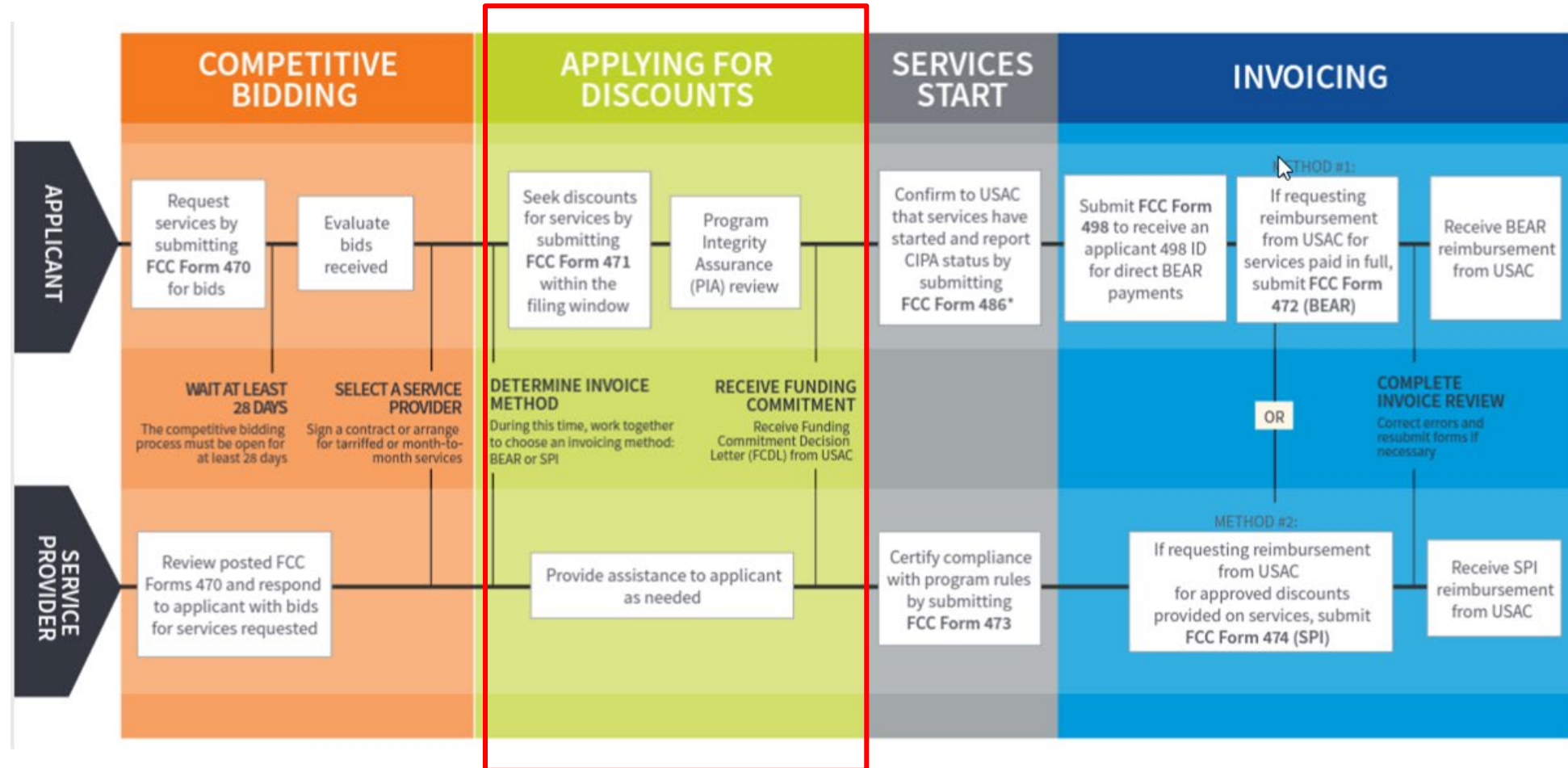
Pro-Tip - Calculate your FCC Form 470 deadline

- The FCC Form 470 generally becomes available one year in advance of the funding year in question. For services starting on July 1, 2023, the 470 can be filed as early July 1, 2022.
- The FCC Form 470 requires a 28-day waiting period, with service provider selection occurring on or after the 29th day after filing.
- With an FCC Form 470 Application Filing window from January to March, it is important to remember to file the FCC Form 470 in time to be able to wait 28 days, select a service provider and file an FCC Form 471 before the close of the filing window.

