# New E-rate Form 472 "BEAR" Reimbursement Filing Guide



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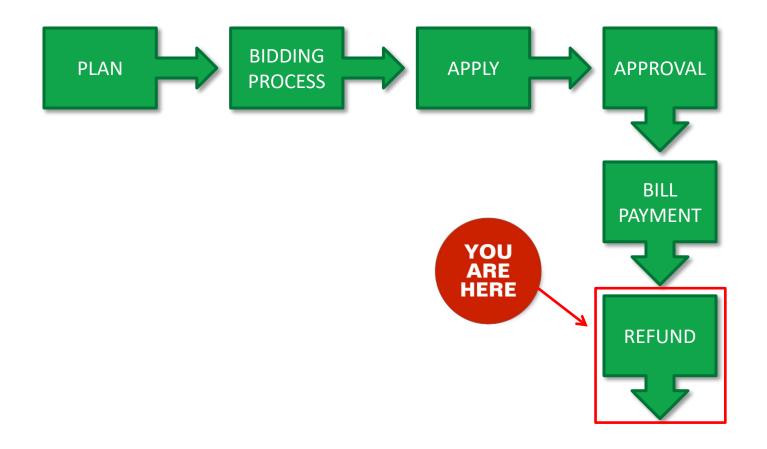
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STATE E-RATE COURDINATORS ALLIANCE

## Where does the BEAR / Form 472 fall in the E-Rate process?







## The Basics



## What is the FCC Form 472 (BEAR)?

- An indication of monies paid in full for eligible products and services for which an FCDL has been awarded
- A request for reimbursement of the discount portion of the amount paid by the applicant



Form 472 (BEAR)

Slide 6

## When can I file a BEAR?

#### A BEAR cannot be filed until:

- A Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) with a positive commitment has been received
- A Form 486 has been filed and processed (indicating services have started)
- The service provider has filed an FCC Form 473, Service Provider Annual Certification (SPAC) Form for the associated funding year and SPIN
- The service provider has billed the applicant for the entire cost of services for the period for which reimbursement is being sought (e.g. the monthly invoice for MRC costs or the one-time invoice for NRC costs)
- The services have been delivered
- The applicant has paid for those services in full
- A Form 498 has been filed and processed (providing direct deposit information for reimbursements)



## What is the deadline for BEARs?

BEARs must be certified no later than 120 days after the last day services are received (typically this is October 28 following the end of the funding year)

or

120 days after the date of the FCC Form 486 Notification Letter, whichever is later

The exception to the above is if there are post-commitment changes, in which case the deadline is no later than 120 days after the latest of the following:

- Date of an approved post-commitment Revised Funding Commitment Decision Letter
- Date of an approved appeal Revised Funding Commitment Decision Letter on a previously denied or reduced funding request



Form 472 (BEAR)

## Where do I file a BEAR?



There is no longer a separate BEAR system with a separate access point from the One Portal platform.

Instead, you will file BEARs by accessing the Billed Entity's profile within the EPC Portal just as you do for other program forms.

Invoicing permissions for applicants are based on user access rights specified in EPC by the Account Administrator.



## How many separate forms do I file?

#### Your choice!

- You may choose to split up or combine your BEAR filings however you choose
- You can include multiple Forms 471s and FRNs on the same BEAR

#### Potential examples:

- file a separate BEAR form for each FRN for each service period (monthly, quarterly, etc) or the entire funding year
- include all the FRNs from the same Form 471 on one BEAR
- include all FRNs that are eligible for invoicing on the same BEAR form



Form 472 (BEAR)

Slide 10

## Managing BEAR Permissions

→ DO THIS FIRST 1←

The Account Administrator should review and assign BEAR permissions before users attempt to create a BEAR.

Once this step has initially been completed, it does not need to be repeated unless new users are added to the entity profile or the AA wishes to modify permissions.



## For existing EPC users with BEAR credentials for the legacy system

These users may have automatically been assigned permissions to create and certify BEARs in the new EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard.

Newly created users did not automatically receive both legacy and EPC BEAR permissions.

The Account Administrator should verify that these permissions are as desired before any current users attempt to create BEARs and adjust the permissions if necessary.

For those users who were not automatically assigned BEAR permissions

AND

For those users who should be assigned different permissions (partial vs full)

**AND** 

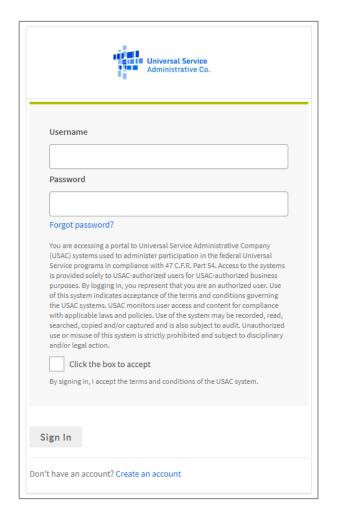
For any new EPC users

Permission to create and/or certify a BEAR must be explicitly selected by the Account Administrator. The Account Administrator must complete this step before a BEAR can be created by users that fall in any of the above circumstances.



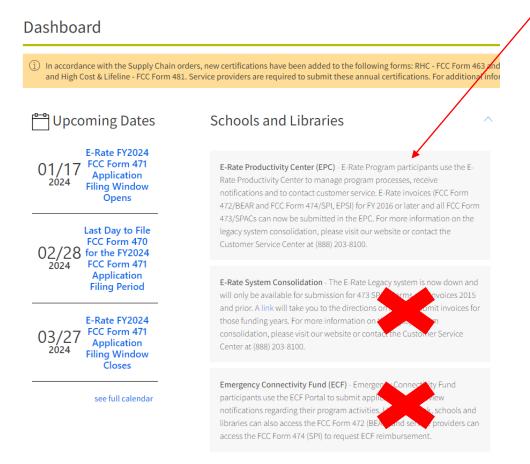
## The Account Administrator completes the following steps:

- 1 First, navigate to https://forms.universalservice.org/portal
- 2 Log into One Portal with your username (your full email address) and One Portal password



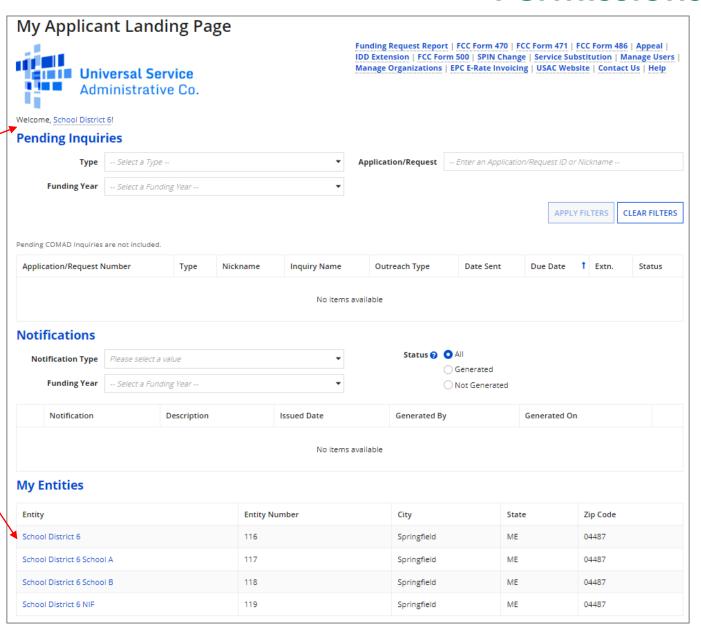


- 3 Complete the steps as prompted to obtain and enter a one-time verification code
- 4 Once you have successfully logged into One Portal and are viewing its dashboard, access EPC by clicking on the gray block for "E-rate Productivity Center (EPC)"



⑤ On the EPC
Landing Page, click on
the link for the
organization (either in
the "Welcome" line or
scroll to the "My
Entities" section")

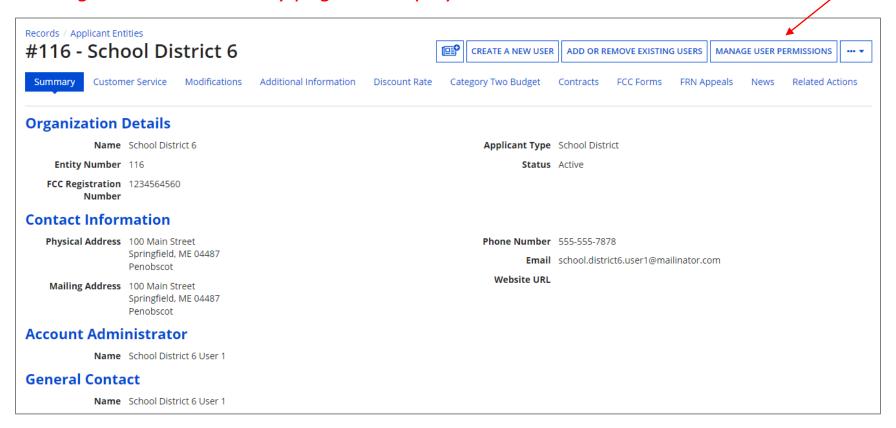
In most cases this will be the school district unless the organization is listed in EPC as an independent school



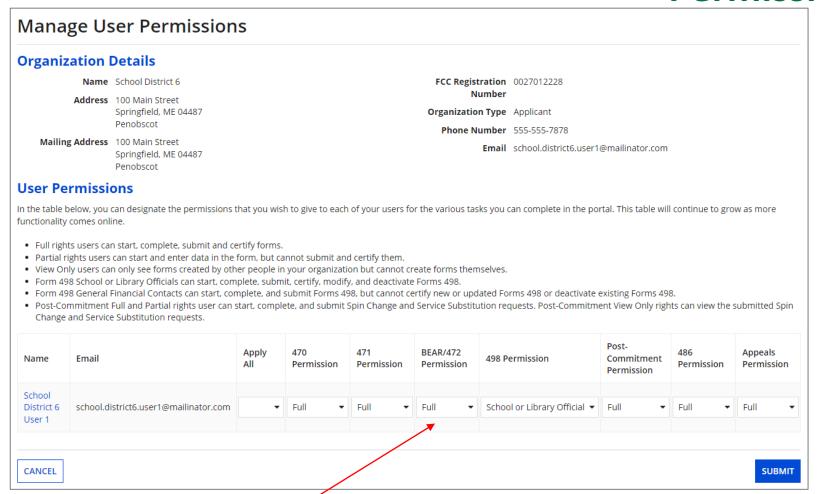


## 6 Click on the "MANAGE USER PERMISSIONS" button

#### The organization's summary page will display







- 7 Select the BEAR/472 permissions you want to specify for each user
  - Full rights users can create, edit, and certify invoices and can respond to outreach
  - Partial rights users can create and edit invoices, but cannot certify them
     Partial rights users can view outreach but cannot respond to it
  - View Only users can see invoices and outreach, but cannot create or edit or respond

#### **User Permissions for Invoices (BEARs):**

Full Partial	View Invoices	Create Invoices	Certify Invoices	View Outreach	Respond to Outreach		
	<b>4</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>/</b>		
	<b>V</b>	<b>*</b>		~			
View Only	<b>V</b>			<b>/</b>			



**NOTE:** Since only full rights users can respond to outreach, it is STRONGLY recommended that you set the permissions as full rights for whoever will function as the main BEAR contact—they will not be able to respond to inquiries if they are only granted partial rights



#### **Manage User Permissions**

#### **Organization Details**

Name School District 6

Address 100 Main Street

Springfield, ME 04487

Penobscot

Mailing Address 100 Main Street

Springfield, ME 04487

Penobscot

FCC Registration 0027012228

Number

Organization Type Applicant

Phone Number 555-555-7878

Email school.district6.user1@mailinator.com

#### **User Permissions**

In the table below, you can designate the permissions that you wish to give to each of your users for the various tasks you can complete in the portal. This table will continue to grow as more functionality comes online.

- · Full rights users can start, complete, submit and certify forms.
- Partial rights users can start and enter data in the form, but cannot submit and certify them.
- · View Only users can only see forms created by other people in your organization but cannot create forms themselves.
- Form 498 School or Library Officials can start, complete, submit, certify, modify, and deactivate Forms 498.
- Form 498 General Financial Contacts can start, complete, and submit Forms 498, but cannot certify new or updated Forms 498 or deactivate existing Forms 498.
- Post-Commitment Full and Partial rights user can start, complete, and submit Spin Change and Service Substitution requests. Post-Commitment View Only rights can view the submitted Spin Change and Service Substitution requests.

Name	Email	Apply All	470 Permission	471 Permission	BEAR/472 Permission	498 Permission	Post- Commitment Permission	486 Permission	Appeals Permission
School District 6 User 1	school.district6.user1@mailinator.com	•	Full ▼	Full ▼	Full ▼	School or Library Official ▼	Full •	Full ▼	Full ▼

CANCEL

SUBMIT

8 Click on the "SUBMIT" button to apply the specified permissions



Once you have set the permissions for the users in your organization's profile, you will not need to repeat this process unless new users are added to the entity profile or you wish to modify existing permissions.



## Filing a BEAR Form

Once permissions have been granted, any user assigned creation and/or certification rights can create a BEAR.



#### Before you begin:



- ✓ Ensure you have the accurate FCC Form 471 and locate your:
  - ✓ FRN
  - ✓ Discount Rate
  - ✓ Approved Services/Equipment
  - ✓ Approved Cost and Quantities
- Locate the approved Recipients of Service (ROS) for the FRN

## 2 CALCULATE Invoice Amount

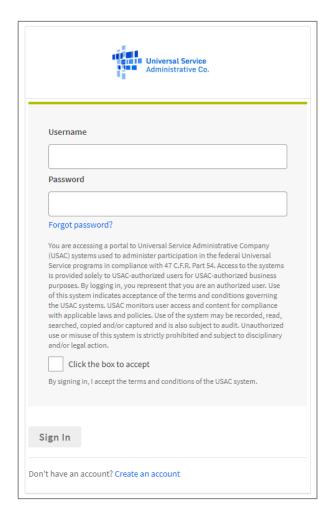
- Invoiced amount must be actual charges
- Calculate total undiscounted amount for each line
- ✓ Remove ineligible items

## 3 DOCUMENT and Track Invoices

- Establish a process to track/ identify each invoice
- Retain your supporting documentation for 10 years

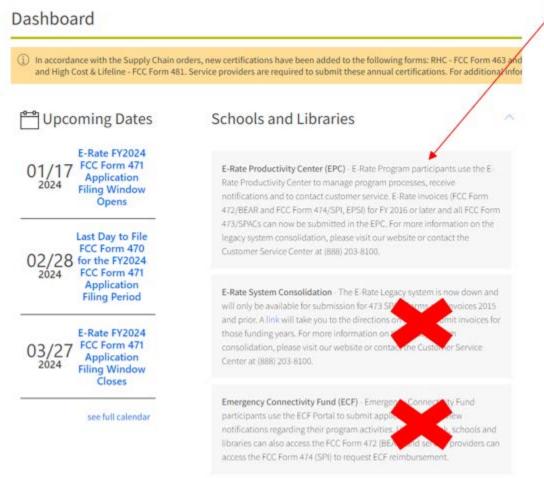


- 1 First, navigate to https://forms.universalservice.org/portal
- 2 Log into One Portal with your username (your full email address) and One Portal password



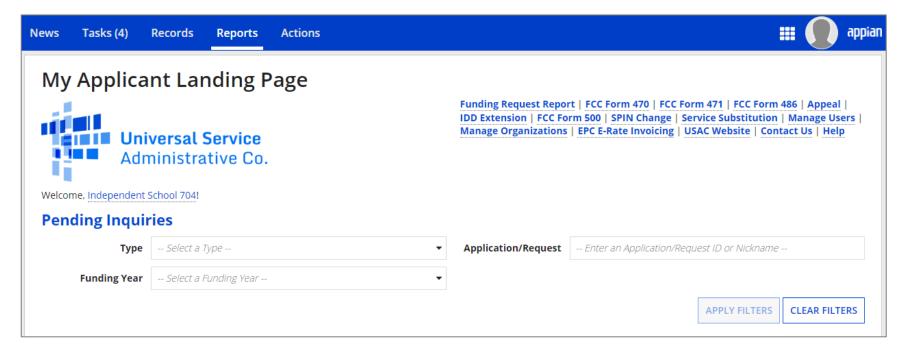


- 3 Complete the steps as prompted to obtain and enter a one-time verification code
- 4 Once you have successfully logged into One Portal and are viewing its dashboard, access EPC by clicking on the gray block for "E-rate Productivity Center (EPC)"

