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## SECTION 2 - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

### S. HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS SUPPORT PROGRAM

#### 1. General

The purpose of the Health Care Providers Support Program is to enable public and non-profit rural health care providers to have access to telecommunications services necessary for the provision of health care services at rates comparable to those paid for similar services in urban areas. The Health Care Providers Support Program offers eligible public and non-profit health care providers located in rural areas reduced rates for Company intrastate services, available in this Tariff. Such services must be purchased in accordance with the Rules adopted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in its Universal Service order 97-157, issued May 8, 1997 and the New York State Public Service Commission in its Order in Cases 94-C-0095 and 28425, issued November 4, 1997. The FCC Rules are codified at 47 Code of Federal Regulation (C.F.R.) 54.601 et. seq., and any amendments made thereto.

#### 2. Regulations

- a. To be eligible for the reduced rates, rural health care providers are required to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the FCC Rules.
- b. Reduced rates are available only to the extent that they are funded by the federal universal service fund.
- c. Eligible rural health care providers may aggregate demand with other entities to create a consortium. Universal service support shall apply only to the portion of eligible services used by an eligible health care provider.
- d. Responsibility of eligible health care providers
  1. Rural health care providers and consortia shall participate in a competitive bidding process for all services eligible for reduced rates in accordance with any state and local procurement rules.
  2. Rural health care providers and consortia shall submit requests for services to the program Administrator, as designated by the FCC, and follow established procedures.
  3. Services requested must be used for purposes related to the provision of health care services or instruction that the health care provider is legally authorized to provide under the law.
  4. A health care provider that cannot obtain toll free access to an Internet service provider and who is eligible for support for limited toll-free access under the Rules must certify that it lacks toll-free Internet access and that it is an eligible health care provider.
  5. Services cannot be sold, resold or transferred in consideration for money or any other thing of value.

Issued by: Vice President, State Government Affairs, Little Rock, Arkansas