

Apply For FCC Telehealth Funding.

The FCC's \$300M in Telehealth Funding brings short-term relief and long-term opportunity.



On April 13, 2020 Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announced that it will begin to accept applications for the COVID-19 Telehealth Program. [Apply Here.](#)

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020. [It provides numerous funding opportunities for healthcare providers for information technology and telehealth](#), including \$200 million for the Federal Communications Committee (FCC) to fund telehealth investments.

As a follow-up to that action, on April 2, 2020 the FCC published a Report and Order titled "[Promoting Telehealth for Low-Income Consumers; COVID-19 Telehealth Program](#)" which details the [FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program and its fast-track funding](#). This Report also covers the distinct and separate [FCC Connected Care Pilot Program](#) which has \$100 million for longer-term innovation in areas including remote patient monitoring, virtual patient health education, and video consultations and visits.

This Pivot Point Perspective reviews these two FCC programs and outlines how to apply for funding. Funding will be awarded on a rolling basis until funds are exhausted or the public health emergency ends.

1.

The FCC'S COVID-19 Telehealth Program.

WHAT:

- \$200 million, as appropriated in the CARES Act, for providers to purchase telecommunications services, information services and devices necessary to provide critical connected care services, during and in response to COVID-19. The Program is not limited to patients being treated for COVID-19. Rather, program funds must be used "to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus."
- Connected care technologies and services covered include those that enable video consults and visits, patient health education, store and forward services and remote monitoring devices connected back to the provider systems. Standalone monitoring devices are not covered.

WHO:

- Open to eligible healthcare providers, regardless of geography

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- Targeted at healthcare providers likely to be most in need of funding, including (1) post-secondary educational institutions offering healthcare instruction, teaching hospitals and medical schools; (2) community health centers or health centers providing healthcare to migrants; (3) local health departments or agencies; (4) community mental health centers; (5) not-for-profit hospitals; (6) rural health clinics; (7) skilled nursing facilities; or (8) consortia of healthcare providers consisting of one or more entities in those categories.

HOW:

- The FCC but does not anticipate awarding more than \$1 million per application, but allows for a healthcare provider to complete additional applications
- The FCC will begin accepting applications once it receives notice of OMB's approval of the COVID-19 Telehealth Program information collection requirements in the Federal Register. It will provide an application form titled **"COVID-19 Telehealth Program Application and Request for Funding"** that applicants must use when submitting their applications to the FCC through its Electronic Comment Filing system under WC Docket No. 20-89. COVID-19 Telehealth Program Application and Request for Funding.
- Program applicants must be deemed eligible by Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). If needed, applicants can complete FCC Form 460 for USAC eligibility determination.
 - Providers can submit applications for the FCC COVID-19 Telehealth Program while their request is pending with USAC.
- The FCC will review Program applications, select participants and make funding awards on a rolling basis until the funds are exhausted or until the current pandemic has ended.
- The Program application requires, among other data:
 - A description of how the organization has been impacted by COVID-19
 - A description of how the funds / technology would be used for COVID-19 response
 - Details on the technology and services requested and a corresponding vendor quote.
- The Program application and invoicing process will be streamlined in many ways:
 - Competitive bidding for the eligible services or devices is not required
 - FCC invoicing and reimbursement will be expedited
 - The FCC will not prohibit participants from receiving gifts or things of value from vendors valued at over \$20, including, devices, equipment, free upgrades, etc.



2.

The FCC Connected Care Pilot Program.

WHAT:

- The Pilot Program will provide up to \$100 million from the Universal Service Fund (USF) over a three-year period to fund selected telehealth pilot projects up to 85% of the eligible costs of (1) patient broadband Internet access services, (2) healthcare provider broadband data connections, (3) other connected care information services and (4) certain network equipment.

- Connected care technologies and services covered include those that enable video consults and visits, patient health education, store and forward services and remote monitoring devices connected back to the provider's systems.
- The Pilot Program is intended to be driven by healthcare providers who design their pilot projects, select their services and equipment vendors and identify and enroll patients.

WHO:

- The FCC notes a strong preference for providers that have either experience with providing telehealth or connected care services to patients or have partnership with another healthcare provider, government agency or designated telehealth resource center with such experience.
- The Pilot Program is geared towards services for low income Americans and veterans, with focus on treating public health epidemics, including opioid dependency, mental health conditions, high-risk pregnancy and / or chronic or recurring conditions.
- The FCC did not set a limit on the number of projects to be selected for the Pilot Program.

HOW:

- The deadline for filing applications for the Pilot Program will be 45 days from the effective date of the Pilot Program rules or 120 days from the April 2, 2020 release date of this Report and Order, whichever is later.
- Program applicants must be deemed eligible by Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). If needed applicants can complete FCC Form 460 for USAC eligibility determination.
- To participate in the Pilot Program, a provider will submit an application to the FCC describing, among other things, its proposed pilot project and how the pilot project will use connected care services to serve the health care needs of participating patients.
- The FCC will announce selected pilot projects and rationale for selecting the projects. It will also provide further information on Pilot Program requirements, including, invoicing, data reporting and audit requirements.



*The information provided here is current as of 4/13/20. Please contact our Telehealth specialists at **800-381-9681** or **letschat@pivotpointconsulting.com** for updates or questions.*