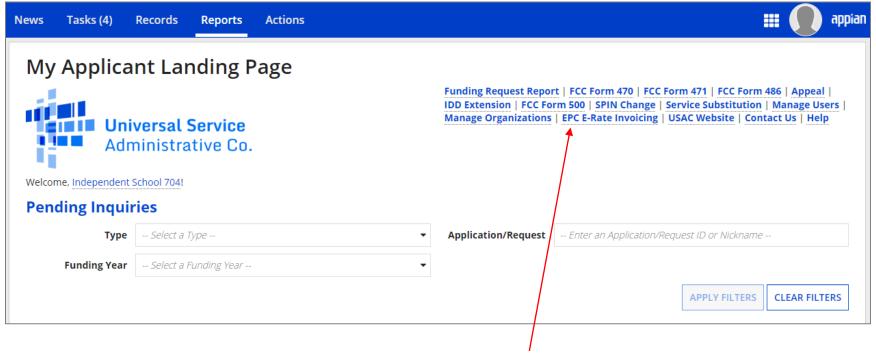




#### Your EPC Landing Page will display





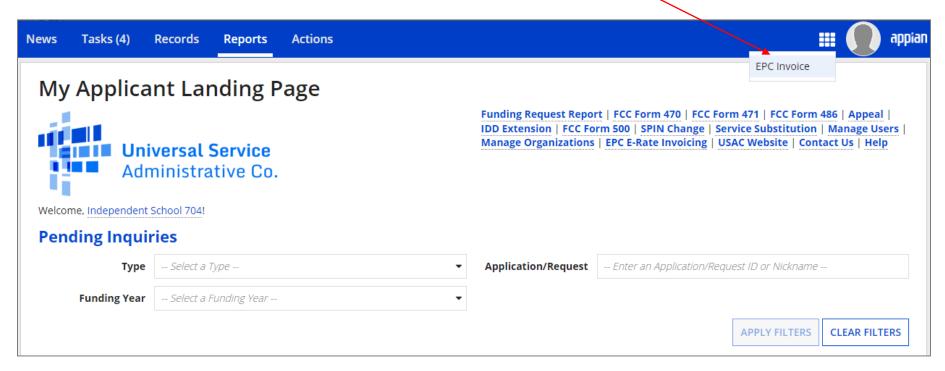


5 Select the "EPC E-Rate Invoicing" link to enter the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard (it will open in its own tab or browser window)

**NOTE:** You will only have access to the quick link if you have been given invoicing permissions



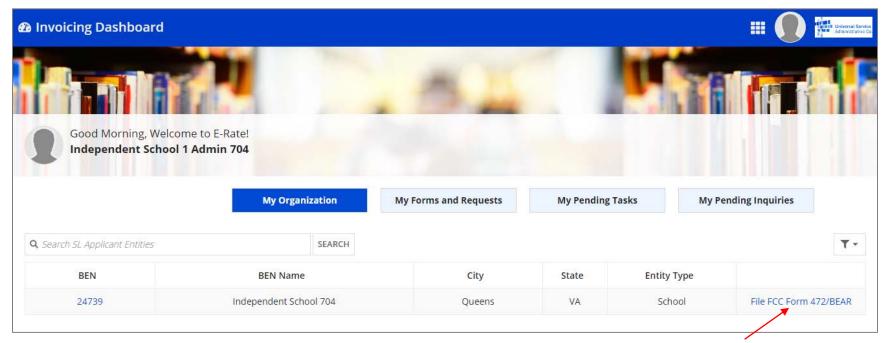
**NOTE:** You can also access the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard by clicking on the grid of squares (or "waffle") located next to your profile picture in the righthand corner of the blue navigation bar, and then selecting "EPC Invoice" from the sub menu





The EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard opens to the "My Organization" tab and provides a table listing the BENs with which you are associated

**NOTE:** The "My Pending Inquiries" button will not display until the organization's first BEAR inquiry is issued, so in your first few ventures to the dashboard you likely will not see this fourth button



6 Click on the "File FCC Form 472 / BEAR" link in the table to begin a new BEAR

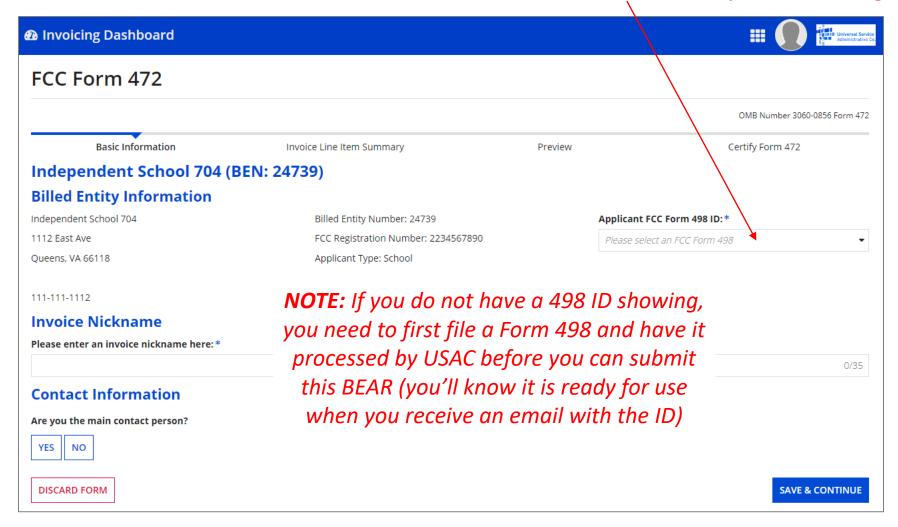


## BEAR Section One: Basic Information

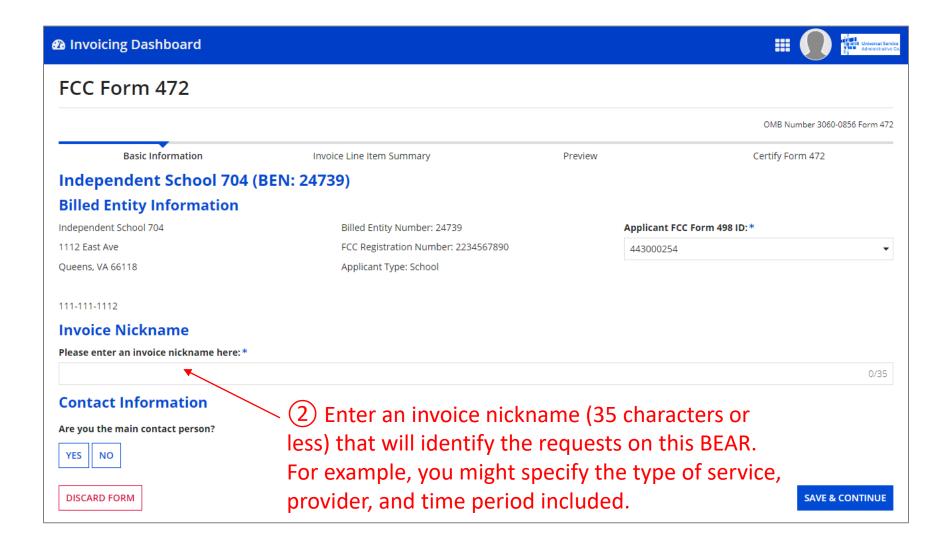
First, you will enter some general information.



① Select your 498 ID from the "Applicant FCC Form 498 ID" dropdown menu. If you have more than one 498 ID, be sure to select the correct one for the BEAR that you are creating.

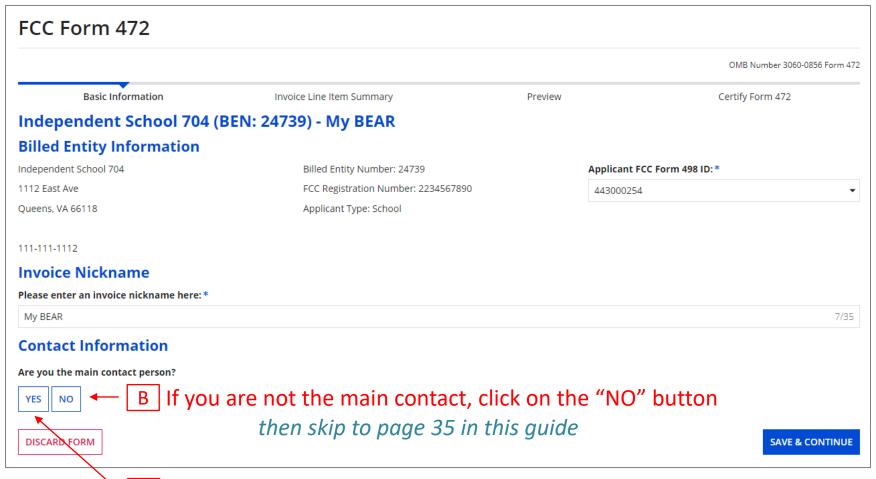








#### 3 Select a contact person for this BEAR

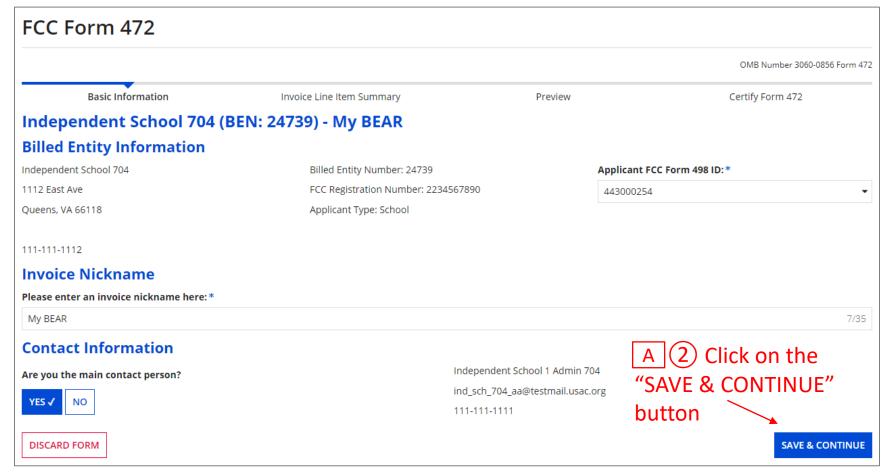


A If you are the main contact for this form, click on the "YES" button then go to the next page in this guide



If you are the main contact (you chose "YES") ....

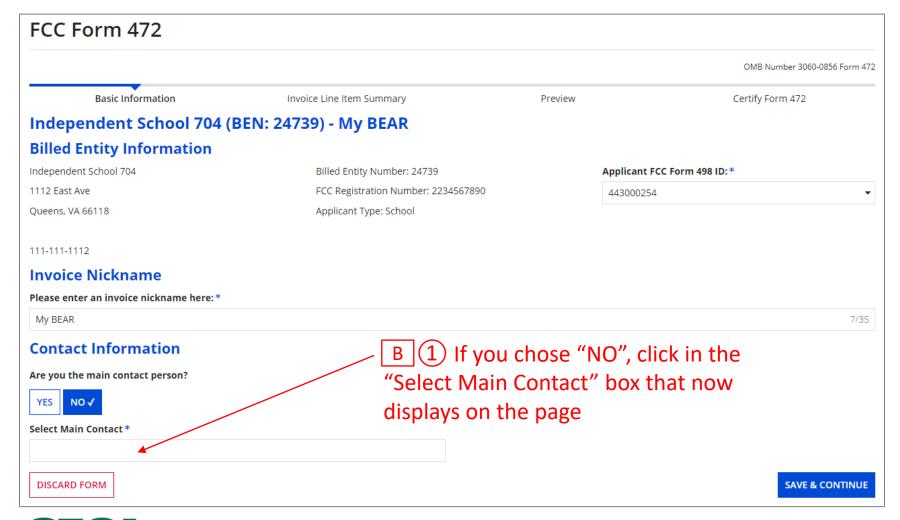
A 1 If you chose "YES", your contact info will automatically display



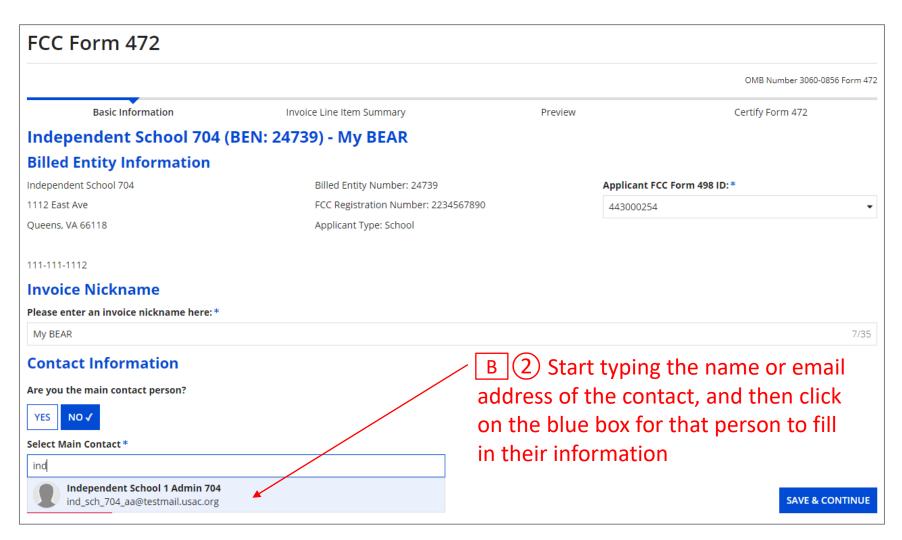


skip to page 38 in this guide

If you are not the main contact (you chose "NO") ....



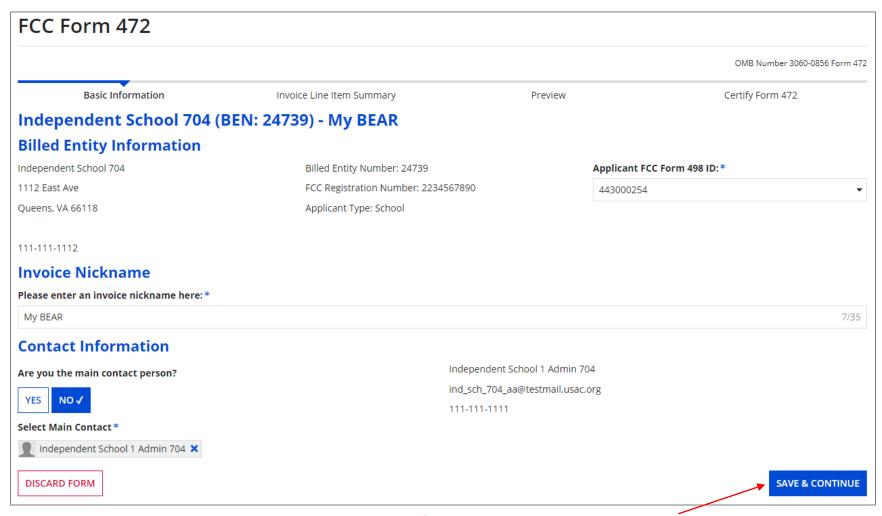




**NOTE:** Only those individuals who have been associated with your organization in EPC can be the contact person for the form



## **Basic Information**





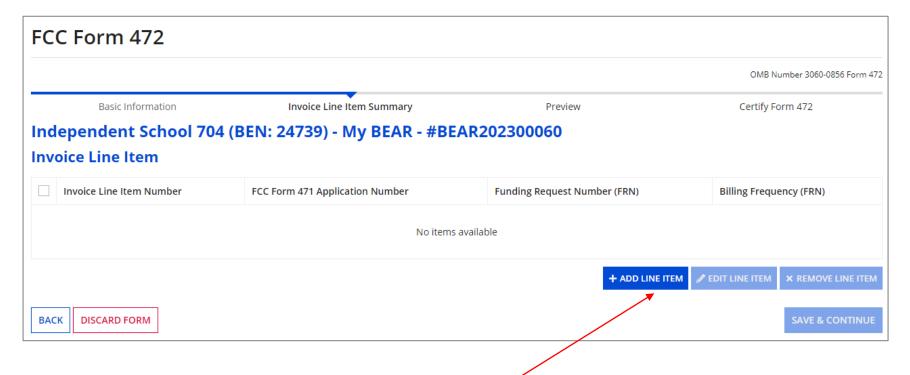
go to the next page in this guide

SECONDINATORS' ALLIANCE

# BEAR Section Two: Invoice Line Item Summary

Next, you will add lines for the reimbursements you are seeking.



