

# CIPA COMPLIANCE

The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-Rate program – a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. In early 2001, the FCC issued rules for CIPA compliance. More recently, Congress enacted additional protections for children using the Internet.

## CIPA REQUIREMENTS

Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-Rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy and technology protection measures in place. An Internet safety policy must include technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) are obscene, (b) child pornography, or (c) harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors).

- Schools and libraries must also certify that, as part of their Internet safety policy, they are educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and response and interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms.
- Schools subject to CIPA are required to adopt and enforce a policy to monitor online activities of minors.
- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt and implement a policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking,” and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) restricting minors’ access to materials harmful to them.

## CIPA CERTIFICATION

**Schools and libraries are required to certify that they have their safety policies and technology in place, showing CIPA compliance, before receiving E-Rate funding.**

- CIPA does not affect E-Rate funding for schools and libraries receiving discounts only for telecommunications, such as telephone service.
- An authorized person may disable the blocking or filtering measure during any use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- CIPA does not require the tracking of Internet use by minors or adults.

**More information:**  
<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act>

# E-RATE FUNDING & APPLICATION PROCESS

## WHAT IS E-RATE?

Government programs can seem like alphabet soup when it comes to acronyms and other jargon.

E-Rate is a program run by USAC, The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), which is an independent, not-for-profit corporation. USAC has been designated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as the administrator of universal service. Universal service is the notion that all Americans should have access to modern, quality telecommunications infrastructure regardless of location, socio-economic status, disabilities or other limiting factors. In brief, USAC is there to help ensure everyone has equal access to telecommunications and the Internet in the United States.

E-Rate is the schools and libraries program run by USAC to help these institutions provide telecommunications and Internet access to the communities they serve. Most K-12 public and private (not-for-profit) schools and public and private libraries are eligible to participate.

Each year, USAC publishes a list of technologies that will qualify for funding based on direction from the FCC and other stakeholders. Schools and libraries with plans to upgrade their Internet connectivity may be eligible for reimbursement for some or all of their technology investment, including for broadband and fiber connections, firewalls, routers and caches. Untangle's NG Firewall can be an integral part of your plan.

Untangle's NG Firewall solution qualifies under Category II, which includes both firewalls and routers. NG Firewall can help keep your network CIPA compliance with web content filtering and application control. Contact us today to learn how Untangle can work at your school or library.

## APPLYING FOR E-RATE

- 1. Determine if you are eligible** by visiting the USAC E-Rate eligibility requirements website: <https://www.usac.org/sl/applicants/beforeyoubegin/default.aspx>.
- 2. Determine if the services you are seeking are eligible** by reviewing USAC over view of Eligible Services at <https://www.usac.org/sl/applicants/beforeyoubegin/eligible-services/default.aspx>.
- 3. Request bids for E-Rate supported services.** The bid request and competitive bidding process must comply with FCC rules and state and local procurement laws. To open the process, you will need to complete and post the FCC Form 470.
- 4. Select your service providers.** After you close your competitive bidding process (28 days after filing the Form 470), you can evaluate the bids received and choose the bid that is the most cost effective.
- 5. Apply for E-Rate discounts** by filing FCC Form 471 and providing USAC with the information of services and discounts you are requesting.
- 6. Answer any questions** the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) reviewers may have. You have 15 days to respond to PIA questions.
- 7. Begin using services.** Once you have received the Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) and have begun using services, file FCC Form 486 to inform USAC that you are using the services and that you are in compliance with CIPA (if applicable).
- 7. Invoice USAC.** After FCC Form 486 has been processed, you or the service provider can invoice USAC for the discount amount of the approved eligible services.



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