



California
Teleconnect
Fund

California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) Program Recap

Presented by CTF Staff



California Public
Utilities Commission



California Teleconnect Fund

The program aims to bring every Californian direct access to advanced communications services in their local communities, particularly those with lower rates of internet adoption and greater financial need. – *California Teleconnect Fund*

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Importance of CTF in promoting affordable telecommunications services

- Facilitates access & innovation in the delivery and use of advanced communication services
- Promotes diversity & affordability of choices among California services and providers
- Bridges the digital divide and enhanced connectivity for entities that serve the public interest and may have limited resources
- Facilitates better communication and internet access for schools, libraries, and healthcare institutions
- Promotes digital inclusion and equitable access to information and resources
- Improves access to affordable and reliable telecommunications services for eligible institutions
- Diffuses access and adoption to broadband services by providing discounts to small Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Agenda Items

CTF Overview

Application Process

Recertification Process

Claims Process

Conclusion

Q&A Session



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CTF Overview



Purpose & Mission of the California Teleconnect Fund

- 1) Advance universal service by providing discounted rates to libraries, hospitals, health clinics, community organizations, community colleges and qualifying schools, maintaining pre-school, kindergarten or any of the grades 1 to 12, inclusive;
- 2) Bring every Californian direct access to advanced communications services in their local communities;
- 3) Ensure high-speed internet connectivity for community CTF-eligible institutions at reasonable rates; and
- 4) Increase direct access to high-speed internet in communities with lower rates of internet adoption and greater financial need.

Background & Establishment of CTF

- The California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) provides discounts of up to 50% for advanced telecommunications services to help bridge the “digital divide” to Schools, Libraries, Community Colleges, Government Owned and Operated Health Facilities, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Healthcare Community Based Organizations, California Telehealth Network (CTN).
- Since it’s inception in 1996, the CTF has supported over 14,000 participants by bridging the Digital Divide through access and adoption to broadband services at discounted rates in their community.
- Prior to 2023, entities would apply for CTF by completing and filling out an application form specific to their entity and mailing the form to the Commission. Now, organizations submit applications online, utilizing eCAP.
- The CTF Program is funded by ratepayer surcharges on telephone access lines. Currently the surcharge rate is \$0.18 per access line. The appropriated CTF budget for 2023-2024 is \$108.34 million.

Background & Establishment of CTF

Assembly Bill 3643 (1994)

Public Utilities Section 280

Decision 96-10-010 (1996)

Decision 08-06-020 (2008)

Decision 15-07-007 (2015)

Decision 16-04-021 (2016)

Decision 18-01-006 (2018)

Decision 19-04-013 (2019)

Entities Eligible for CTF Support

Schools

Libraries

Community Colleges

Government Owned and Operated Health Facilities

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Healthcare Community Based Organizations

California Telehealth Network (CTN)

CTF's Role in Bridging the Digital Divide

- By providing discounts for small, Community Based Organizations to diffuse access and adoption to broadband services.
- During the pandemic in 2020-21, the Distance Learning Initiative provided 413 School Districts a total of 110,630 mobile hot spots, ensuring remote access to state testing for students.
- The Digital Divide Grant Program awarded nearly \$1million in grant funding to provide holistic technological solutions for low income, rural and urban, small school districts.





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CTF- Application Process

Entities Eligible for CTF Support

Schools

Public Schools-No requirement
Private Schools- must be a verifiable non-profit organization

Public Schools- None
Private Schools- \$50 Million Endowment Cap

Services: Elementary, pre-school, or K-12 academic instruction

CDS Code



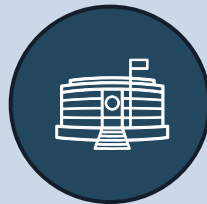
Libraries

Certified by the CA State Library

No Revenue Cap

Services: Direct broadband access to community members

N/A



Government Hospitals & Clinics

Operated by municipal or local government

No Revenue Cap

Services: Only locations in CA that provide direct healthcare services to the community

