

§ 54.1502

§ 54.1502 Geographic areas eligible for Stage 2 fixed support.

High-cost universal service support may be made available for Stage 2 of the fixed Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and the fixed Connect USVI Fund for all areas of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, respectively, as announced by public notice.

§ 54.1503 Geographic area and locations to be served by Stage 2 fixed support recipients.

(a) For Stage 2 of the fixed Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund, proposals will be accepted for each municipio in Puerto Rico.

(b) For Stage 2 of the fixed Connect USVI Fund, proposals will be accepted for one geographic area composed of St. John and St. Thomas islands together, and a second geographic area of St. Croix island.

(c) For both Funds, all locations must be served within each defined geographic area by the deployment milestone as defined in § 54.1506. The number of supported locations will be identified for each geographic area in the territories by public notice.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 84 FR 59963, Nov. 7, 2019, § 54.1503 was added. This section contains information collection and record-keeping requirements and will not become effective until approval has been given by the Office of Management and Budget.

§ 54.1504 Term of Stage 2 fixed support and phase-down of legacy fixed support.

(a) *Term of support.* Support awarded through Stage 2 of the fixed Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and of the fixed Connect USVI Fund shall be provided for ten years.

(b) *Phase-down of legacy support.* Stage 2 of the fixed Uniendo a Puerto Rico and of the fixed Connect USVI Fund shall replace the legacy frozen high-cost support for the Territories. Beginning on a date determined by the Wireline Competition Bureau and announced by public notice following authorization of a winning application, frozen support recipient carriers will receive $\frac{2}{3}$ frozen fixed support amortized for the first 12 months following the date announced by public notice; $\frac{1}{3}$ frozen fixed support amortized over the

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second 12-month period; and zero frozen support thereafter.

§ 54.1505 Stage 2 fixed support application process.

(a) *Provider eligibility.* A provider shall be eligible to submit an application for support from Stage 2 of the fixed Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund or of the fixed Connect USVI Fund if it had its own fixed network and provided broadband service in Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands, respectively, according to its June 2018 FCC Form 477 data. A provider must obtain eligible telecommunications carrier designation no later than sixty (60) days after public notice of selection to receive fixed support. Any entity that is awarded support but fails to obtain ETC designation within sixty (60) days shall be considered in default and will not be eligible to receive high-cost funding.

(b) *Application processing.* No application will be considered unless it has been submitted in an acceptable form during the period specified by public notice. No applications submitted or demonstrations made at any other time shall be accepted or considered.

(c) *Application format.* All applications must be substantially in the format as specified and announced by the Wireline Competition Bureau.

(1) Any application that, as of the submission deadline, either does not identify the applicant seeking support as specified in the public notice announcing application procedures or does not include required certifications shall be denied.

(2) An applicant may be afforded an opportunity to make minor modifications to amend its application or correct defects noted by the applicant, the Commission, the Administrator, or other parties. Minor modifications include correcting typographical errors in the application and supplying non-material information that was inadvertently omitted or was not available at the time the application was submitted.

(3) Applications to which major modifications are made after the deadline for submitting proposals shall be denied. Major modifications may include, but are not limited to, any