



State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Rhode Island Telecommunications Educational Access Fund **NOTES for Letter of Agency (LOA) 2025/26 Program Year**

OVERVIEW

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will submit a statewide consortium application to the E-Rate program, alleviating schools and libraries of some of this responsibility for telecommunication services. A Letter of Agency is a prerequisite for the state to receive ERATE subsidies for the telecommunications services funded under the Rhode Island Telecommunications Education Access Fund (RITEAF).

SCHOOLS, DISTRICTS and LIBRARIES MUST AUTHORIZE RIDE TO RECOVER E-RATE SUBSIDIES FOR TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Schools and Libraries that choose to participate in this program must **sign** and complete the attached Letter of Agency (LOA). A signed Letter of Agency fulfills the USAC School and Library Division's (SLD) strict enforcement of rules associated with consortium applications. The consortium leader must prove that members of the consortium will adhere to rules governing individual applicants and that the consortium is authorized to submit an application on behalf of the included entities.

An important issue related to signatures: A Superintendent, Principal, Technology Director or other individual with authority may complete and sign this form. The person who completes the form, and whose information and title are provided, **MUST** be the same as the person who signs the form. The SLD can deprive districts and libraries of money for these types of errors.

A district's or school's failure to submit to RIDE a signed Letter of Agency form by the deadline indicated means that it will not be included in the consortium applications submitted by RIDE. RITEAF provides telecommunication services with an approximate value of \$10,000 per year per school/library.

ONLY RIDE CAN RECOVER SUBSIDIES FOR THE TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES PROVIDED VIA RITEAF

Note 1: RIDE will submit (a) a FORM 470 application (BID) for "CATEGORY 1 Data Connection services" for all schools/districts/libraries in the consortium, (b) the subsequent FORM 471, and (c) other related forms to recover subsidies for these services. RIDE will use funds it receives (RITEAF and E-Rate) to pay for telecommunication services allocated to your site from the approved provider(s). The school/district/library does not need to submit any other forms to the E-Rate program for "telecommunication services" used for Internet Access, unless it intends to purchase bandwidth with local money. The school/district/library should submit an FCC Form 470 only to request additional bandwidth.

If the school/district/library does not submit the required Letter of Agency, RIDE will direct the selected provider to terminate telecommunication services covered by RITEAF.

Note 2: RIDE provides Internet accessible telecommunication service lines, only. Schools/districts/libraries are responsible for all forms (470, 471, and others) associated with all other Category 1 and 2 services, which are unrelated to the telecommunication service lines provided by RIDE in its applications.

Note 3: RIDE will submit a FORM 470 application (BID) for "Internet Access" for all schools/districts/libraries which will result in a State MPA. Thus, the school/district/library can assume responsibility for the subsequent FORM 471 and related forms to obtain internet access. RIDE's only role is to post a FORM 470 for Internet Access services, to ensure that all schools/libraries have a proper and timely FORM 470 for these services in effect. Schools/districts/libraries will contract directly with the approved vendors, because they pay for these services with individual contracts.

Telephone (401)222-4600 Fax (401)222-6178 TTY (800)745-5555 Voice (800)745-6575 Website: www.ride.ri.gov

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