CDPH/ Healthcare License Number



Community Colleges

N/A

No Revenue Cap

Services: Educational services to community members

MIS Code



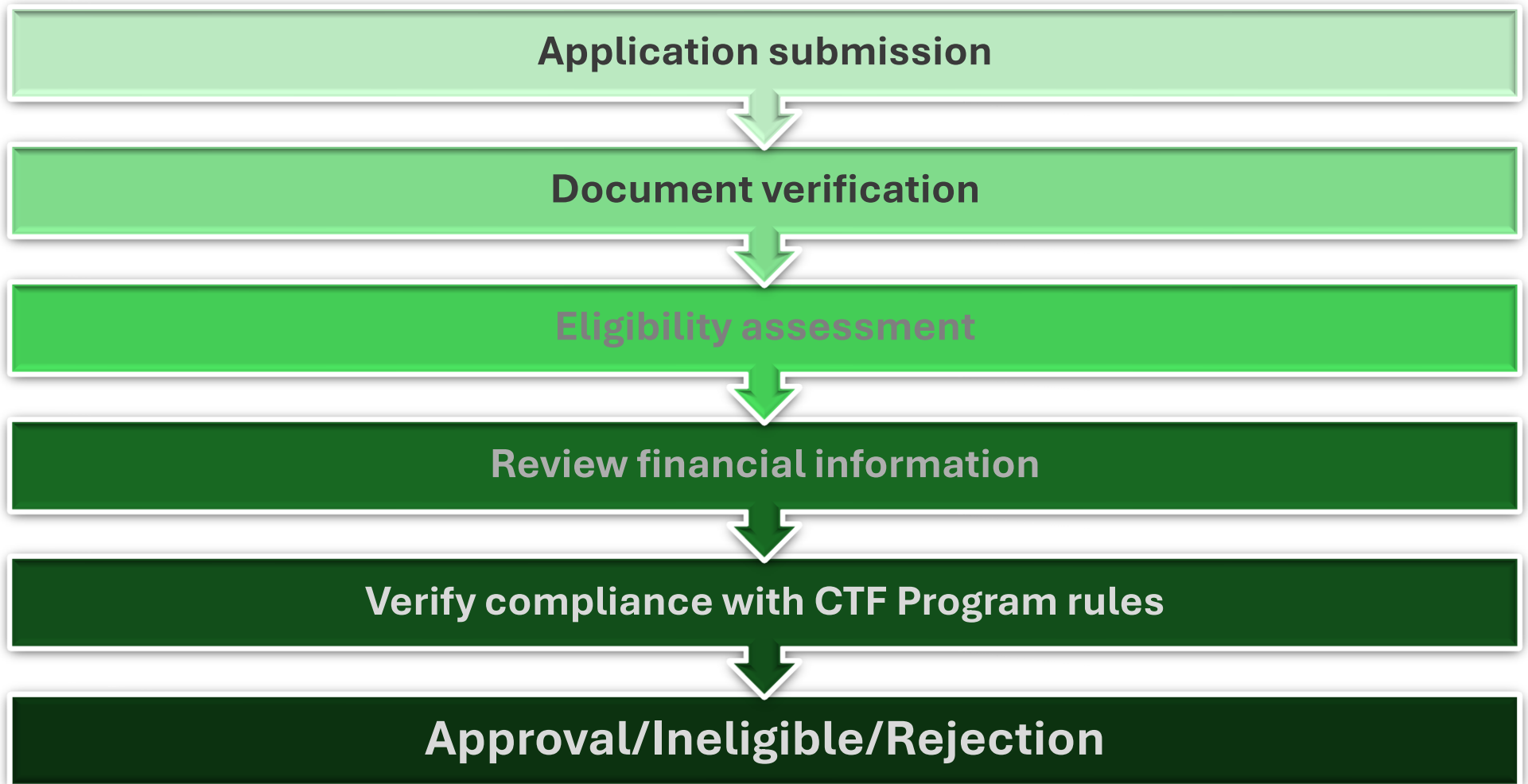
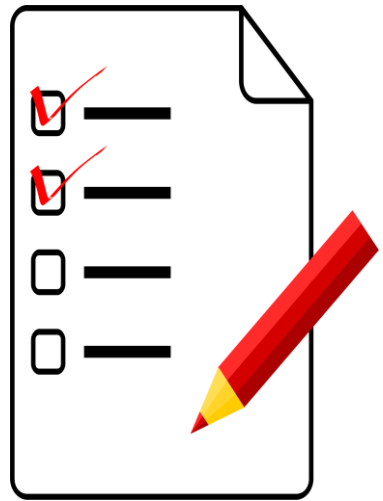
Entities Eligible for CTF Support Cont.



