

The Term	Our Definition
498 Company Officer	The officer of a service provider company who is authorized to certify that data set forth in the FCC Form 498 is true, accurate, and complete. The 498 Company Officer has access to certify forms through the E-File system and occupies a position specified in the corporate by-laws (or partnership agreement), and would typically be president, vice president of operations, vice president of finance, comptroller, treasurer, or a comparable position. If the reporting entity is a sole proprietorship, the owner must sign the certification.
499 Company Officer	A person who occupies a position specified in the corporate by-laws (or partnership agreement), and would typically be president, vice president for operations, vice president for finance, comptroller, treasurer, or a comparable position. If the reporting entity is a sole proprietorship, the owner must sign the certification. This person must review and certify the information reported on the FCC Forms 499-A/Q. The latest 499 Company Officer on file has access to certify forms through the E-File system.
annual A/Q true up	A comparison between a company's actual revenue (as reported on the FCC Form 499-A) and the prior billings that were based on projections from the FCC Form 499-Q of collected end-user revenue. USAC conducts the annual true up each July, after companies submit the FCC Form 499-A in April.
appeal	An appeal is a request to reconsider a USAC decision. Appeals can be made to either USAC or the FCC. Appeals must be filed within 60 days of the original USAC decision. Requests for waivers of rules must be filed directly with the FCC.
audit	A review of documentation and resources that verify the state of compliance with program rules.
Automated Clearing House (ACH)	An electronic clearing house and settlement system for exchanging electronic transactions among banking institutions.
Beneficiary and Contributor Audit Program (BCAP)	Run by USAC, and carried out by auditors trained in universal service and program audit requirements, these audits of beneficiaries and contributors serve to identify noncompliance with program rules and amounts of recoverable funds.
Board of Directors	USAC Board of Directors
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	Corporate officer responsible for financial operations.
Commission	The short name for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). See "FCC."
common carrier	An organization recognized by a regulatory authority (such as a state public utility commission) to provide telecommunications services to all requesting parties, or an organization that holds itself out to provide such services generally to the public for a fee.
contributor	A company that, based on the revenue reported on the FCC Forms 499-A/Q, is required to pay contributions directly to the universal service fund.
CORES ID	A 10-digit number that the FCC assigns to a business or individual that registers with the FCC. It is associated with an entity's Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and is required before filing FCC Forms 499-A/Q.
credit balance refund	A disbursement made to a universal service fund contributor in the event that the contributor has overpaid USAC.
Data Collection Agent (DCA)	USAC is the FCC's agent responsible for the administration, processing, filing and distribution of carrier revenue data for the Telecommunications Relay Services Fund — the cost recovery mechanisms for numbering administration and local number portability, and the universal service programs.
<i>de minimis</i> exception	Status associated with companies whose revenue reported on a particular FCC Form 499-A would result in less than \$10,000 in annual contributions. In these cases, the company is exempt from paying directly to the universal service fund.
Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA)	A law that requires federal agencies to transfer delinquent debts or claims to the Secretary of Treasury (Treasury) for further collection action. Unpaid obligations to the universal service fund are subject to the DCIA. In the event that a balance becomes over 120 days past due, (or 90 days past due for service providers), USAC will transfer the debt to the Treasury for further collection and enforcement actions.
delegated users	The employee(s) of a service provider company authorized to enter and modify company information on FCC Forms 498 and 499 through the E-File application. Also known as "authorized users," these individuals are established by the Company Officer or General Contact.
delinquency notices	Monthly letters that companies receive if they have fallen behind on payments owed to the universal service fund. A company could receive more than one notice in one month if they are behind on more than one invoice.
delinquent debt	Any portion of an amount owed to the universal service fund that is not paid by the due date stated on the respective invoice. Amounts remaining unpaid 30 days after the payment due date are subject to interest at an annual rate of prime plus 3.5 percent. Amounts remaining unpaid 90 days after the payment due date are subject to an additional penalty at an annual rate of six percent.
Detailed Audit Finding Worksheet (DAF)	A worksheet that contains background information and notes the basis of an exception during an audit.
e-certification (E-Cert)	Process that allows applicants to certify and submit forms online, eliminating the need for a paper form with an original signature.
E-File	USAC's online forms submission tool, available at <a href="https://forms.universalservice.org">https://forms.universalservice.org</a> .
eligible services	Products and services that are eligible for universal service support.
eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC)	A designation given to telecommunications service providers by their state public utility commissions or the FCC, enabling them to participate in universal service programs.

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estimation factor	A percentage value provided in the FCC Form 499-A and FCC Form 499-Q instructions that help companies calculate possible future thresholds of contribution requirements and determining whether they are likely to be <i>de minimis</i> .
ETC	See "eligible telecommunications carrier."
FCC circularity factor	A percentage value applied to revenues established quarterly by the FCC to eliminate the circularity of being assessed universal service fees on pass-through charges.
