



## USAC + MTEAF = Free Internet for Networkmaine Consortium Members

### What is USAC (Universal Services Administrative Company)?

The Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund, commonly known as "E-Rate," is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and provides discounts to assist most schools and libraries in the United States to obtain affordable telecommunications and Internet access. The Schools and Libraries Program supports connectivity - the conduit or pipeline for communications using telecommunications services and/or the Internet. 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.

### What is MTEAF (The Maine Telecommunications Education Access Fund)?

MTEAF is a fund administered by the Maine Public Utilities Commission to support the Maine School and Library Network (MSLN). MSLN has been in operation since 1996. Today, MSLN provides internet access to approximately 950 schools and libraries statewide. MSLN is paid for using a combination of funding from USAC (approximately 60% of the cost) and MTEAF (approximately 40% of the cost). Funds are generated through an assessment on interstate phone bills for the Federal E-Rate portion and on intrastate bills for the MTEAF portion.

### What is Networkmaine?

Networkmaine is a unit within the University of Maine System that provides schools and libraries in the state with Internet connectivity at little or no cost through the Maine School and Library Network (MSLN) project. Networkmaine negotiates reduced Internet and broadband service rates for its members.

### What is my responsibility as a Networkmaine consortium member?

Consortium members are required to file a Letter of Authorization (LOA) allowing Networkmaine to contract for services and file for e-rate funding on their behalf.

The FCC requires participants to file a form that verifies CIPA compliance.

All consortium members also need to report income eligibility. Information provided by consortium members helps to determine the USAC discount rate applied to the consortium. Many locations can report free and reduced lunch data. However, locations that do not provide school lunch typically need to complete an Alternative Discount Mechanism form and submit supporting documentation.

### What does all this mean for me?

If you were not a Networkmaine consortium member and were contracting for Internet services through a private vendor you could expect to pay a significant monthly rate.

10 Mbps connection	
Estimated cost per month	\$500.00
Cost to the Networkmaine location*	\$0.00

100 Mbps connection	
Estimated cost per month	\$1700.00
Cost to the Networkmaine location*	\$0.00

\* based on the discount percentage determined by USAC and the remaining amount funded by MTEAF