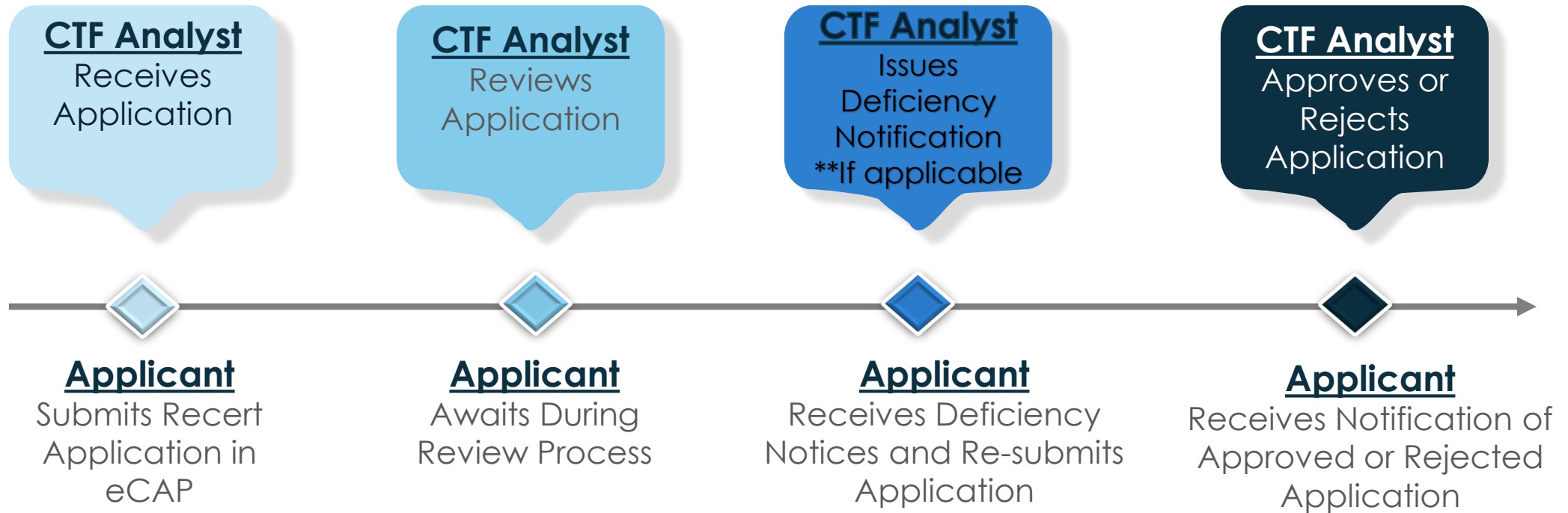
www.cpuc.ca.gov/ctf

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)	Healthcare CBO's	2-1-1 Service Providers
501-c3 Organization	501-c3 Organization	501-c3 Organization
\$5 Million Revenue Cap	\$50 Million Revenue Cap	None
Performs Qualifying Services per CTF rules	Provides direct licensed healthcare services to public	Offers 2-1-1 services as the primary function
Majority Board members in CA	Majority board members in CA	Majority board members in CA
Not a religious organization	Licensed Healthcare Personnel on site	Be a designated 2-1-1 service provider by the CPUC via an adopted Resolution.
		

