

e-Rate

Overview of e-Rate

The Schools and Libraries Universal Service Program (E-rate) was established as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 with the express purpose of providing affordable access to telecommunication services for all eligible schools and libraries, particularly those in rural and inner-city areas. The program provides discounts of 20% to 90% on telecommunication services, Internet access, and internal connections. In order to receive discounts, schools and libraries must submit applications to the Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Administrative Company. Funding is requested under four categories of service:

- Telecommunications services
- Internet access
- Internal connections
- Basic maintenance of internal connections.

Discounts for support depend on the level of poverty and the urban/rural status of the population served and range from 20% to 90% of the costs of eligible services. Eligible schools, school districts and libraries may apply individually or as part of a consortium.

Information websites

[Schools and Libraries web site](#) - For information on the program and to access application information.

[e-Rate 101 Overview of the Program](#) - Information about eligibility for applicants and service providers, technology plans and applications.

Contact for technology plan approval: Susan Paznekas, e-rate coordinator at spaznekas@msde.state.md.us