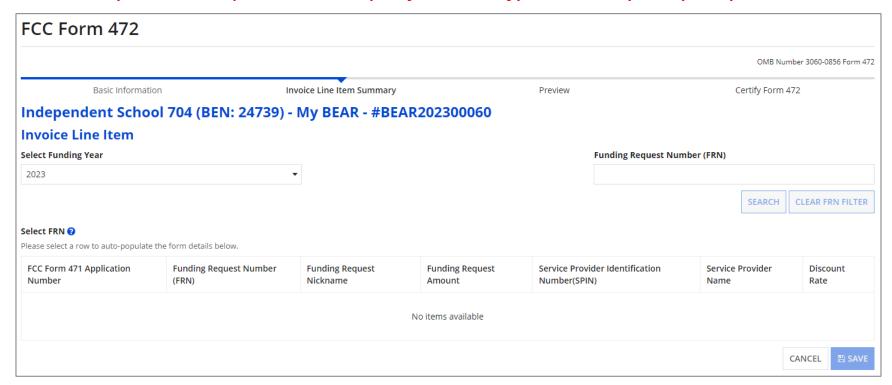


1 Click on the "ADD LINE ITEM" button to add your first line to this BEAR



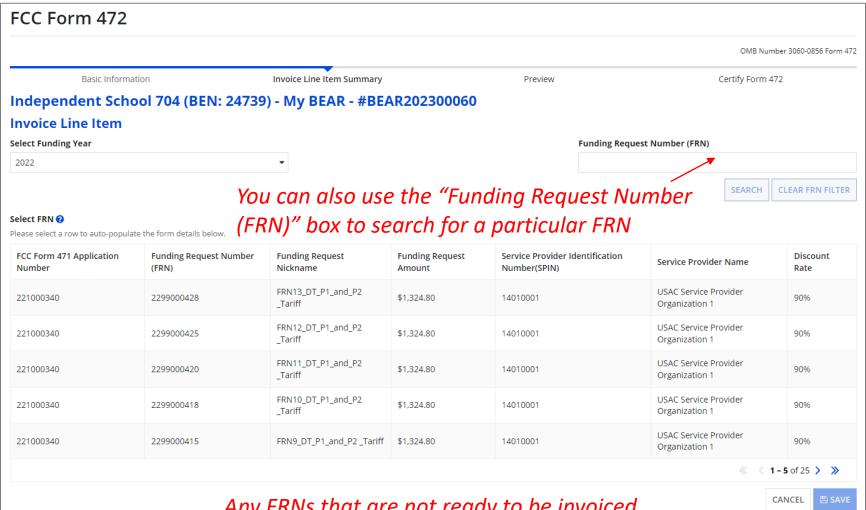
2 Select a Funding Year from the drop down menu if necessary

**NOTE:** a year will be pre-selected by default - verify this is truly the year you want





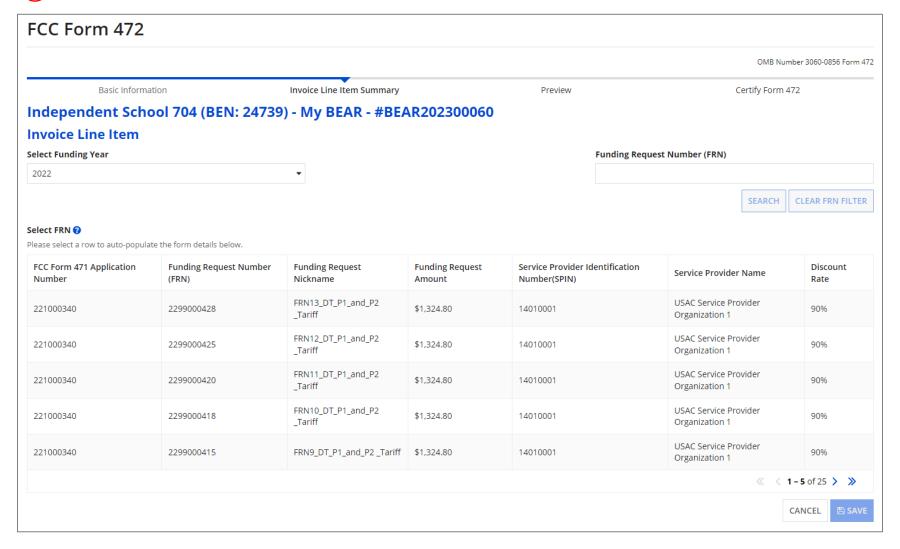
#### A table with FRNs from that funding year that are available for invoicing will display



Any FRNs that are not ready to be invoiced, that have been canceled, or for which the invoice deadline has passed will not be listed

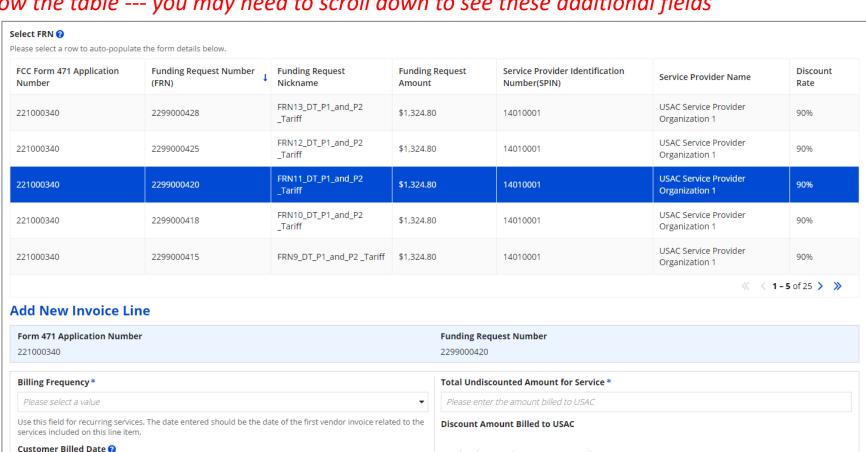


### (3) To include an FRN on the BEAR, click on its FRN row





Once you select an FRN row, it will be highlighted blue and an "Add New Invoice Line" section with additional information fields to complete will appear below the table --- you may need to scroll down to see these additional fields





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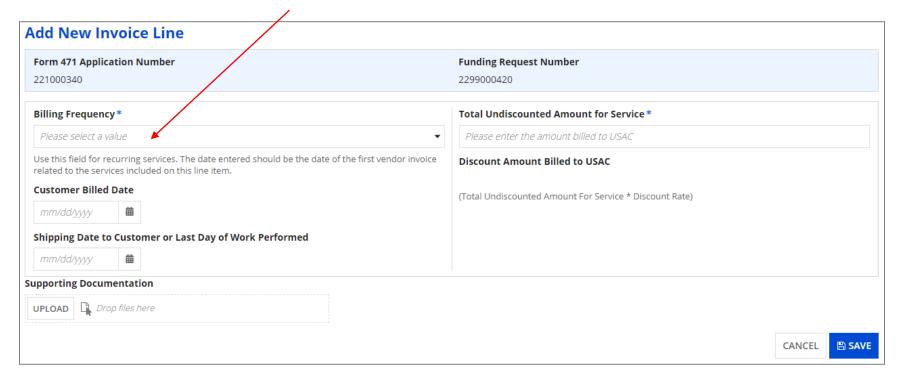
曲

Shipping Date to Customer or Last Day of Work Performed ?

Form 472 (BEAR) Slide 43

(Total Undiscounted Amount For Service \* Discount Rate)

4 In the "Add New Invoice Line" section, select a billing frequency from the drop down menu



#### **Available Options:**

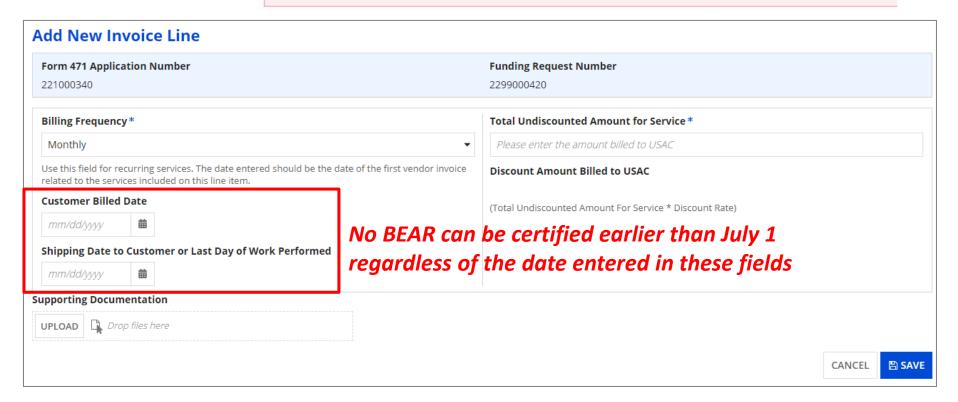
Annually, Monthly, On Delivery, One-Time, Other, Quarterly, Semi-Annually, Weekly, Every Two Weeks, Every Two Months



(5) Complete one of the date fields

#### DO NOT COMPLETE BOTH FIELDS! - you will get an error when you try to save the line

You must enter either a "Customer Billed Date" or a "Shipping Date to Customer or Last Day of Work Performed" date.



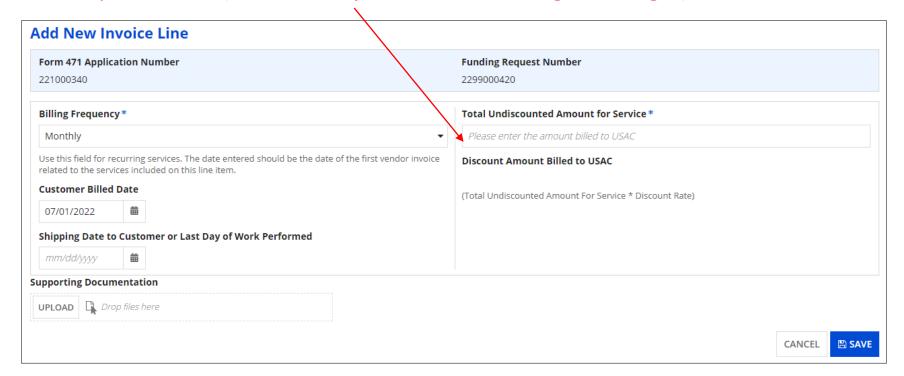
SEE THE NEXT SLIDE FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THESE FIELDS >>>



	Recurring FRNs	Non-Recurring FRNs
Field to Use:	"Customer Billed Date"	"Shipping Date to Customer or Last Day of Work Performed"
Type of services:	Recurring services and multiple installments for non-recurring services	Non-recurring services billed one- time only
Earliest Allowed Date:	July 1	<ul> <li>Category 1</li> <li>January 1 for advanced installation of non-recurring services</li> <li>July 1 for most C1 FRNs</li> <li>Category 2</li> <li>April 1 for advanced installation of non-recurring services</li> <li>July 1 for most C2 FRNs</li> </ul>
Latest Allowed Date:	Service Delivery Deadline (usually June 30)	Service Delivery Deadline (usually September 30)

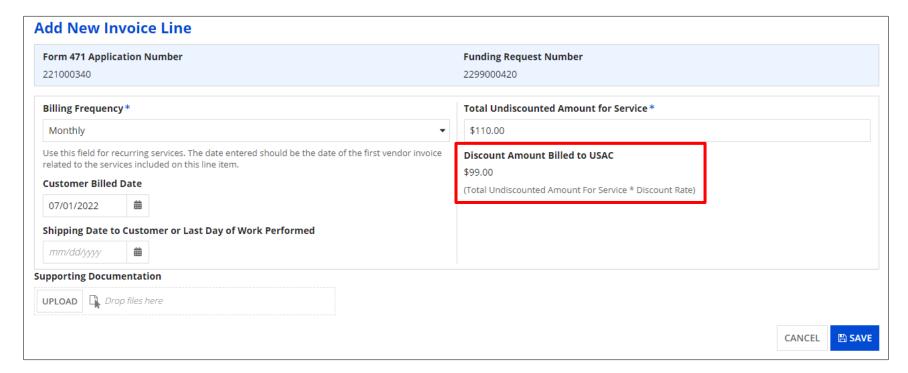
Being allowed to enter a date earlier than July 1 in the "Shipping Date" field is a new BEAR functionality. Review your service provider invoices and program rules carefully to ensure you are entering a valid date.

6 Enter the total <u>ACTUAL ELIGIBLE UNDISCOUNTED</u> amount you paid for the service provider bill (be sure that you **subtract all ineligible charges**)





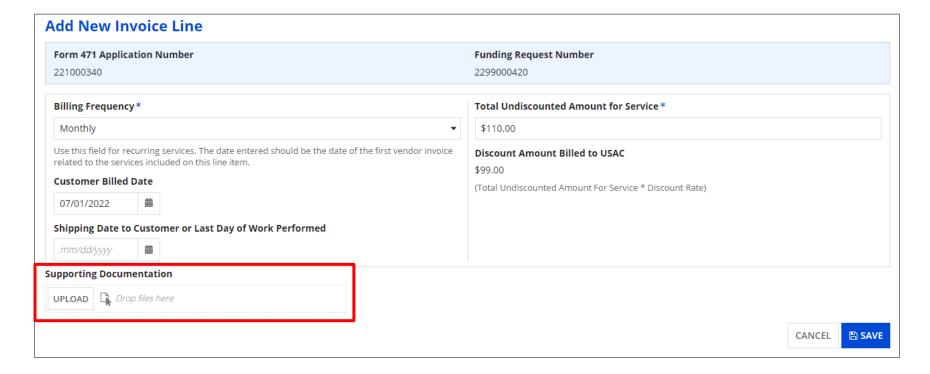
After the undiscounted amount has been entered, the system will automatically calculate the discounted reimbursement amount to which you are entitled



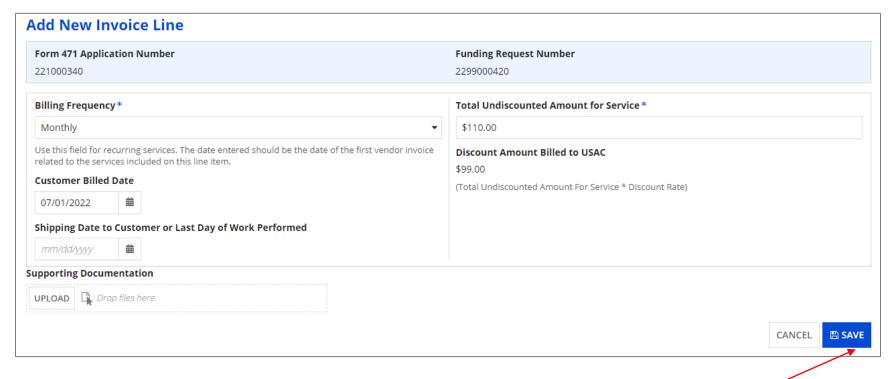


7 OPTIONAL: If you would like to upload supporting documentation with your BEAR, you may drag any appropriate files onto the "UPLOAD" button

This is not a required action, but you may want to do so if you know you are likely to receive outreach requesting supporting information for the type of service included in this line, for example basic maintenance of internal connections (BMIC)