Example: The [December 2021 Newsbrief](#) announced a filing window from January 12, 2022 through March 22, 2022 for services starting on July 1, 2022 (Funding Year 2022). Filing an FCC Form 470 on February 1 would allow you to waiting **at least** 28 days, select a service provider **on or after the 29th day** and file an FCC Form 471 to request USAC funding in window

Requesting Funding – FCC Form 471

Applying for Discounts is the second Step In The E-Rate Application Process



FCC Form 471 Overview

- Applicants file an FCC Form 471 (Description of Services ordered and Certification Form) to request funding for eligible services and equipment for the upcoming funding year.
- Applicants must
 - Include information on the recipients of service and service provider(s)
 - Provide detailed descriptions of services, including costs, requested equipment and dates of service and
 - Certify compliance with program rules

Before you file – Update your EPC Profile

- If you are a new applicant, you will need to create an account in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC)
- If you are a returning applicant, you need to update your EPC account information during the **Administrative Window**, which typically occurs between October and December
 - It is important to verify the accuracy of the information during the administrative window because **USAC automatically updates profile information to match information on the most recently filed FCC Form 471**. These updates impact Student Count, NSLP and CEP numbers, and library square footage
- During the Application Filing window, any changes to your EPC profile that would impact your discount will be prohibited. EPC is “locked” at this point.

What is the FCC Form 471 Application Window?

The **FCC Form 471 Application Window** refers to the time every year when the **FCC Form 471** application is available to file in EPC.

- It occurs annually between January and March is announced in the E-Rate News Brief each December. Subscribe to the [E-Rate News Brief](#) to be notified of the Application Window and other timely program information.
- This is a firm deadline and based on FCC Rules
- It cannot be waived without express written permission from the FCC

Pro-Tip – Your FCC Form 470 and FCC Form 471 must match

- Your FCC Form 470 and FCC Form 471 should match, in terms of service type.
- If you bid for two categories of service on your FCC Form 470, and invoice USAC for three categories of service, this implies that additional information, other than what was competitively bid for, may have influenced the selection of service provider.
 - This discrepancy cannot be corrected after the fact.
 - To avoid a competitive bidding violation, if there is time before the FCC Form 471 deadline, you would need to recertify the FCC Form 470 with the additional service type, wait an additional 28 days and select a service provider on or after the 29th day.

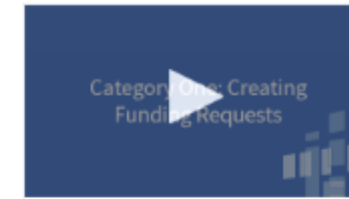
How to file FCC Form 471

- After you have selected a service provider, and made sure that your profile contains the most accurate information, gather information you will need to file your FCC Form 471 (see [FCC Form 471 Checklist](#))
- File FCC Form 471 through the E-Rate Productivity Center
- For more information on the FCC Form 471 application process, see [FCC Form 471 Videos](#) on the E-Rate website.

FCC Form 471



Category One: Starting Your
FCC Form 471
3:38 minutes



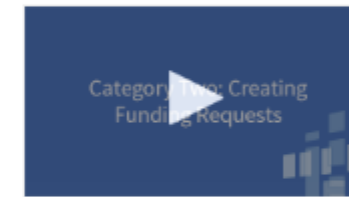
Category One: Creating
Funding Requests
9:25 minutes



Category One: Certification
4:30 minutes



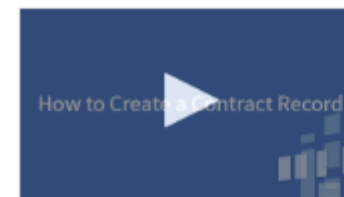
Category Two: Starting Your
FCC Form 471
4:32 minutes



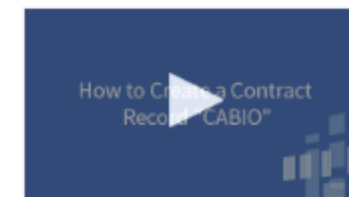
Category Two: Creating
Funding Requests
13:03 minutes



