

## § 54.1

- 54.604 Existing contracts.
- 54.605 Determining the urban rate.
- 54.607 Determining the rural rate.
- 54.609 Calculating support.
- 54.611 Distributing support.
- 54.613 Limitations on supported services for rural health care providers.
- 54.615 Obtaining services.
- 54.617 Resale.
- 54.619 Audits and recordkeeping.
- 54.621 Access to advanced telecommunications and information services.
- 54.623 Cap.
- 54.625 Support for services beyond the maximum supported distance for rural health care providers.

### Subpart H—Administration

- 54.701 Administrator of universal service support mechanisms.
- 54.702 Administrator's functions and responsibilities.
- 54.703 The Administrator's Board of Directors.
- 54.704 The Administrator's Chief Executive Officer.
- 54.705 Committees of the Administrator's Board of Directors.
- 54.706 Contributions.
- 54.707 Audit controls.
- 54.708 De minimis exemption.
- 54.709 Computations of required contributions to universal service support mechanisms.
- 54.711 Contributor reporting requirements.
- 54.712 Contributor recovery of universal service costs from end users.
- 54.713 Contributors' failure to report or to contribute.
- 54.715 Administrative expenses of the Administrator.
- 54.717 Audits of the Administrator.

### Subpart I—Review of Decisions Issued by the Administrator

- 54.719 Parties permitted to seek review of Administrator decisions.
- 54.720 Filing deadlines.
- 54.721 General filing requirements.
- 54.722 Review by the Wireline Competition Bureau or the Commission.
- 54.723 Standard of review.
- 54.724 Time periods for Commission approval of Administrator decisions.
- 54.725 Universal service disbursements during pendency of a request for review and Administrator decision.

### Subpart J—Interstate Access Universal Service Support Mechanism

- 54.800 Terms and definitions.
- 54.801 General.
- 54.802 Obligations of local exchange carriers and the Administrator.

## 47 CFR Ch. I (10–1–08 Edition)

- 54.803 Universal service zones.
- 54.804 Preliminary minimum access universal service support for a study area calculated by the Administrator.
- 54.805 Zone and study area above benchmark revenues calculated by the Administrator.
- 54.806 Calculation by the Administrator of interstate access universal service support for areas served by price cap local exchange carriers.
- 54.807 Interstate access universal service support.
- 54.808 Transition provisions and periodic calculation.
- 54.809 Carrier certification.

### Subpart K—Interstate Common Line Support Mechanism for Rate-of-Return Carriers

- 54.901 Calculation of Interstate Common Line Support.
- 54.902 Calculation of Interstate Common Line Support for transferred exchanges.
- 54.903 Obligations of rate-of-return carriers and the Administrator.
- 54.904 Carrier certification.

AUTHORITY: 47 U.S.C. 151, 154(i), 201, 205, 214, and 254 unless otherwise noted.

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### Subpart A—General Information

#### § 54.1 Basis and purpose.

(a) *Basis.* These rules are issued pursuant to the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

(b) *Purpose.* The purpose of these rules is to implement section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 USC 254.

#### § 54.5 Terms and definitions.

Terms used in this part have the following meanings:

*Act.* The term “Act” refers to the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

*Administrator.* The term “Administrator” shall refer to the Universal Service Administrative Company that is an independent subsidiary of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc., and that has been appointed the permanent Administrator of the federal universal service support mechanisms.

*Competitive eligible telecommunications carrier.* A “competitive eligible telecommunications carrier” is a carrier

## Federal Communications Commission

## § 54.5

that meets the definition of an “eligible telecommunications carrier” below and does not meet the definition of an “incumbent local exchange carrier” in § 51.5 of this chapter.

*Contributor.* The term “contributor” shall refer to an entity required to contribute to the universal service support mechanisms pursuant to § 54.706.

*Eligible telecommunications carrier.* “Eligible telecommunications carrier” means a carrier designated as such by a state commission pursuant to § 54.201.

*Incumbent local exchange carrier.* “Incumbent local exchange carrier” or “ILEC” has the same meaning as that term is defined in § 51.5 of this chapter.

*Information service.* “Information service” is the offering of a capability for generating, acquiring, storing, transforming, processing, retrieving, utilizing, or making available information via telecommunications, and includes electronic publishing, but does not include any use of any such capability for the management, control, or operation of a telecommunications system or the management of a telecommunications service.

*Interconnected VoIP Provider.* An “interconnected VoIP provider” is an entity that provides interconnected VoIP service, as that term is defined in section 9.3 of these rules.

*Internet access.* “Internet access” includes the following elements:

(1) The transmission of information as common carriage;

(2) The transmission of information as part of a gateway to an information service, when that transmission does not involve the generation or alteration of the content of information, but may include data transmission, address translation, protocol conversion, billing management, introductory information content, and navigational systems that enable users to access information services, and that do not affect the presentation of such information to users; and

(3) Electronic mail services (e-mail).

