

Overview of High Cost Certificate

- Title 47 Code of Federal Regulations § 54.314 requires state utility commissions certify that carriers under their jurisdiction are eligible to receive High Cost support, which is designed to deliver affordable voice and broadband services in rural areas and is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company. This certification confirms that the carrier has used all support funds collected in the previous calendar year exclusively for the purpose of providing, maintaining, and upgrading the facilities intended for the support and that the carrier will continue to use the support funds in the same manner for the upcoming calendar year.
- The certification is valid for one year.
- To apply, a carrier must file a request with the Commission via the Commission's E-file system online along with an affidavit certifying that the High Cost support collected in the previous calendar year was used exclusively to provide, maintain, and upgrade the intended facilities and a commitment to use the support in the same manner for the upcoming calendar year. Technical staff reviews the carrier's request, affidavit, and the carrier's annual Form 481, which is filed with the FCC to ensure compliance with federal requirements. Based on this review, Technical Staff drafts a memo for each carrier, indicating whether the carrier should be certified or not. The memo is forwarded to the Executive Secretary of the Commission, who makes the final certification decision based on the technical staff's recommendation. The certification is submitted through the Universal Service Administrative Company's website.
- Estimated time to process and receive a decision is 30 days.
- No changes have been made to this process in the last 12 months.