Category Two: Certification
4:31 minutes



How to Create a Contract
Record
5:59 minutes



How to Create a Contract
Record "CABIO"
4:55 minutes

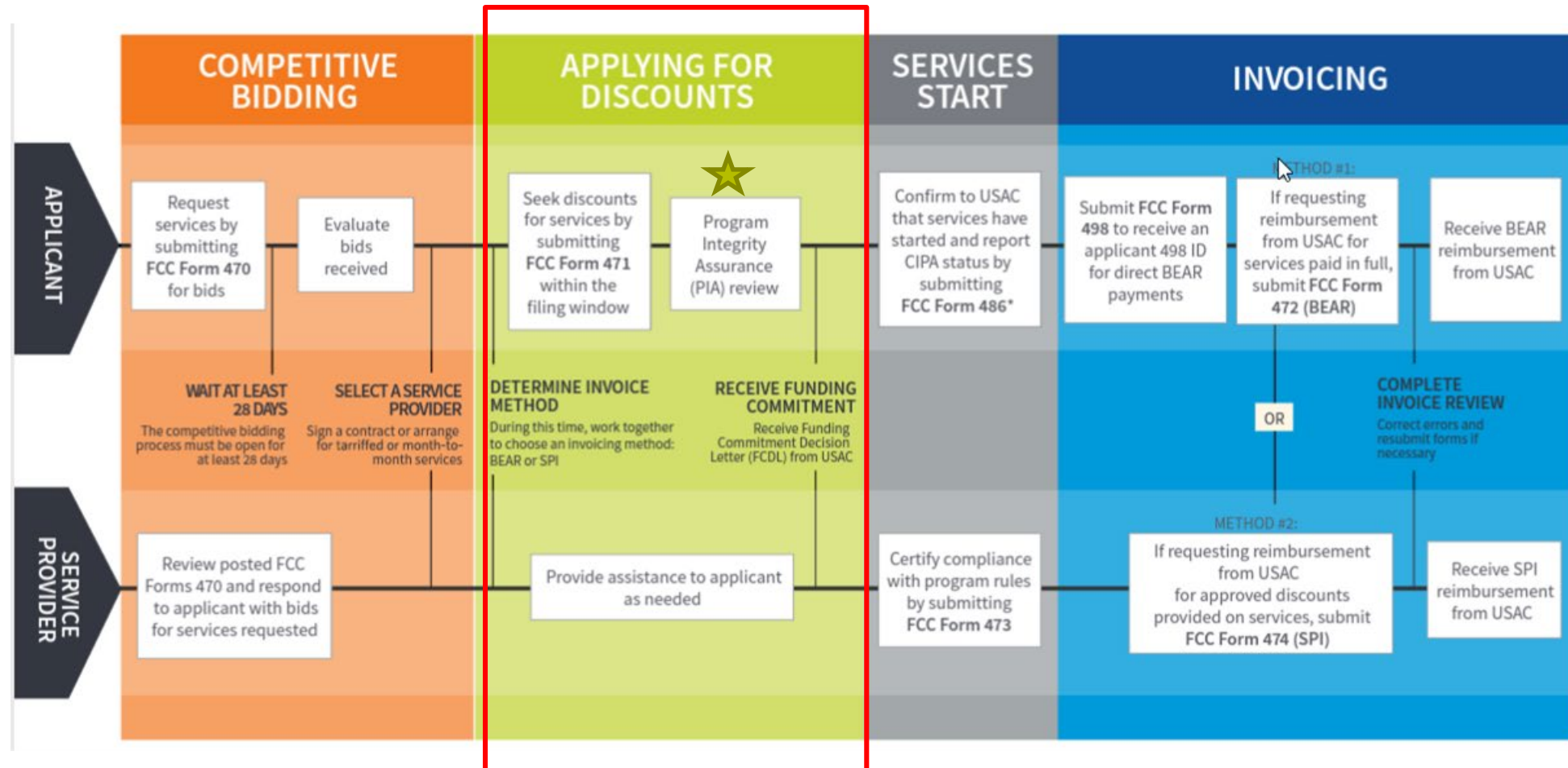
“Out of Filing Window” Applications

- If you certified your FCC Form 470 after February 22, 2022, you would still have need to wait 28 days before certifying FCC Form 471, which means you will not be able to certify your FCC Form 471 before the filing window closes on March 22. ♦
- You can still submit and certify your FCC Form 471 after waiting the 28 days and after March 22, but USAC cannot consider your FCC Form 471 unless the FCC grants a waiver.
- FCC Window Waiver
 - USAC cannot approve appeals or waiver requests that ask for a waiver of the E-Rate program rules— you must file a request for waiver with the FCC.
 - Basic instructions for filing the FCC Window Waiver Requests is on the [FCC Form 471 Filing](#) page.