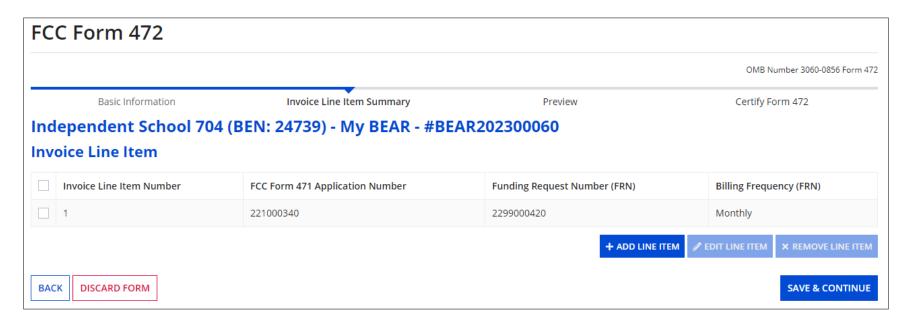
8 Click on the "SAVE" button



Each Line Item that has been created for this BEAR will display in a table

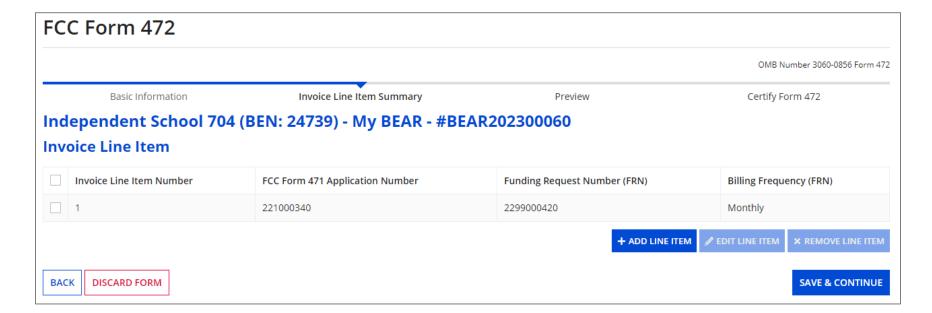
To create another Line Item for additional requests for this BEAR, click on the "ADD LINE ITEM" button and complete the fields as prompted

Example: If filing a BEAR for all bills paid in quarter 1, you would first complete a line item for July, then add and complete a line item for August, and finally add and complete a line item for September

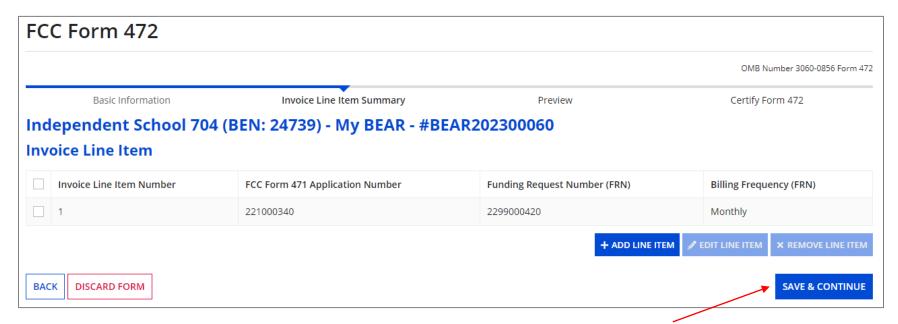




To edit an existing Line Item, click the check box for it and click on the "EDIT LINE ITEM" button To delete an existing Line Item, click the check box for it and click on the "REMOVE LINE ITEM" button







Olick on the "SAVE & CONTINUE" button
 when your Line Items for this BEAR are complete



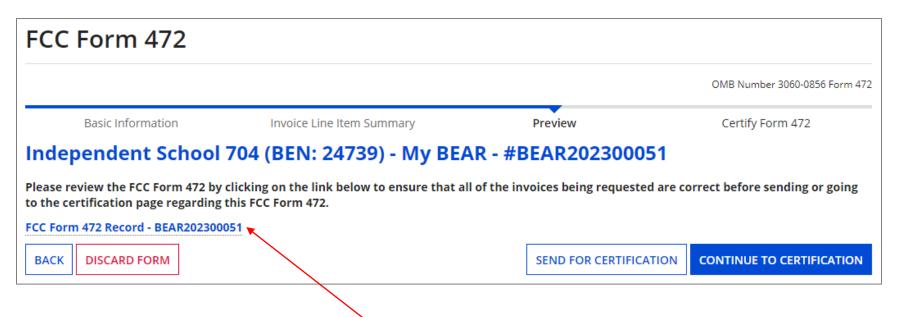
go to the next page in this guide

Form 472 (BEAR)

Before certifying the form, you will have the opportunity to review it in its entirety.



You should review your form carefully before proceeding to certification



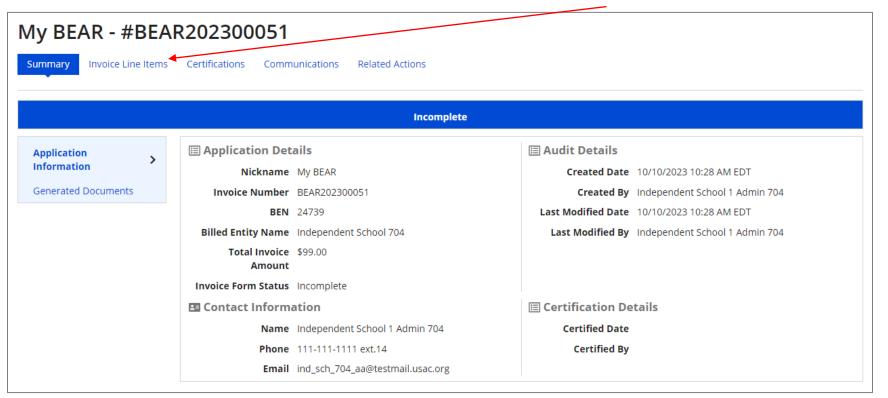


**NOTE:** The form will be displayed in either a new window or new tab depending on your browser settings



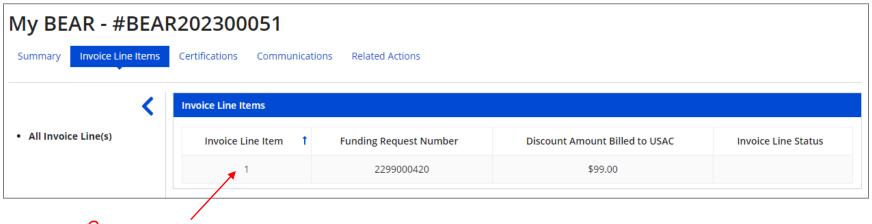
#### The form preview opens to a summary page

Click on the "Invoice Line Items" tab



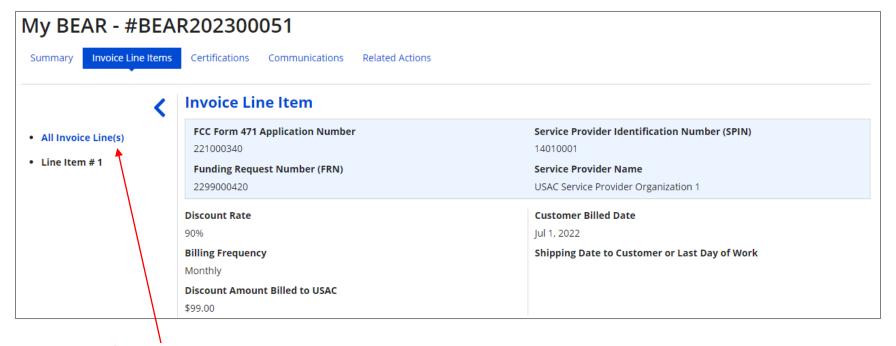


#### The "Invoice Line Items" tab displays a table with each invoice line



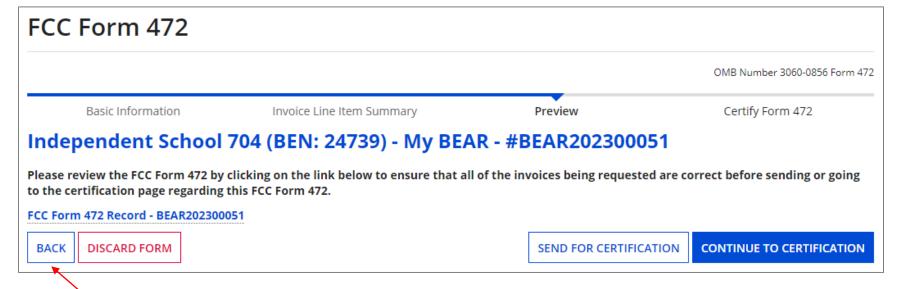
Click on a specific invoice line to show details about that line item





Click on the "All Invoice Line(s)" link in the sidebar menu to return to the full list of line items





If you discover any modifications to be made, return to the FCC Form 472 window and click on the "BACK" button to go through the form screens and make any necessary changes



# Certifying the BEAR

Finally, a user in your organization will certify and submit the BEAR form.



# **Certifying the BEAR**

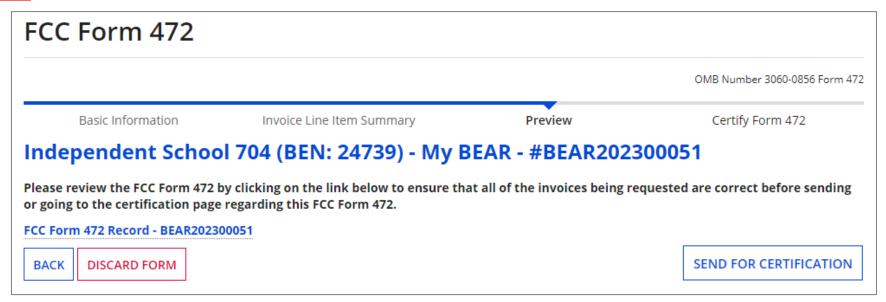
Certification of the form takes place in different manners depending on the rights assigned to users for your organization and who in your organization is responsible for certifying the form.

- A If you are a partial rights user  $\rightarrow$  go to the next page in this guide
- B If you are a full rights user but not the person who will certify the form  $\rightarrow$  skip to page 63
- C If you are a full rights user who is responsible for certifying the form  $\rightarrow$  skip to page 64
- D If you are a full rights user certifying a form sent to you by another user  $\rightarrow$  skip to page 68



### [Partial Rights]

### A If you are a partial rights user:



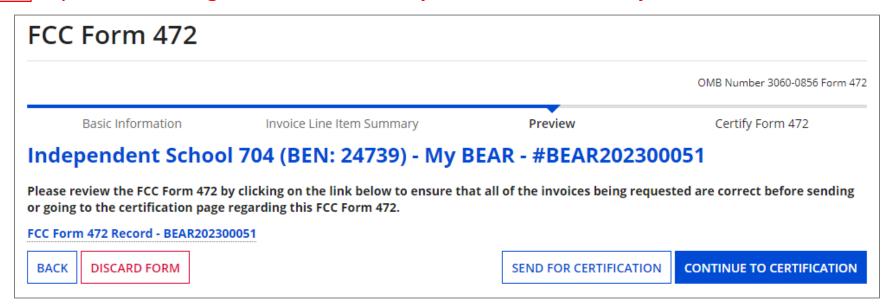
- A 1 Click on the "SEND FOR CERTIFICATION" button
- A 2 You will see a notice that your form will be sent to the full rights users in your organization
- A 3 Click on the "YES" button to proceed





## [Full Rights / Not the Certifier]

B If you are a full rights user but not the person who will certify the form:



- B 1 Click on the "SEND FOR CERTIFICATION" button
- B 2 You will see a notice that your form will be sent to the full rights users in your organization
- B 3 Click "YES" to send the form

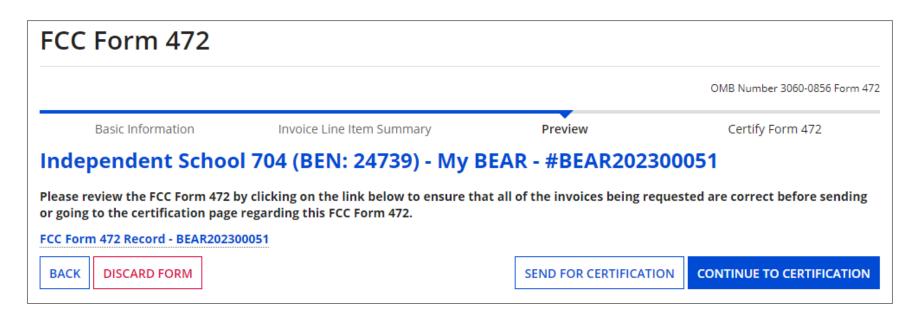




skip to page 74 in this guide

Form 472 (BEAR)

C If you are a full rights user who is responsible for certifying the form:



C 1 Click on the "CONTINUE TO CERTIFICATION" button to proceed



- C 2 Read the certification text carefully
- C 3 Check the check box for each certification statement
- C 4 Click the "CERTIFY & SUBMIT" button

#### FCC Form 472 OMB Number 3060-0856 Form 472 Basic Information Invoice Line Item Summary Preview Certify Form 472 Independent School 704 (BEN: 24739) - My BEAR - #BEAR202300051 **▲ Billed Entity Certifications & Signature** Please check all boxes to certify. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that I am authorized to submit this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form on behalf of the eligible schools, libraries, or consortia of those entities represented on this Form, and I certify to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, as follows. The discount amounts listed in this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form represent charges for eligible services and/or equipment delivered to and used by eligible schools, libraries, or consortia of those entities for educational purposes, on or after the service start date reported on the associated FCC Form 486. The discount amounts listed in this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form were already billed by the Service Provider and paid for by the Billed Entity Applicant on behalf of eligible schools, libraries, and consortia of those entities. The discount amounts listed in this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form are for eligible services and/or equipment approved by the Fund Administrator pursuant to a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL). I acknowledge that I may be audited pursuant to this application and will retain for at least 10 years (or whatever retention period is required by the rules in effect at the time of this certification), after the latter of the last day of the applicable funding year or the service delivery deadline for the funding request any and all records that I rely upon to complete this form. I certify that, in addition to the foregoing, this Billed Entity Applicant is in compliance with the rules and orders governing the schools and libraries universal service support program, and I acknowledge that failure to be in compliance and remain in compliance with those rules and orders may result in the denial of discount funding and/or cancellation of funding commitments. I acknowledge that failure to comply with the rules and orders governing the schools and libraries universal service support program could result in civil or criminal prosecution by law enforcement authorities. **CERTITY & SUBMIT BACK**



C 5 Click the "CERTIFY" button to certify the form --this is the equivalent to providing your electronic signature

signed the f	n "Certify & Submit" button, y orm. An electronic signature is signature on the form.	•
NO		CERTIFY



C 6 Click on the "CLOSE" button on the certifier information screen to return to the Invoicing Dashboard

#### FCC Form 472

OMB Number 3060-0856 Form 472

Basic Information

Invoice Line Item Summary

Preview

Certify Form 472

# Independent School 704 (BEN: 24739) - My BEAR - #BEAR202300051

**Certification Confirmation** 

You have successfully filed FCC Form 472 #BEAR202300051

FCC Form 472 Record - BEAR202300051

#### **Certifier Information**

Name Independent School 1 Admin 704

Title Tester

Certified Date 10/10/2023 12:59 PM EDT

Address 1112 East Ave

Queens, VA 66118

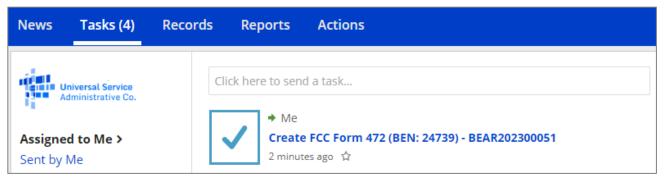
**Telephone** 111-111-1111 ext. 14

CLOSE

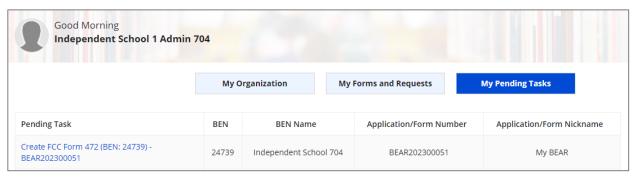


skip to page 74 in this guide

- D If you are a **full rights user who is certifying a form sent to you** by another user:
  - D 1 Once a user has sent you a BEAR to certify, you will receive the following:
    - 1. a task in your EPC task list



2. a task in the "My Pending Tasks" tab in the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard



3. an email notification



D 2 Go to one of the Task areas, then click on the "Create" task for the BEAR that is ready for certification



#### **CAUTION:**

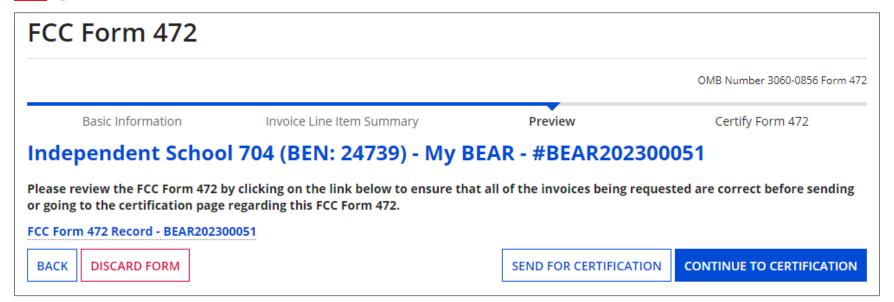
The task link will read: Create FCC Form 472 (BEN: XXX) – BEAR NUMBER

The link will not have any reference to certifying

Users should be extremely careful they are selecting the correct BEAR as any other in process BEARs will have the same task wording, not just those that are ready for certification



D 3 Click on the form link to preview the form



The form will be displayed in a new window or tab depending on your browser settings.