*Interstate telecommunication.* “Interstate telecommunication” is a communication or transmission:

(1) From any State, Territory, or possession of the United States (other than the Canal Zone), or the District of Columbia, to any other State, Terri-

tory, or possession of the United States (other than the Canal Zone), or the District of Columbia,

(2) From or to the United States to or from the Canal Zone, insofar as such communication or transmission takes place within the United States, or

(3) Between points within the United States but through a foreign country.

*Interstate transmission.* “Interstate transmission” is the same as interstate telecommunication.

*Intrastate telecommunication.* “Intrastate telecommunication” is a communication or transmission from within any State, Territory, or possession of the United States, or the District of Columbia to a location within that same State, Territory, or possession of the United States, or the District of Columbia.

*Intrastate transmission.* “Intrastate transmission” is the same as intrastate telecommunication.

*LAN.* “LAN” is a local area network, which is a set of high-speed links connecting devices, generally computers, on a single shared medium, usually on the user’s premises.

*Rate-of-return carrier.* “Rate-of-return carrier” shall refer to any incumbent local exchange carrier not subject to price cap regulation as that term is defined in § 61.3(x) of this chapter.

*Rural area.* For purposes of the schools and libraries universal support mechanism, a “rural area” is a non-metropolitan county or county equivalent, as defined in the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Revised Standards for Defining Metropolitan Areas in the 1990s and identifiable from the most recent Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) list released by OMB, or any contiguous non-urban Census Tract or Block Numbered Area within an MSA-listed metropolitan county identified in the most recent Goldsmith Modification published by the Office of Rural Health Policy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For purposes of the rural health care universal service support mechanism, a “rural area” is an area that is entirely outside of a Core Based Statistical Area; is within a Core Based Statistical Area that does not have any Urban Area with a population of 25,000

or greater; or is in a Core Based Statistical Area that contains an Urban Area with a population of 25,000 or greater, but is within a specific census tract that itself does not contain any part of a Place or Urban Area with a population of greater than 25,000. “Core Based Statistical Area” and “Urban Area” are as defined by the Census Bureau and “Place” is as identified by the Census Bureau.

*Rural incumbent local exchange carrier.* “Rural incumbent local exchange carrier” is a carrier that meets the definitions of “rural telephone company” and “incumbent local exchange carrier,” as those terms are defined in § 51.5 of this chapter.

*Rural telephone company.* “Rural telephone company” has the same meaning as that term is defined in § 51.5 of this chapter.

*State commission.* The term “state commission” means the commission, board or official (by whatever name designated) that, under the laws of any state, has regulatory jurisdiction with respect to intrastate operations of carriers.

*Technically feasible.* “Technically feasible” means capable of accomplishment as evidenced by prior success under similar circumstances. For example, preexisting access at a particular point evidences the technical feasibility of access at substantially similar points. A determination of technical feasibility does not consider economic, accounting, billing, space or site except that space and site may be considered if there is no possibility of expanding available space.

*Telecommunications.* “Telecommunications” is 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.* A “telecommunications carrier” is any provider of telecommunications services, except that such term does not include aggregators of telecommunications services as defined in section 226 of the Act. A telecommunications carrier shall be treated as a common carrier under the Act only to the extent that it is engaged in providing tele-

communications services, except that the Commission shall determine whether the provision of fixed and mobile satellite service shall be treated as common carriage. This definition includes cellular mobile radio service (CMRS) providers, interexchange carriers (IXCs) and, to the extent they are acting as telecommunications carriers, companies that provide both telecommunications and information services. Private mobile radio service (PMRS) providers are telecommunications carriers to the extent they provide domestic or international telecommunications for a fee directly to the public.

*Telecommunications channel.* “Telecommunications channel” means a telephone line, or, in the case of wireless communications, a transmittal line or cell site.

*Telecommunications service.* “Telecommunications service” is the offering of telecommunications for a fee directly to the public, or to such classes of users as to be effectively available directly to the public, regardless of the facilities used.

*Website.* The term “website” shall refer to any websites operated by the Administrator in connection with the schools and libraries support mechanism, the rural health care support mechanism, the high cost mechanism, and the low income mechanism.

*Wire center.* A wire center is the location of a local switching facility containing one or more central offices, as defined in the Appendix to part 36 of this chapter. The wire center boundaries define the area in which all customers served by a given wire center are located.

[62 FR 32948, June 17, 1997, as amended at 62 FR 41303, Aug. 1, 1997; 63 FR 70571, Dec. 21, 1998; 64 FR 67431, Dec. 1, 1999; 66 FR 30087, June 5, 2001; 66 FR 59726, Nov. 30, 2001; 70 FR 6372, Feb. 7, 2005; 71 FR 38796, July 10, 2006]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 71 FR 38796, July 10, 2006, § 54.5 was amended by revising the definition of “contributor” and adding the definition of “interconnected VoIP provider” in alphabetical order. This text contains information collection and recordkeeping requirements and will not become effective until approval has been given by the Office of Management and Budget.