Application Review

Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) Review

After applicants certify an FCC Form 471 within the filing window, PIA reviewers check the information on the form for completeness and accuracy



Before your PIA Review - Review your FCC Form 471

- After certifying your FCC Form 471, and while you are waiting for your PIA review, there are some areas you should double-check for accuracy.
- If you find any information that should be corrected or updated, you can submit a [Receipt Acknowledgment Letter \(RAL\) Modification Request](#).
- If you are using a new or existing contract on your FCC Form 471, you must have a contract **record** uploaded to your EPC profile.
 - To create that record, go to your organization page and click **Contracts**, then **Manage Contracts** and **Add a New Contract**.

PIA review resources

- For a deep dive on the PIA Review process, please view the following:
 - [PIA and Selective Review Process Webinar](#)
 - [Application Review](#) page on the E-Rate website

Funding Commitments

Funding Commitment Decision Letter

- After the PIA review process has been completed, USAC issues a **Funding Commitment Decision Letter** (FCDL) containing USAC's decisions on your funding requests.
- You can find this decision in the **News feed** in your organization's E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) account.
- You should review this decision carefully, as it contains important information both for planning the start of the receipt of services and for completing the additional steps in the application process.
- If you disagree with one or more of the decisions in your FCDL, you can appeal to USAC.

Document Retention

Document Retention

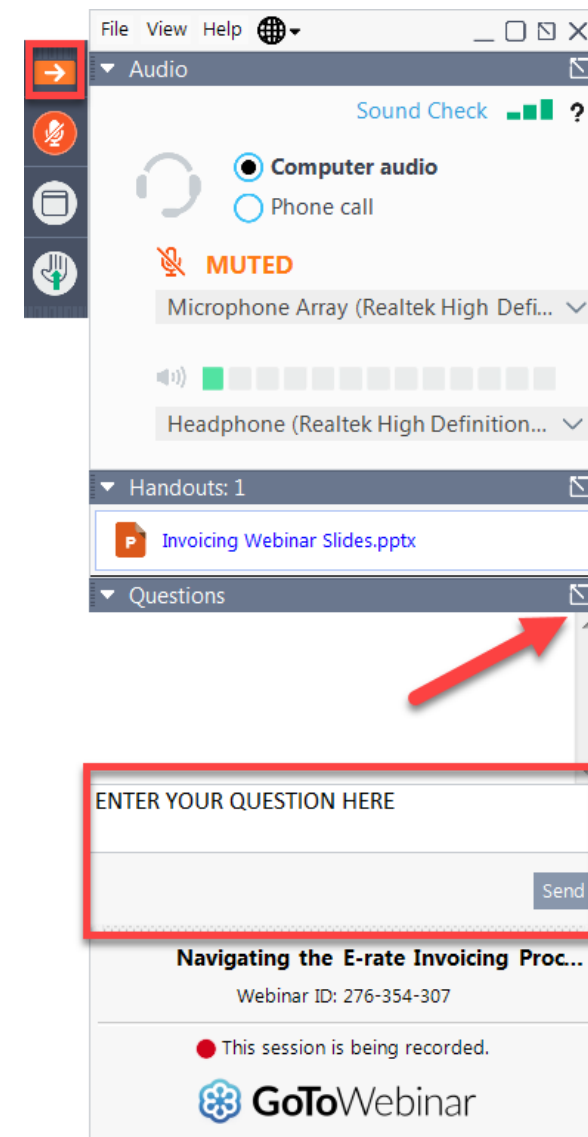
- You must keep all documentation for 10 years from the last date to receive service
 - Here are some examples of documentation that would be needed for pre-planning and step one:
 - Evidence of eligibility for E-Rate participation
 - Proof of square footage
 - Bids received
 - Evaluation matrix
- Retain receipt and delivery records relating to pre-bidding, bidding, contracts, application process, invoices, provision of services and other matters relating to your applications
 - For example, with recurring internet access service for FY2022, both the applicant and the service provider **must retain all records** until at least June 30, 2033

Additional Resources

- Visit the [E-Rate Website](#)
- Subscribe to the [E-Rate Newsbrief](#)
- Attend [E-Rate Webinars](#)
- View [E-Rate Training Videos](#)
- [E-Rate Process Flow Chart](#)
- [E-Rate Registration Checklist](#)
- [FCC Form 471 Submission Checklist](#)

Housekeeping – Q&A

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Questions?