See the "Previewing the BEAR" section of this guide for further information.

D 4 Click on the "CONTINUE TO CERTIFICATION" button to proceed



- D S Read the certification text carefully
- D 6 Check the check box for each certification statement
- D 7 Click the "CERTIFY & SUBMIT" button

FCC Form 472				
			OMB Number 3060-0856 Form 472	
Basic Information	Invoice Line Item Summary	Preview	Certify Form 472	
<b>Independent School 70</b>	4 (BEN: 24739) - My BEAR - #BEAF	R202300051		
▲ Billed Entity Certification	ns & Signature			
Please check all boxes to certify.				
I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that I am authorized to submit this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form on behalf of the eligible schools, libraries, or consortia of those entities represented on this Form, and I certify to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, as follows.				
	ed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form represent charge tional purposes, on or after the service start date reported		delivered to and used by eligible schools, libraries,	
The discount amounts listed in this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form were already billed by the Service Provider and paid for by the Billed Entity Applicant on behalf of eligible schools, libraries, and consortia of those entities.				
☐ The discount amounts listed in this Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form are for eligible services and/or equipment approved by the Fund Administrator pursuant to a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL).				
I acknowledge that I may be audited pursuant to this application and will retain for at least 10 years (or whatever retention period is required by the rules in effect at the time of this certification), after the latter of the last day of the applicable funding year or the service delivery deadline for the funding request any and all records that I rely upon to complete this form.				
acknowledge that failure to be in comp	g, this Billed Entity Applicant is in compliance with the rule liance and remain in compliance with those rules and orde re to comply with the rules and orders governing the school rities.	rs may result in the denial of discount fu	ınding and/or cancellation of funding	
ВАСК			CERTITY & SUBMIT	



D 8 Click the "CERTIFY" button to certify the form --- this is the equivalent to providing your electronic signature

signed the	on "Certify & Submit" button, you form. An electronic signature is th n signature on the form.	•
NO		CERTIFY



#### [Full Rights / Certifier]

D 9 Click on the "CLOSE" button on the certifier information screen to return to the Invoicing Dashboard

#### FCC Form 472

OMB Number 3060-0856 Form 472

Basic Information

Invoice Line Item Summary

Preview

Certify Form 472

## Independent School 704 (BEN: 24739) - My BEAR - #BEAR202300051

**Certification Confirmation** 

You have successfully filed FCC Form 472 #BEAR202300051

FCC Form 472 Record - BEAR202300051

#### **Certifier Information**

Name Independent School 1 Admin 704

Title Tester

Certified Date 10/10/2023 12:59 PM EDT

Address 1112 East Ave

Queens, VA 66118

Telephone 111-111-1111 ext. 14

CLOSE



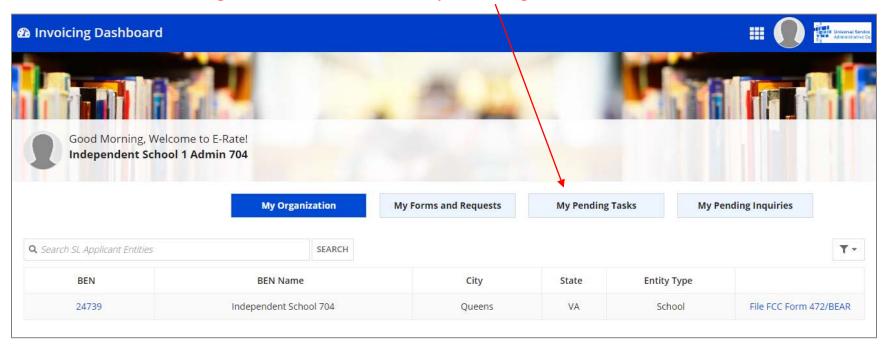
go to the next page in this guide

Form 472 (BEAR)

Slide 73



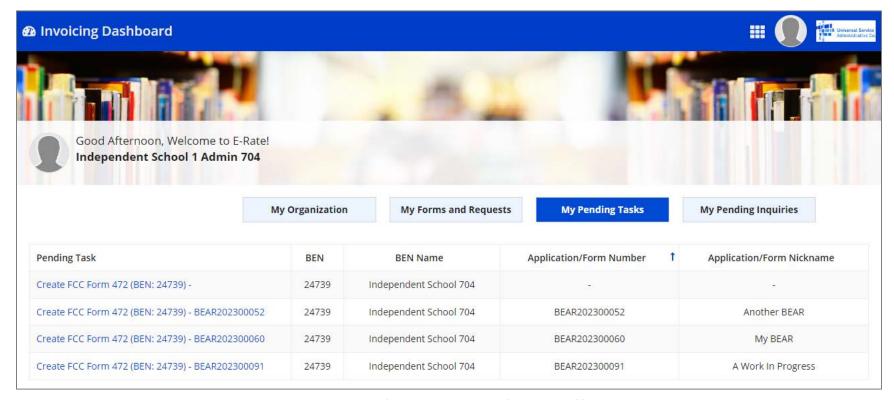
To return to an incomplete BEAR and continue working on it, click on the "My Pending Tasks" button



If you are not on a page that displays the navigation buttons, first return to the Invoicing Dashboard summary page by clicking on the "Invoicing Dashboard" link in the blue bar, then click on the button

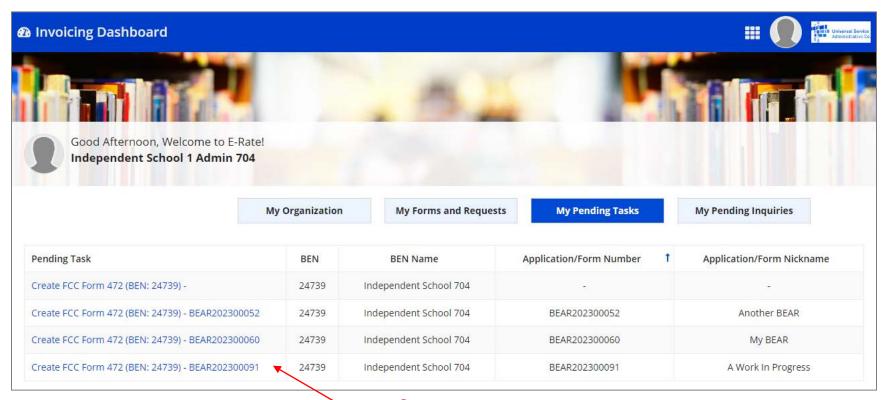


The "My Pending Tasks" tab displays a list of tasks including a "Create FCC Form 472" task for each incomplete (not yet certified) form



**NOTE:** application numbers will not generate until the "Basic Information" section has been completed

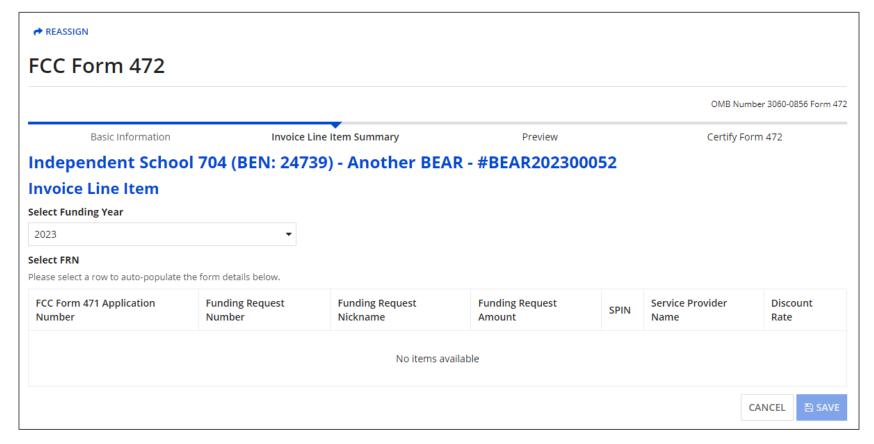




Click on a "Create FCC Form 472" link in the "Pending Task" column to open the form



The in-progress form displays wherever you left off. Note however that if you happen to have stopped in the middle of adding a line item but did not save it, you may see a screen similar to the one below and you will need to click on the "CANCEL" button to return to a screen where you can continue to modify your form.







#### *Types of communications:*

Description:	Generated:	Method of Delivery:
Notification that an invoice requires certification by a Full Rights user	A Partial Rights user creates an invoice and sends it to a Full Rights user to certify	Create FCC Form 472 task in My Pending Tasks tab assigned to Full Rights users  Email alert to Full Rights user that a new task has been assigned
Notification that an invoice line has an inquiry form USAC that requires a response	A USAC reviewer sends new communication regarding an invoice line	Email to Partial and Full Rights users with invoice permissions for the BEN  Invoice Line Number listed for Full Rights users in My Pending Inquiries tab
Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an inquiry for an invoice line	A USAC reviewer updates the response due date for an invoice line that was granted an extension	Email to Partial and Full Rights users with invoice permissions for the BEN  Invoice Line Number listed for Full Rights users in My Pending Inquiries tab
A letter notifying users that an invoice line or lines submitted using the BEAR mode have been processed	After each payment file batch is run, typically at the end of every Monday and Thursday	Email to all users with invoice permissions for the BEN  News post visible to all users with invoice permissions for the BEN
A letter notifying users of the amount approved for payment for a processed invoice line or lines	After each payment file batch is run, typically at the end of every Monday and Thursday	Email from USAC's Finance Department to General Financial Contact listed on FCC Form 498
A quarterly summary of disbursement activity for a particular BEN number for invoice lines submitted using both the BEAR and SPI mode	At the end of every quarter (Jan, Apr, Jul, and Aug) if the BEN has invoicing activity that quarter	Email to all users with invoice permissions for the BEN  News post visible to all users with invoice permissions for the BEN
	Notification that an invoice requires certification by a Full Rights user  Notification that an invoice line has an inquiry form USAC that requires a response  Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an inquiry for an invoice line  A letter notifying users that an invoice line or lines submitted using the BEAR mode have been processed  A letter notifying users of the amount approved for payment for a processed invoice line or lines  A quarterly summary of disbursement activity for a particular BEN number for invoice lines submitted using	Notification that an invoice requires certification by a Full Rights user  Notification that an invoice line has an inquiry form USAC that requires a response  Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an inquiry for an invoice line  Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an inquiry for an invoice line  Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an invoice line  Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an invoice line  Notification that additional time has been granted to respond to an invoice line  Notification that an invoice line  Notification that an invoice line  Notification that an invoice line  A USAC reviewer updates the response due date for an invoice line that was granted an extension  A letter notifying users that an invoice line or lines submitted using the BEAR mode have been processed  A letter notifying users of the amount approved for payment for a processed invoice line or lines  After each payment file batch is run, typically at the end of every Monday and Thursday  A quarterly summary of disbursement activity for a particular BEN number for invoice lines submitted using  A quarterly summary of disbursement activity for a particular BEN number for invoice lines submitted using





#### A Full Rights user needs to certify an invoice

Notifications will be sent to full rights users by email if there is an uncertified BEAR that needs to be certified.

Notifications will also appear in the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard on the "My Pending Tasks" tab.



#### An invoice line has an inquiry from USAC that requires a response

Notifications will be sent both by email and in the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard on the "My Pending Inquiries" tab if there are review inquiries to be answered.

Both full and partial rights users will receive the inquiry, but only full rights users can respond.

View only users will be able to see these notifications on the "Communications" tab of the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard but will not receive a specific notification themselves.

The specific information and documentation required during review of BEARs will not change. You will log into EPC and go to the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard to submit replies to any outreach and provide any necessary documentation.

Applicants still have seven days to respond to invoicing inquiries.

You may request an extension of time, if needed. A notice will be sent if additional time has been granted to respond to an inquiry.



#### A Invoice Status

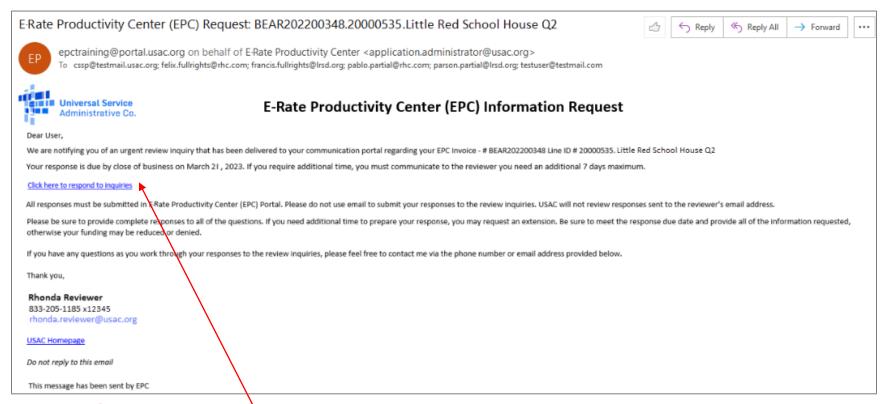
Notifications about invoice submission statuses (for example that an invoice has been processed) will be delivered to users who have been assigned full and partial rights for BEARs:

- Via email
- In the EPC News Feed
- Via a Task in the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard

View only users will be able to see these notifications as a News Post in EPC but will not receive a specific notification themselves.



# If there is an inquiry on a particular invoice line item, an email will be sent to full and partial rights users:

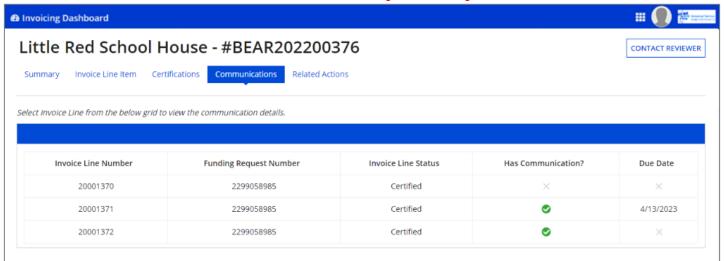


 ${f 1}$  To view the communication and respond, click on the link in the email

**NOTE:** if you are not already logged in, you will be prompted to do so after clicking the link



You will be taken to the "Communications" tab for that form

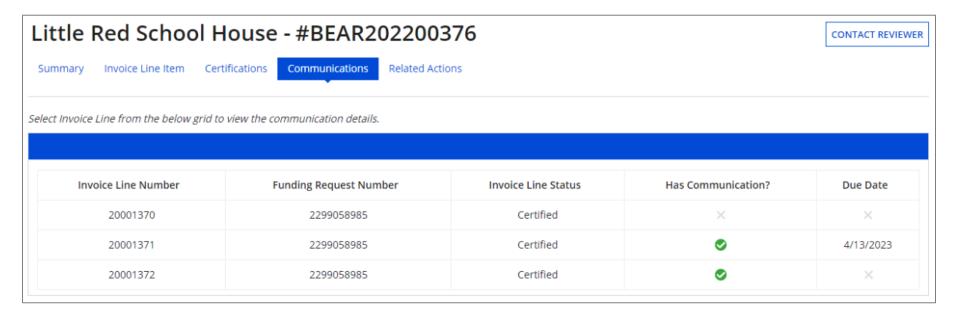


**NOTE:** You can also locate this tab by opening the EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard, clicking the "My Forms and Requests" button, choosing a form, and clicking on "Communications"

#### The following indicators may appear on this page:

"Has Communication?" column		"Due Date" column
If a green checkmark image is displaying: a communication has been sent	>>>	<ul> <li>If a date is listed:         <ul> <li>a response is still pending</li> </ul> </li> <li>If it is empty:             <ul> <li>a response was submitted</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
If a grayed-out "X" is displaying: there is no communication	>>>	If a grayed-out "X" is displaying: there is no communication

#### 2 Click on an Invoice Line row to view the communications for that line





You will be taken to the "Communications Details" page.