FCC contribution factor	A percentage value applied to revenues established quarterly by the FCC to indicate what portion of interstate and international end-user revenue that FCC Forms 499-A/Q filers must contribute to the universal service fund.
FCC Form 498	The Service Provider Identification Number and Contact Information Form is an FCC form that service providers must fill out in order to participate in any of the universal service programs. The form is used to collect contact, remittance, and payment information for service providers that receive universal service support.
FCC Form 498 Company Officer	See "498 Company Officer."
FCC Form 498 delegated users	See "delegated users."
FCC Form 498 General Contact	See "General Contact."
FCC Form 499 Company Officer	See "499 Company Officer."
FCC Form 499 delegated users	See "delegated users."
FCC Form 499 estimation factor	A percentage value provided in the FCC Form 499-A and FCC Form 499-Q instructions that helps companies calculate possible future thresholds of contribution requirements and determining whether they are likely to be <i>de minimis</i> .
FCC Form 499 Preparer	See "Preparer."
FCC Form 499-A	The Annual Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet Form is an FCC form that telecommunications companies (whether they are <i>de minimis</i> or not) are required to submit to USAC every year by April 1, to report revenues they received from offering services.
FCC Form 499-Q	The Quarterly Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet Form is an FCC form that telecommunications companies are required to use to calculate their mandatory contributions to universal service each quarter. The forms are due to USAC on Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, and Nov. 1, annually.
FCC Registration Number	See "CORES ID."
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)	The U.S. government agency that regulates interstate and international communications and oversees the universal service fund. In 1997, the FCC designated USAC to be the independent not-for-profit corporation to administer the universal service fund in accordance with its rules.
Federal Financial Management Improvement Act 1996 (FFMIA)	This act defines the financial operations requirements for government entities and this act would apply to the universal service fund as a result of the FCC Government Accounting Order.
Federal Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (Federal GAAP)	The standards for government agencies that will apply to the fund effective with the Government Accounting Order.
Filer ID	Identification number assigned to each entity filing the FCC Forms 499-A/Q. USAC automatically issues a new Filer ID upon the first FCC Form 499-A filed by a company.
Filer ID Deactivation Request	In the event that a company needs to deactivate their six-digit USAC-generated Filer ID, due to a company sale, merger, consolidation, bankruptcy, termination of business, or because the company no longer provides services that are subject to direct universal service fund contributions, it is that company's responsibility to notify USAC of the deactivation request as described on USAC's website and to update their company information in the FCC CORES database.
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)	The federal statute requiring access to information. Through the FCC, USAC is often called upon to respond to Freedom of Information Act requests.
General Accounting Office (GAO)	An agency that reports to Congress, who asks the GAO to study the programs and expenditures of the federal government. It studies how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars, evaluates federal programs, audits expenditures and issues legal opinions.
General Contact	The employee of a service provider company who filled out the FCC Form 498. This individual is listed on Line 8. The latest General Contact on file has access to submit and modify data in the E-file system, and to create delegated or authorized users.

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Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAPP)	Uniform minimum standards of and guidelines to financial accounting and reporting. The Financial Accounting Standards Board and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board are authorized to establish these principles.
Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)	Standards promulgated by the Auditing Standards Board (ASB) of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) These standards are recognized by state boards of accountancy and the SEC. GAAS consists primarily of 10 standards and accompanying statements on auditing standards or "SAS."
Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS)	The standards that apply to all government audits and will apply to audits of the fund and fund recipients effective with the Government Accounting Order.
Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA)	A law passed in 2010 to amend IPIA and enhance the federal government's practices to measure and recover improper payments.
Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA)	A 2002 law that requires USAC to provide the FCC with accurate, timely information about improper payments to program beneficiaries. To comply, USAC created its Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program, which assesses specific payments made to beneficiaries in all four programs to determine if these payments were made in accordance with FCC rules. Using results of these assessments, USAC calculates estimates of improper payment rates and provides this information to the FCC.
Internet service provider (ISP)	A company that provides Internet access service (also referred to as a service provider).
interstate telecommunications	All telecommunications services that cross state or international borders. This includes but is not limited to: wireless telephony, including cellular and personal communications services; paging and messaging services; dispatch services; mobile radio services; operator services; access to interexchange service; special access; wide area telecommunications services; subscriber toll-free services; 900 services; message telephone services; private line; telex; telegraph; video services; satellite services; resale services; frame relay and ATM services; and interconnected VoIP services.
local number portability (LNP)	The ability of telephone consumers to retain their telephone number when switching from one company to another. Information collected on the FCC Form 499-A is also used to calculate contributions to the Local Number Portability Administration (LNPA).
Memorandum Opinion and Order (MO&O)	Order issued by the Commission to deny a petition for rulemaking, modify a decision, grant or deny a petition for reconsideration, or grant or deny an application for review of a decision. A second or third Memorandum Opinion and Order (2 <sup>nd</sup> MO&O/3 <sup>rd</sup> MO&O) may be issued.