E-Rate Customer Service Center (CSC)



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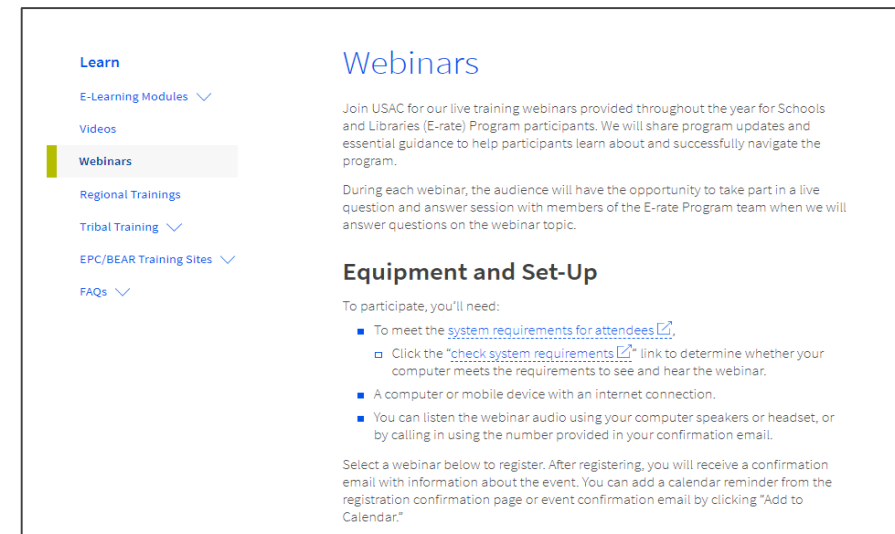
Upcoming Webinars

**Our next webinar is on:
October 24 at 2 p.m. ET**

Category Two Budgets

Recommended for: Applicants and
service providers

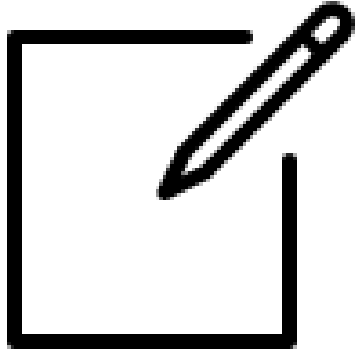
E-Rate Experience Level: All



The screenshot shows a webpage with a navigation menu on the left and main content on the right. The navigation menu includes: Learn, E-Learning Modules (with a dropdown arrow), Videos, Webinars (highlighted with a yellow bar), Regional Trainings, Tribal Training (with a dropdown arrow), EPC/BEAR Training Sites (with a dropdown arrow), and FAQs (with a dropdown arrow). The main content area is titled "Webinars" and contains the following text: "Join USAC for our live training webinars provided throughout the year for Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program participants. We will share program updates and essential guidance to help participants learn about and successfully navigate the program." Below this is a paragraph: "During each webinar, the audience will have the opportunity to take part in a live question and answer session with members of the E-rate Program team when we will answer questions on the webinar topic." A section titled "Equipment and Set-Up" follows, with the text "To participate, you'll need:" and a list of requirements: "To meet the [system requirements for attendees](#), Click the [\"check system requirements\"](#) link to determine whether your computer meets the requirements to see and hear the webinar." "A computer or mobile device with an internet connection." "You can listen the webinar audio using your computer speakers or headset, or by calling in using the number provided in your confirmation email." At the bottom, it says: "Select a webinar below to register. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about the event. You can add a calendar reminder from the registration confirmation page or event confirmation email by clicking \"Add to Calendar.\"",

Go to the E-Rate [Webinars](#)
page for additional
information.

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- We appreciate your feedback!

Thank You!



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