It reveals all the communications related to the invoice line from newest to oldest by default. You can click the "Oldest" radio button to sort by oldest communication first. You can also click the "Show only updates with attachment(s)" checkbox to view only correspondence with attachments. Outreach requests can be long so be sure to scroll down to the bottom if you don't see what you are looking for.





#### You will be taken to the "Contact Reviewer" page



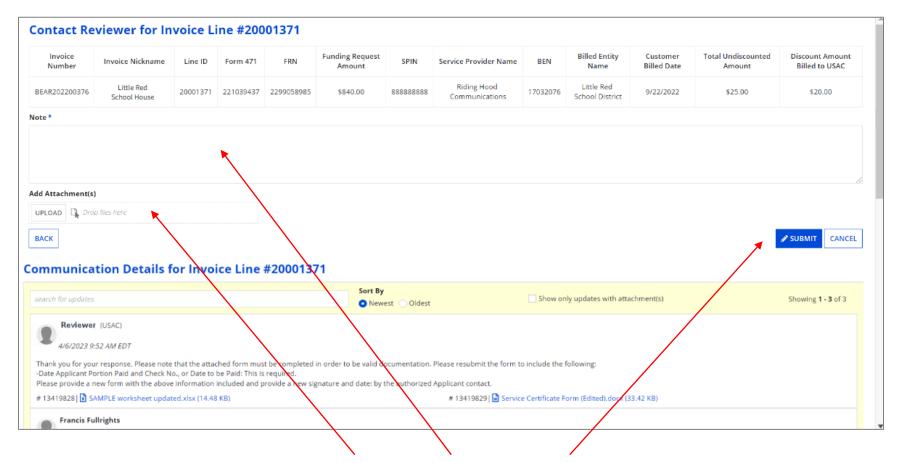
#### As with the "Communications" page, the following indicators may appear:

"Has Communication?" column		"Due Date" column
If a green checkmark image is displaying: a communication has been sent	>>>	<ul> <li>If a date is listed: <ul> <li>a response is still pending</li> </ul> </li> <li>If it is empty: <ul> <li>a response was submitted</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
If a grayed-out "X" is displaying: there is no communication	>>>	If a grayed-out "X" is displaying: there is no communication

4 Click on an Invoice Line row --- only lines with a due date listed can be selected on this screen

#### **Contact Reviewer** Select Invoice Line from below grid to contact the reviewer Invoice Line Has **Funding Request Number** Invoice Line Status Due Date Number Communication? 20001370 2299058985 Certified 0 Certified 4/13/2023 20001371 2299058985 Certified 0 20001372 2299058985 CANCEL

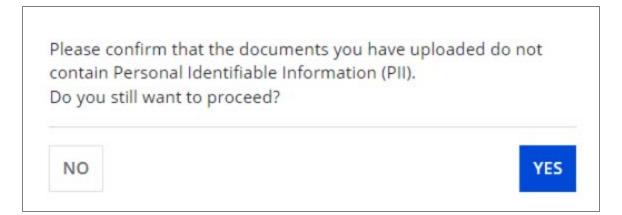




(5) Read the message(s) at the bottom of the page, download and review any attachments (these may include the specific information your reviewer needs!), type your response in the "Note" box, upload any required documentation to the "Add Attachments" section, and click on the "SUBMIT" button to send your response

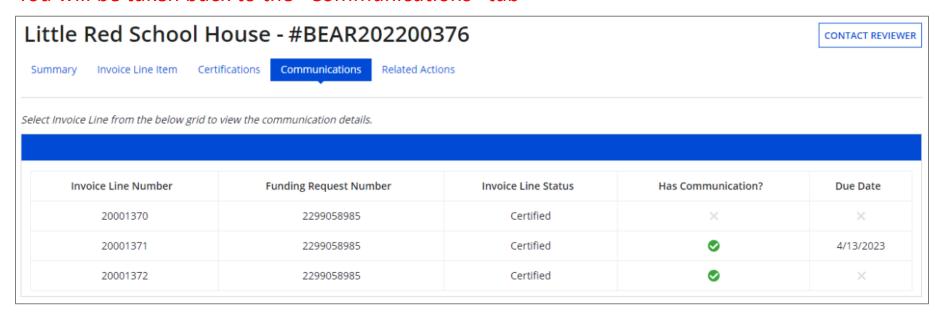


6 Click on the "YES" button in the pop-up window





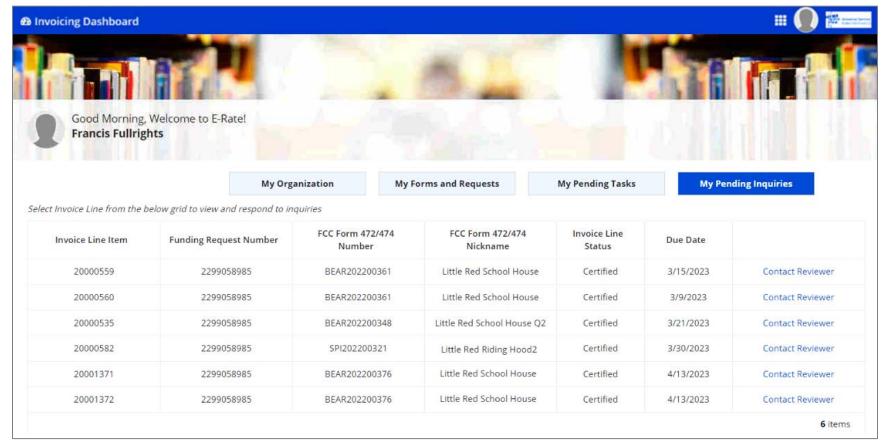
#### You will be taken back to the "Communications" tab





Outreach can also be found on the "My Pending Inquiries" tab

**NOTE:** this tab only displays lines with a pending response from the applicant entity and is only accessible by users with full rights







#### **Outreach Reminders:**

- Ensure invoicing permissions in EPC are up to date
- Only Full Rights users can respond, and have 7 days to respond
- ✓ Full Rights users can request a one-time 7-day extension
- If USAC does not receive a reply by the deadline, the invoice line will be denied

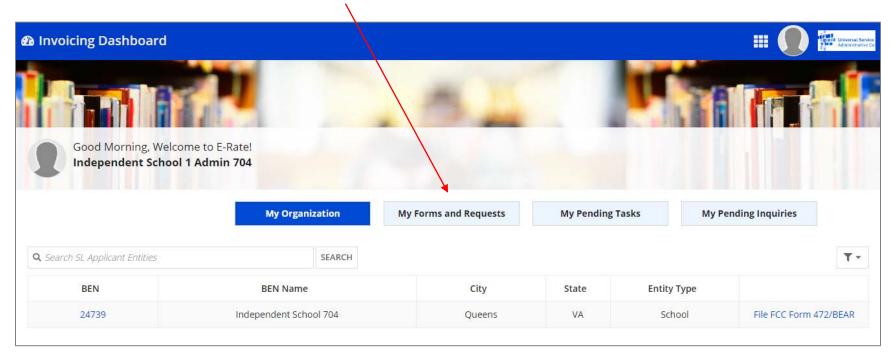
- Respond to each inquiry in the method it was received
- Read the communication carefully and download any attachments
- Response to outreach should be complete, accurate, and timely
- Applicants and service providers can receive or be copied on communication



# **Understanding Invoice Statuses**



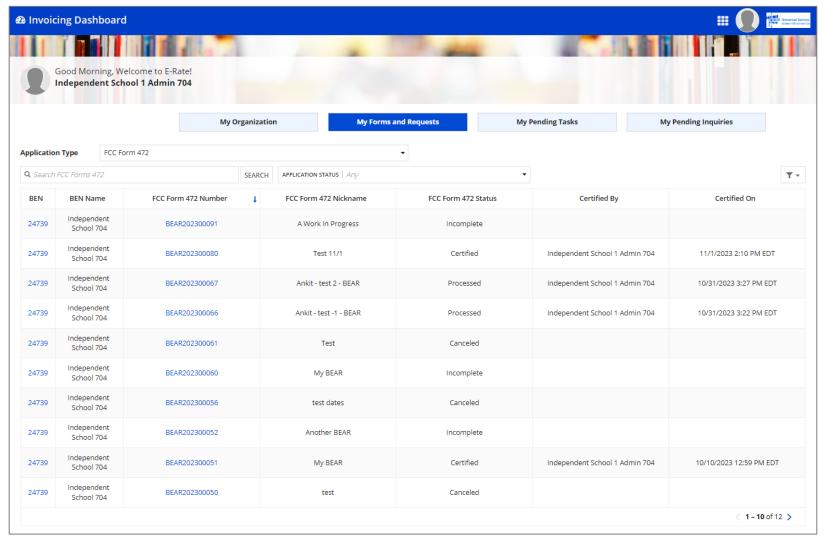
Click on the "My Forms and Requests" button to display a list of forms



If you are not on a page that displays the navigation buttons, first return to the Invoicing Dashboard summary page by clicking on the "Invoicing Dashboard" link in the blue bar, then click on the button



The "My Forms and Requests" tab displays a list of all previously created BEARs as well as the status of each form (incomplete, certified, processed, canceled)





## **Invoice Status Overview**



Incomplete An Invoice has been created but not certified

Certified

The invoice has been submitted and certified and one or more invoice lines have yet to be processed by USAC

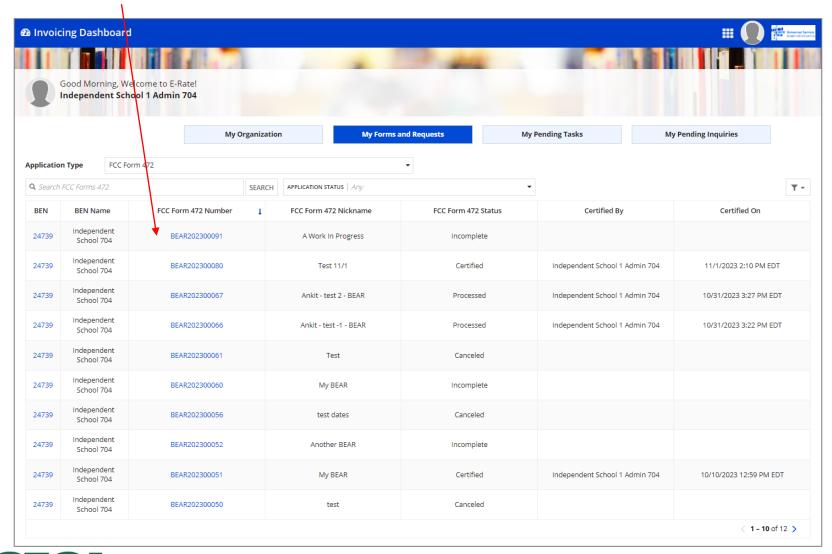
Processed All lines of the invoice have been processed and paid (paid in full, modified, or denied)

The invoice has been **discarded before submission** OR has been **canceled after it was submitted and certified** 



Canceled

Click on any form link in the "FCC Form 472 Number" column to display that form's summary information





#### Each BEAR will go through several statuses before being fully finalized

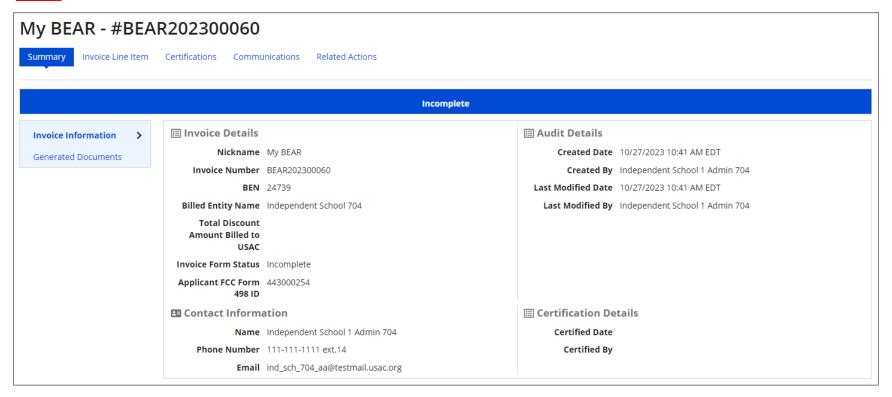
- A Incomplete  $\rightarrow$  go to the next page in this guide
- B Certified with no lines processed  $\rightarrow$  skip to page 103
- C Certified with some lines processed  $\rightarrow$  skip to page 105
- D Certified with all lines processed → skip to page 110





Incomplete ....

#### A.1 If you selected an incomplete BEAR, the blue status bar will display "Incomplete"







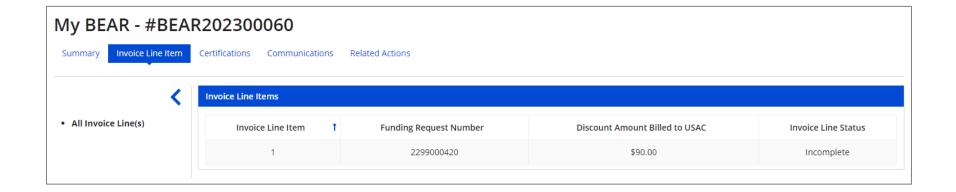
Incomplete ....

A.2 Click on the "Invoice Line Item" tab to show a list of line items added to the BEAR Each line item will display a status of "Incomplete"

#### **Invoice Line Item Tab for Incomplete Version**

Lines Listed = All lines entered so far

Invoice Line Status field = "Incomplete"



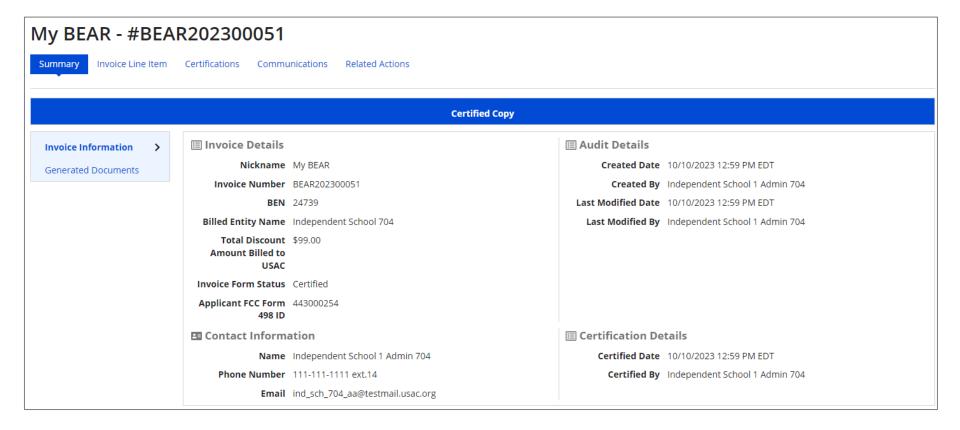


#### [Certified / No Lines Processed]

Certified But No Lines Are Processed ....

B.1 After a BEAR has been submitted, a Certified Copy becomes available

You can tell that no lines have been disbursed yet because there is only one copy displaying on the summary page





#### [Certified / No Lines Processed]

Certified But No Lines Are Processed ....