National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA)	Parent company of USAC. Formed by the FCC as a not-for-profit corporation, NECA plays an important role in administering the FCC's access charge plan, which helps ensure telephone service remains available and affordable in all parts of the country.
National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)	Part of the Department of Commerce, NTIA is responsible for telecommunications policy and provides telecommunications grants to various entities.
North American Numbering Plan (NANP)	The integrated telephone numbering plan serving 19 North American countries. Information collected on the FCC Form 499-A is also used to calculate contributions to the North American Numbering Plan Administration (NANPA).
Notice of Apparent Liability (NAL)	An order issued by the FCC that provides a penalty will be imposed on a carrier for violating an FCC rule or procedure.
Notice of Inquiry (NOI)	Adopted by the Commissioners primarily for fact-gathering; which is a way to seek comments from the public or industry on a specific issue.
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)	An announcement issued by the FCC to detail proposed changes to FCC rules and policies and seek public comment on the changes.
Office of Inspector General (OIG)	A division of the FCC that provides independent and objective audits and investigations relating to agency programs and operations.
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	Part of the Executive Office of the President, OMB reviews and approves FCC forms that are used by universal service contributors and universal service program participants, contributors and service providers.
Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program	USAC's own program, created to comply with IPIA, which assesses specific payments made to beneficiaries in all four programs to determine if these payments were made in accordance with FCC rules. Using results of these assessments, USAC calculates estimates of improper payment rates and provides this information to the FCC.
Preparer	The employee of company that filed an FCC Form 499-A/Q. This individual is listed on the FCC Form 499-Q Line 108 and FCC Form 499-A Line 203. The latest preparer on file has access to submit and modify data in the E-File system.

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Public Notice (PN)	A notice issued by the FCC to notify the public of an action taken, a change made, or an upcoming event.
Red Light Rule	A requirement that the FCC withholds action on an application, payment, and/or other requests for benefits when the universal service program participant is delinquent in non-tax debts owed to the FCC or other federal governmental agencies. This rule extends to applications for support and disbursements from the universal service fund, and requires that USAC suspend support to any company that shares a Tax Identification Number with a company that has a delinquent debt.
Red Light status	An entity is considered in Red Light status when the Red Light Rule goes into effect (the entity is delinquent). See "Red Light Rule." USAC will not make any disbursements until the delinquency has been satisfied or payment arrangements are made. USAC takes into consideration the Red Light status of each entity at the FCC and will hold disbursements until the Red Light status is resolved.
service provider	A company that participates in one of four universal service programs and provides telecommunications or Internet services, equipment, hardware, or software. Types of companies include but are not limited to: competitive access/competitive local exchange carriers (cellular, personal communications, or specialized mobile radio providers), incumbent local exchange carriers, interexchange carriers, Internet service providers, interconnected VoIP, local resellers (coaxial cable, non-traditional, operator, paging, messaging, payphone, prepaid card, private and satellite service providers), shared-tenant service providers or building local exchange carriers, SMR (dispatch), toll resellers, or wireless data providers.
Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)	A unique number that USAC assigns to each service provider once that service provider has submitted the FCC Form 498 to USAC. Every service provider is required to have a SPIN in order to participate in any universal service programs and to receive payments from USAC.
Study Area Code (SAC)	A unique number that USAC assigns to ETCs that uniquely identifies that company based on its service area. Companies must have at least one SAC per state in which they operate, but can have more than one SAC within a state if they have more than one service area.
telecommunications	The transmission, between or among points specified by the user, of information of the user's choosing, without change in the form or content of the information as sent and received.
telecommunications carrier	Common carrier, as defined by the FCC, is an entity that provides telecommunications service including interexchange carriers, wireless carriers, and competitive local exchange carriers (also referred to as service provider).
telecommunications relay services (TRS)	A type of telephone service that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls. Information collected on the FCC Form 499-A is also used to calculate contributions to the Telecommunications Relay Service Administration.
universal service	Under the authority of the 1996 Telecom Act, the FCC created universal service as well as the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the organization charged with administering universal service. Companies make contributions based on revenues from providing international and interstate telecommunications services.
Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)	An independent, not-for-profit corporation created by the FCC in 1997 to administer the four universal service programs which help provide communities across the country with access to affordable telecommunications services.
universal service fund (USF)	Money collected from telecommunications companies and dedicated to fulfilling the goals of universal service. Under the authority of the 1996 Telecom Act, the FCC created the USF as well as the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the organization charged with administering universal service. Companies make contributions to universal service based on revenues from providing international and interstate telecommunications services.
Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)	A technology that allows users to make phone calls using the same line as an Internet connection.
Whistleblower Alert/ "Code 9 Call"	This hotline allows members of the public to report suspected violations of program rules to USAC. These reports can be made anonymously and toll free by calling (888) 203-8100.