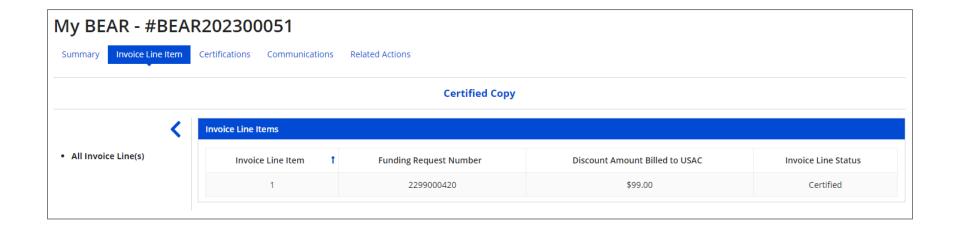
B.2 Click on the "Invoice Line Item" tab to show a list of line items on the invoice

This tab will list all BEAR line items, each with a "Certified" status

#### **Invoice Line Item Tab for Certified Copy**

Lines Listed = All lines

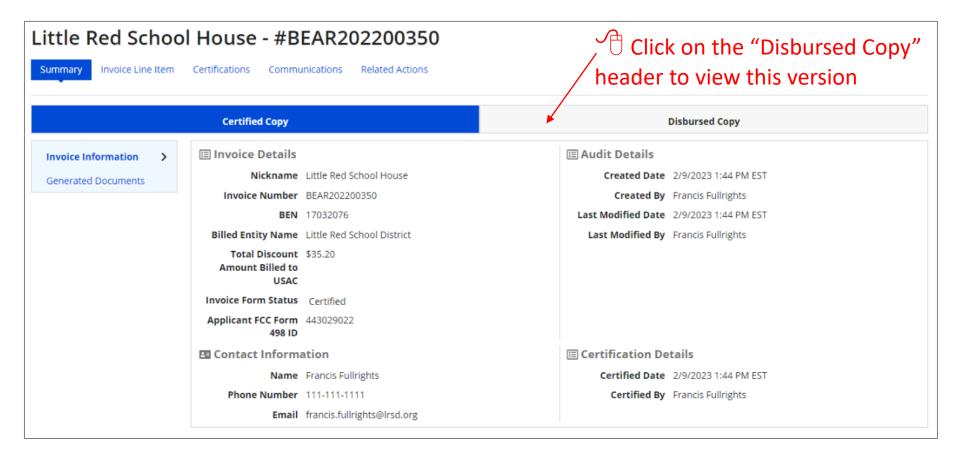
Invoice Line Status field = "Certified"





Partially Processed ....

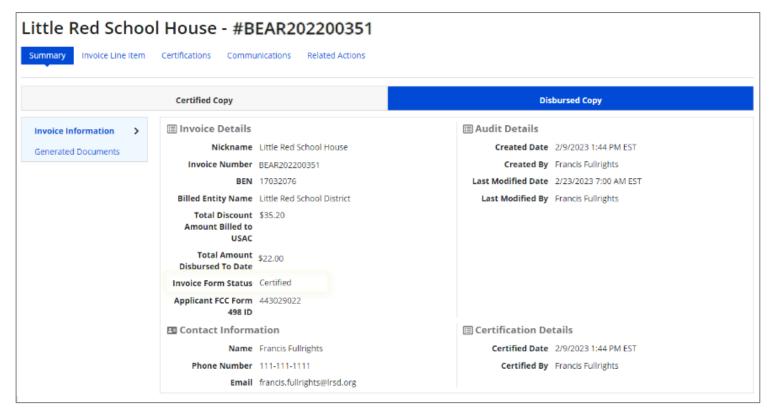
C.1 After a BEAR has been submitted and one or more lines have been processed, a second copy of the form will appear – the Disbursed Copy





Partially Processed ....

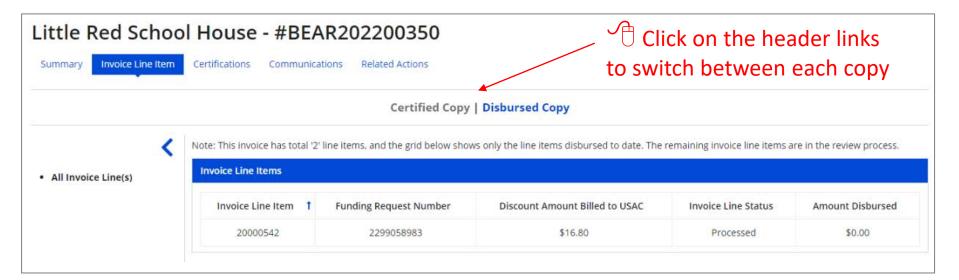
- C.2 When the BEAR is partially processed, the "Summary" tab for the Disbursed Copy:
  - Represents the processed and paid invoice record to date
  - Reflects any modifications made to the disbursed amount so far
  - Displays an Invoice Form Status of "Certified" (the entire BEAR is not fully processed)
  - Continues updating the "Total Amount Disbursed To Date" field as lines are processed



Partially Processed ....

C.3 Click on the "Invoice Line Item" tab to view the Certified Copy and Disbursed Copy of the line items in the BEAR

	Invoice Line Item Tab for Disbursed Copy
Lines Listed = All lines	Lines Listed = Only lines processed so far
Invoice Line Status field = "Certified"	Invoice Line Status field = "Processed"

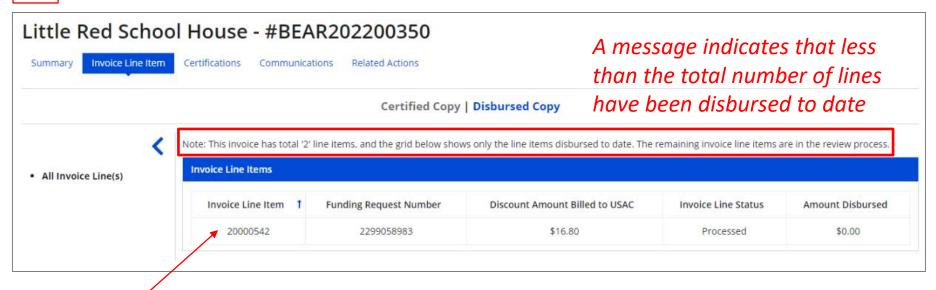


Always compare the amount requested to the amount disbursed



Partially Processed ....

C.4



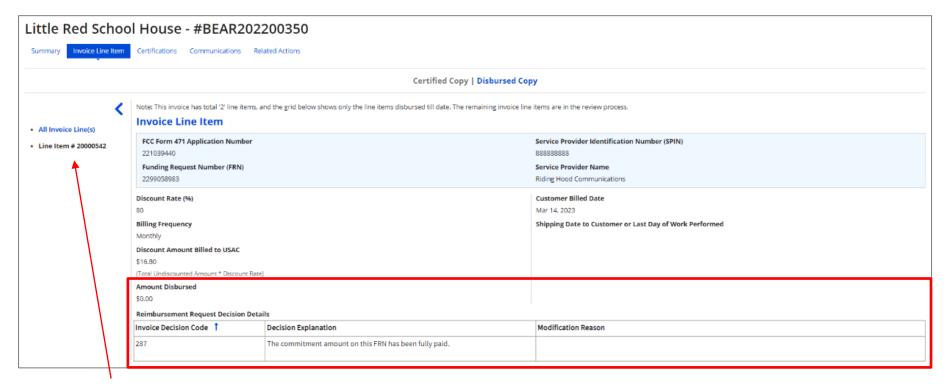
Click on a specific invoice line to show details about that line item



## [Certified / Partially Processed]

Partially Processed ....

C.5



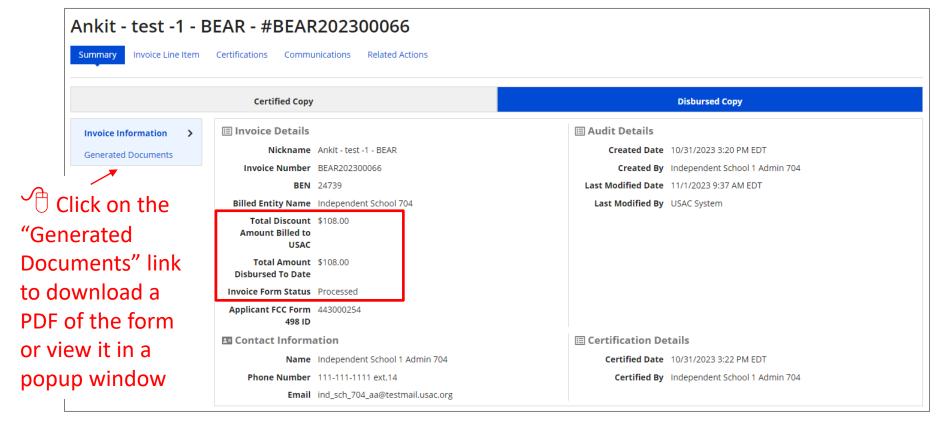
Click on the "All Invoice Line(s)" link in the sidebar menu to return to the full list of line items

If the line was denied or partially funded, information about the decision will display at the bottom of the page



Fully Processed ....

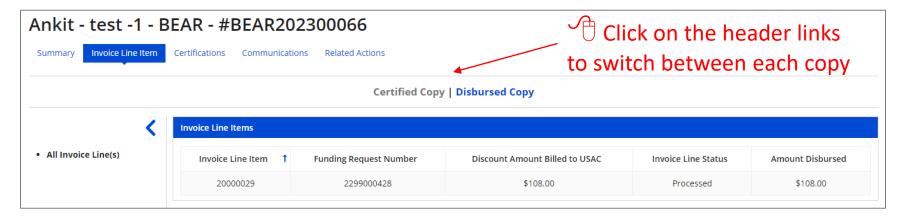
- D.1 When the BEAR is fully processed, the "Summary" Tab for the Disbursed Copy:
  - Represents the processed and paid invoice record
  - Reflects any modifications made to the disbursed amount
  - Displays an Invoice Form Status of "Processed"
  - Displays the final Total Amount Disbursed



Fully Processed ....

D.2 Click on the "Invoice Line Item" tab to view the Certified Copy and Disbursed Copy of the line items in the BEAR

Invoice Line Item Tab for Certified Copy	Invoice Line Item Tab for Disbursed Copy
Lines Listed = All lines	Lines Listed = All lines
Invoice Line Status field = "Certified"	Invoice Line Status field = "Processed"

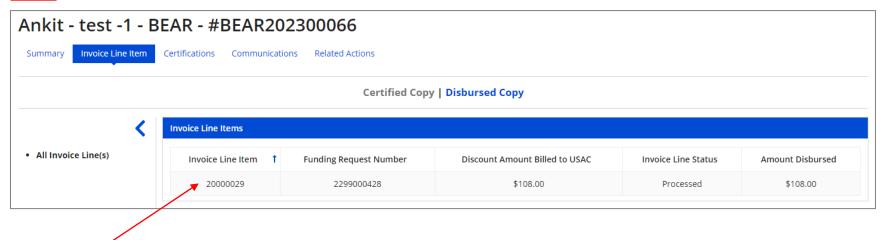


Always compare the amount requested to the amount disbursed



Fully Processed ....

D.3



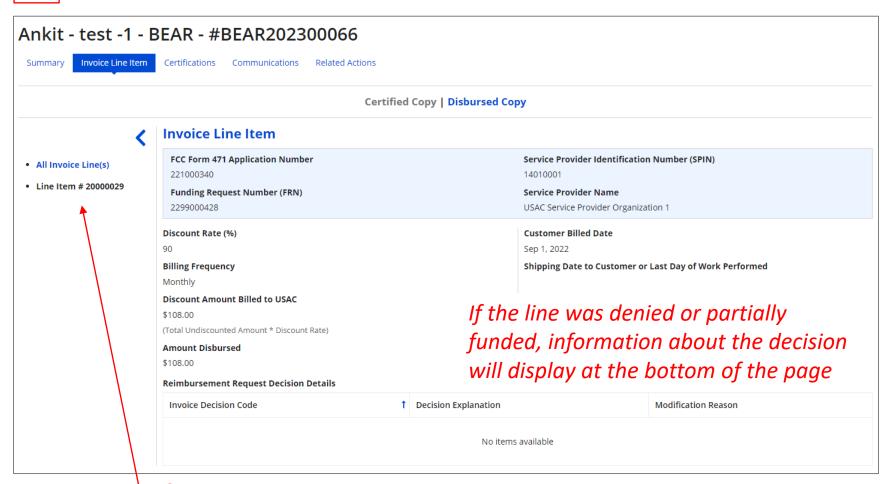
Click on a specific invoice line to show details about that line item



Fully Processed ....

D.4

STATE E-RATE COORDINATORS' ALLIANCE



Click on the "All Invoice Line(s)" link in the sidebar menu to return to the full list of line items

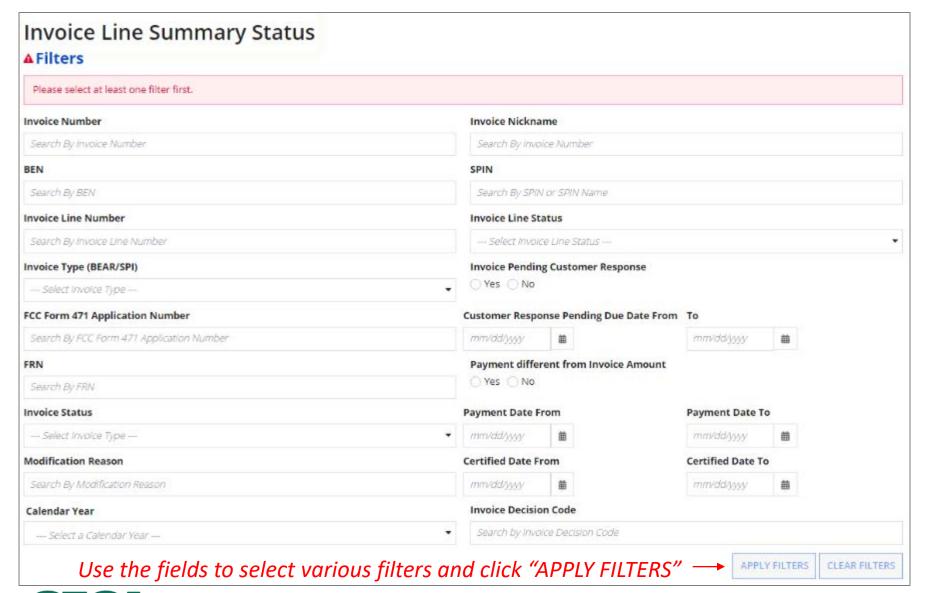
The "Invoice Line Summary Status" Report will help you locate lots of helpful information regarding the BEARs filed by your organization, including their current status

#### How to get there:

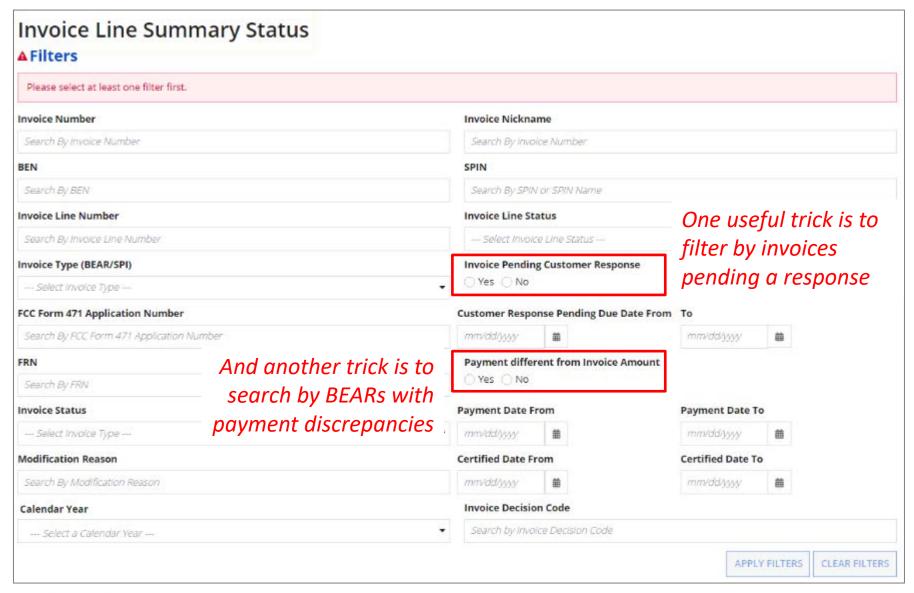
- 1) Go to your EPC Landing Page
- 2) Click on the "Reports" link in the blue navigation bar
- 3) Select the "Invoice Line Summary Status" link



#### Various BEAR data can be obtained here









Once the filters are applied, a scrollable report will display a scrollable list of the filtered results or you can use the "DOWNLOAD" button to view the data in Excel

nvoice Number ↓	Invoice Nickname	BEN	SPIN	State	Invoice Line Number	Invoice Line Status	Certified Date	FCC Form 471 Application Number	Funding Request Number (FRN)
BEAR202300080	Test 11/1	24739	14010001	VA	20000068	Certified	11/1/2023	221000337	2299000338
BEAR202300067	Ankit - test 2 - BEAR	24739	14010001	VA	20000030	Processed	10/31/2023	221000340	2299000425
BEAR202300067	Ankit - test 2 - BEAR	24739	14010001	VA	20000031	Processed	10/31/2023	221000337	2299000334
BEAR202300066	Ankit - test -1 - BEAR	24739	14010001	VA	20000029	Processed	10/31/2023	221000340	2299000428
BEAR202300052	Another BEAR	24739	14010001	VA				221000340	2299000428
BEAR202300051	My BEAR	24739	14010001	VA	1	Certified	10/10/2023	221000340	2299000420
BEAR202300014	EPC TRAINING UAT SCENARIO #3	24739	14010001	VA	1	Certified	6/2/2023	221000340	2299000420
									<b>7</b> items



# To find the date a BEAR paid, scroll through the columns until you find the "Payment Date" column

Discount Rate (%)	Billing Frequency	Discount Amount Billed to USAC	Amount Disbursed	Payment Date	Calendar Year	Invoice Status	Invoice Pending Customer Response	Customer Pending Response Due Date	Payment different from Invoiced Amount	Invoice Decision Code	Invoicin <sub>{</sub> Type
85	One-Time	\$8.50			2023	Certified	No		Yes		FCC Forr 472/BEA
90	Monthly	\$90.00	\$90.00	11/1/2023	2023	Processed	No		No		FCC Forr 472/BEA
85	Other	\$12.75	\$12.75	11/1/2023	2023	Processed	No		No		FCC Form
90	Monthly	\$108.00	\$108.00	11/1/2023	2023	Processed	No		No		FCC Form
0	Monthly	\$90.00			2023	Incomplete			No		FCC Form
0	Monthly	\$99.00			2023	Certified	No		Yes		FCC Form
0	Annually	\$270.00			2023	Certified	No		Yes		FCC Fori
											7 items





Once an invoice line item has been processed, the BEAR Notification Letter will be emailed to full and partial rights









Schools and Libraries Division

#### FCC Form 472 (BEAR) Notification Letter

November 01, 2023

Independent School 704 1112 East Ave Queens, VA 66118

Contact Email Address: ind\_sch\_704\_aa@testmail.usac.org

Re: Invoice Number: BEAR202300066

Applicant Form Identifier: Ankit - test -1 - BEAR

Billed Entity Number: 24739

Invoice reimbursement payment in this letter: \$108.00 Invoice reimbursement adjustments in this letter: \$0.00

Summary of reimsursement payments on this invoice to date: \$108.00 Summary of Invoice Reimbursement Pending Payments: \$0.00

The email will include an attachment with details about the BEAR

#### INVOICE BEAR202300066 LINE SUMMARY TABLE

Line #	FY	FRN	Dollars	Status	Decision Code(s)
20000029	2022	2299000428	\$108.00	Processed	

Invoice Number: BEAR202300066 Invoice Line Number: 20000029

Privileged and Contains Confidential Information

Form 471 Application Number: 221000340 Funding Request Number: 2299000428

Service Provider Name: USAC Service Provider Organization 1

SPIN: 14010001

Funding Year 2022: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023

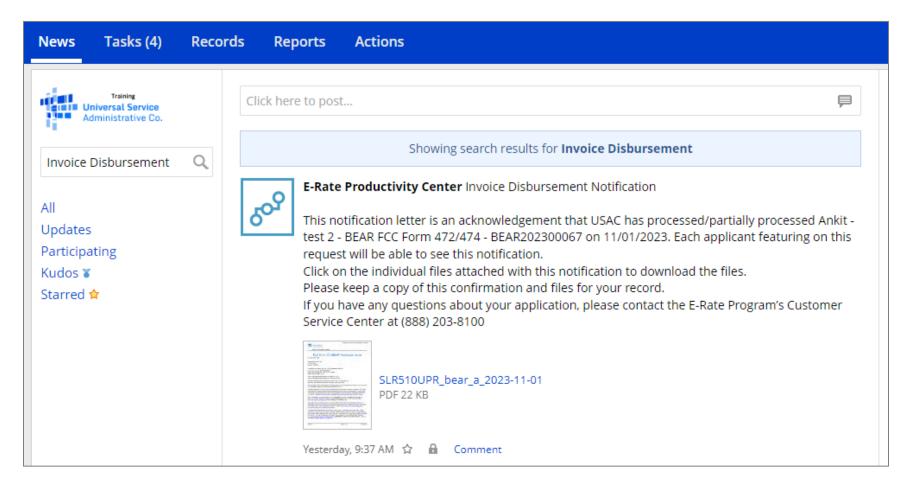
Contract Number: N/A

Funding Commitment Decision: \$1324.80 Reimbursement Request: \$108.00

Reimbursement Amount: \$108.00



# The BEAR Notification Letter and its attachment can also be found in the EPC News feed





SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES BEAR PROGRAM REMITTANCE STATEMENT
As Of September 22, 2023

In addition, the system will email a remittance statement to the person identified as the "Remittance Contact" on your organization's FCC Form 498

Multiple BEAR forms may be disbursed as part of the same transaction and therefore appear on the same remittance statement Attn: Caroline Hammond NETWORKMAINE

RE: FCC Form 498 ID 443000154

This notice provides an explanation of your entity's Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) payment for the following invoices.

Approved

9/21/2023 143001200 Consolidated Communications Enterprise Services, Inc. 2399023194 2023CC DF-07

\$4,963.81

Applicant Name: NETWORKMAINE; SLD Invoice Number: 3567534; BEAR Letter Date: 09/21/2023; Line Item Detail Number: 11046580; Amount Requested: 4963.81;

Total Approved Disbursement

\$4,963.81

Total Actual Disbursement:

\$4,963.81

If you have any questions, please contact USAC Customer Operations at (888) 641-8722 or <a href="mailto:CustomerSupport@usac.org">CustomerSupport@usac.org</a>. You may also visit us at <a href="https://www.usac.org">www.usac.org</a>.



This notification provides the amount that will be paid in the next batch that is processed

It is always a good practice to verify that the amount approved (reimbursed) for each BEAR line item is the same amount that was requested

If line items are missing, it is likely that it is under review

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Payment of the BEAR will then be delivered electronically to the bank account indicated on your organization's FCC Form 498



# Requesting an Invoice Deadline Extension

If you know that you will not be able to file the BEAR Form by the invoice deadline, you can submit an invoice deadline extension request by that deadline to receive a one-time, 120 day extension.



## When are BEARs due?

BEARs must be certified no later than 120 days after the last day services are received or 120 days after the date of the FCC Form 486 Notification Letter, whichever is later.



Form 472 (BEAR)

Slide 127

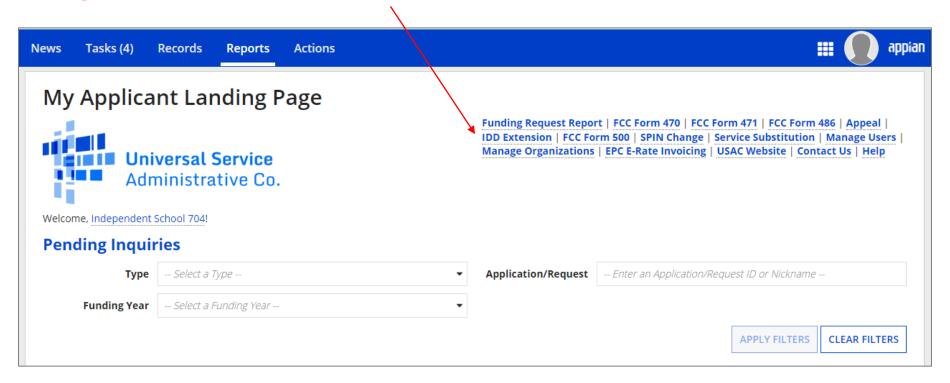
## What if I need an extension?

USAC will automatically grant upon request a single, one-time, 120 day extension to an applicant's BEAR invoice deadline. However, the extension must be requested on or before the original BEAR filing deadline of October 28.

Each FRN for which you need an extension must be specifically requested - a request granted for one FRN on a Form 471 will not extend to other FRNs on that Form 471



1 On the EPC Landing Page, click on the "IDD Extension" link





2 Enter each FRN in text format, separated by a comma (the system will ignore spaces)

**NOTE:** Multiple FRNs from different forms and/or different funding years may be listed on the same request

Request an Extension: Invoice Deadline Date	
Funding Request Number(s) for Extension  List one or more funding request numbers (FRN) below to check its eligibility for an extension to the Invoice Deadline Date.	
600/600 characters remaining	di di
Note: Each FRN must be separated by a comma.	
CANCEL	CHECK ELIGIBILITY

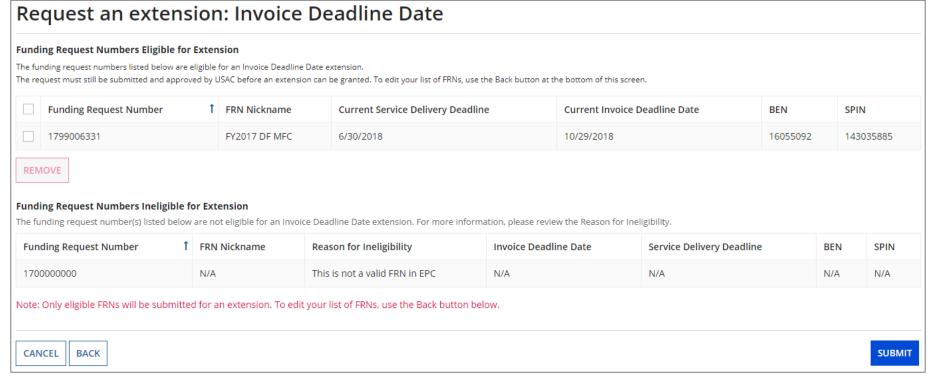
3 Then click on the "CHECK ELIGIBILITY" button



A grid of the FRNs you have entered will appear, split into two tables.

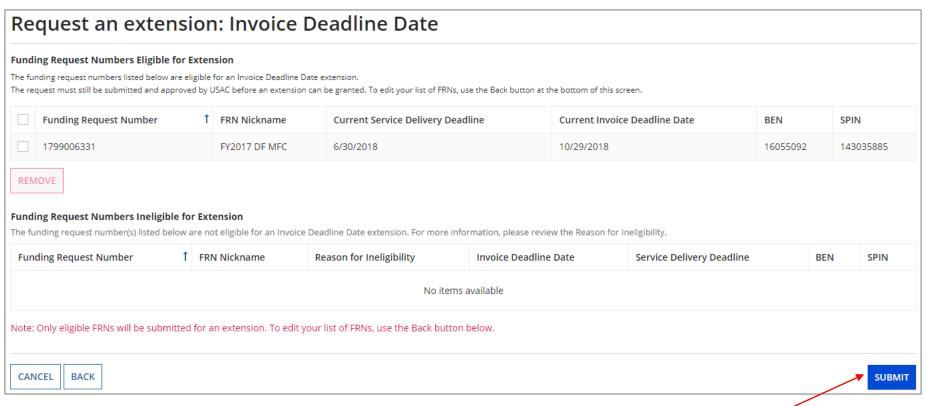
The first table includes the FRNs that are eligible for an extension. If there are any FRNs on this table you want to remove, check the box to the left of the FRN and then click on the "Remove" button.

The second table will include the FRNs for which you cannot submit an extension request together with the reason for each (for example, the FRN does not exist in EPC or the FRN does not belong to your organization).





## 4 Look through the list to verify the FRNs



(5) Click on the "SUBMIT" button



The system will return the eligible FRNs in two tables.

The first table includes FRNs with approved extensions. The extended invoice deadline date will appear after the original invoice deadline date.

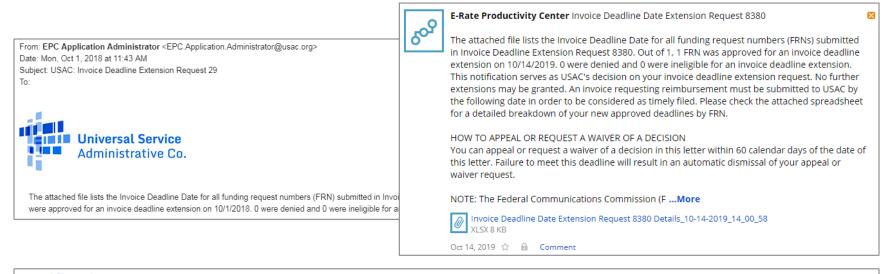
The second table includes FRNs that have not been approved for extensions, together with the reason for the denial (for example, an extension has already been granted for that FRN or if there are no undisbursed funds left on that FRN.

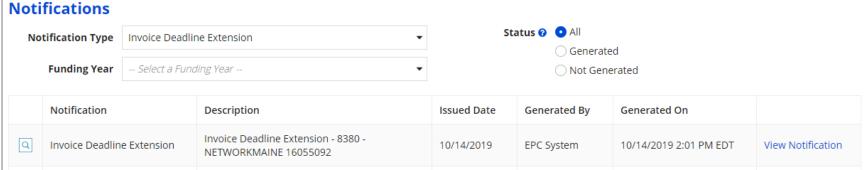
Note that the table of FRNs originally marked as ineligible is repeated below the first two tables for reference.

Request an external For your records, a News Post and co						D extension request #29.				
Approved for an IDD extension The funding request number(s) listed	below	have been appr	oved for an ex	tension to the Invoice Deadl	line Date	2.				
Funding Request Number 1	FRN	l Nickname	Original In	nvoice Deadline Date	Ext	tended Invoice Deadline Date	Service Delivery Deadline	BEN		SPIN
1799006331	FY2017 DF MFC 10/29/2018		8	2/2	26/2019	6/30/2018	1605	5092	143035885	
<b>Denied for an IDD extension</b> The funding request number(s) listed	below	have been deni	ed for an exter	nsion to the Invoice Deadline	e Date. P	Please review the reason below for mo	re information.			
Funding Request Number		† FRN Nickname		e Reason for Denial		Invoice Deadline Date	Service Delivery Deadline		BEN	SPIN
Ineligible for an IDD extension The funding request number(s) listed	below	are not eligible	for an Invoice I	Delivery Deadline extension.	.Please r	eview the reason below for more info	rmation.			
Funding Request Number	1	FRN Nicknai	me	Reason for Ineligibility		Invoice Deadline Date	Service Delivery Deadline		BEN	SPIN
				1	No items	s available				
										CLOSE

The requestor will receive an email containing the extension request information, and a **News** post will be created for both the BEN(s) and the SPIN(s) associated with the FRNs on the list.

Additionally, within the **Notifications** section of the Landing Page for each BEN and SPIN a notification of the decision for each FRN will be listed.







# Wrapping Up



# What do I save for my files?

- **★** Save all records for at least 10 years from the last date of service ★
- A copy of all bills
- Proof of payment of all bills
- A copy of completed BEAR forms
- BEAR Notification Letters
- BEAR Remittance Statements
- Proof of receipt and deposit of all reimbursements



# **Navigation Cheat Sheets**



# How do I submit ...?

Action	EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard Tab	EPC Path
View/Change Access		EPC Landing Page > locate BEN > Click on MANAGE USER PERMISSIONS
Submit a BEAR	My Organization tab > locate BEN > Click File FCC Form 472/BEAR	
Certify a Pending BEAR	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > Click CERTIFY  or My Pending Tasks tab > locate task name > Click the task > Click CERTIFY	
Submit deadline extension request	My Organization tab > locate BEN > Click dropdown > Click Invoice Deadline Date Extension Request	EPC Landing Page > Click <b>IDD Extension</b>
Respond to Outreach	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab	

## How do I review ... ?

Action	EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard Tab
See actions needed for invoice	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab
	OR
	My Pending Tasks tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab
View status of a Line	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab
See what has not been certified	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab



# How do I check payments ...?

Action	EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard Tab
View Amount Disbursed	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab
View Reason for Reduction / Denial	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click FCC Form 472 number > INVOICE LINE ITEM tab
Appeal an Invoice	My Organization tab > locate BEN > Click dropdown > Click Create a Customer Service Case



# How do I finish ...?

Action	EPC E-Rate Invoicing Dashboard Tab	EPC Path
View Remittance Statements		EPC Landing Page > <b>News</b> tab > view remittance statement
View remaining balance of funds available for C2	My Forms and Requests tab > locate BEN > Click Category Two budget > see Category Two Budget Information > remaining budget	