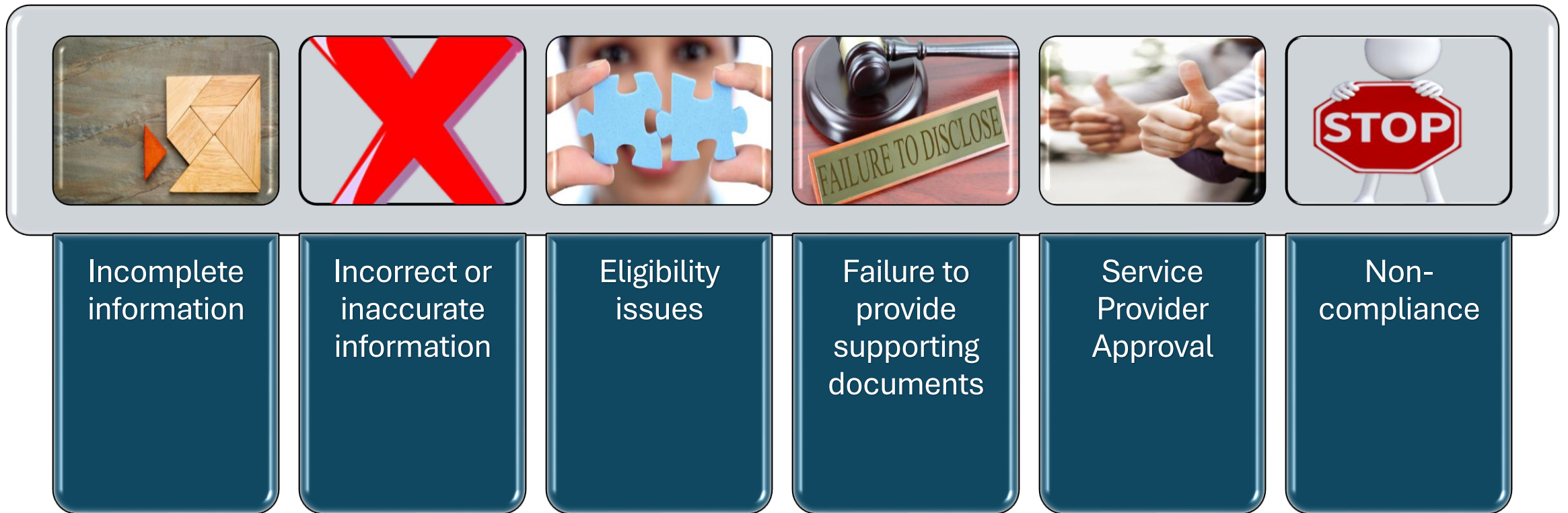
Application Review Process



Application Timeline



Deficiencies and Delays





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CTF- Recertification Process

Why do I need to Recertify?

- The California Teleconnect Fund was established by the CPUC in 1996 as a result of the Telco Act of 1996 and deregulation by the Federal Communications Commission in Decision 96-10-066. The Decision states that the fund must undergo review every three years. Since then, there have been changes to technology and program rules in 2008, 2015, 2016, and 2018.
- In Decision 18-01-066 (2018) the Commission ordered the implementation and documentation specifics for a three-year eligibility verification requirement.
- Major changes to the California Teleconnect Fund since inception in 1996:
 - In 2015, reinstatement of CTF Goals, elimination of support for voice services, eligible services list.
 - In 2016, establishment of e-rate cap.
 - In 2018, updated eligibility rules for Community Based Organizations.
 - In 2019, implementation of the 50% of mission rule and Qualifying Services Worksheet.

Who needs to Recertify?

- There are over 15,000 participants in the California Teleconnect Fund, the recertification process will be done by category.
- Community Based Organizations and Health Care CBO must recertify every three years from the eligibility date. This process should take around three years.
- The next categories will undergo Recertification every five years from their eligibility date.
 - Public and Private schools
 - Libraries
 - Government Owned and Operated hospitals
 - California Telehealth Network members

Submission of Necessary Documentation

Documentation and Information that applicants need to provide when submitting their recertification

Log in to your eCAP account

Schools, Libraries, Community Colleges, Government Hospitals/ Clinics, Community-Based Organizations , 2-1-1 providers and Healthcare Community-Based Organization needs to click “recertifications CTF applications” when they submit the document in eCAP

Current Form 990 and 501c(3) letter

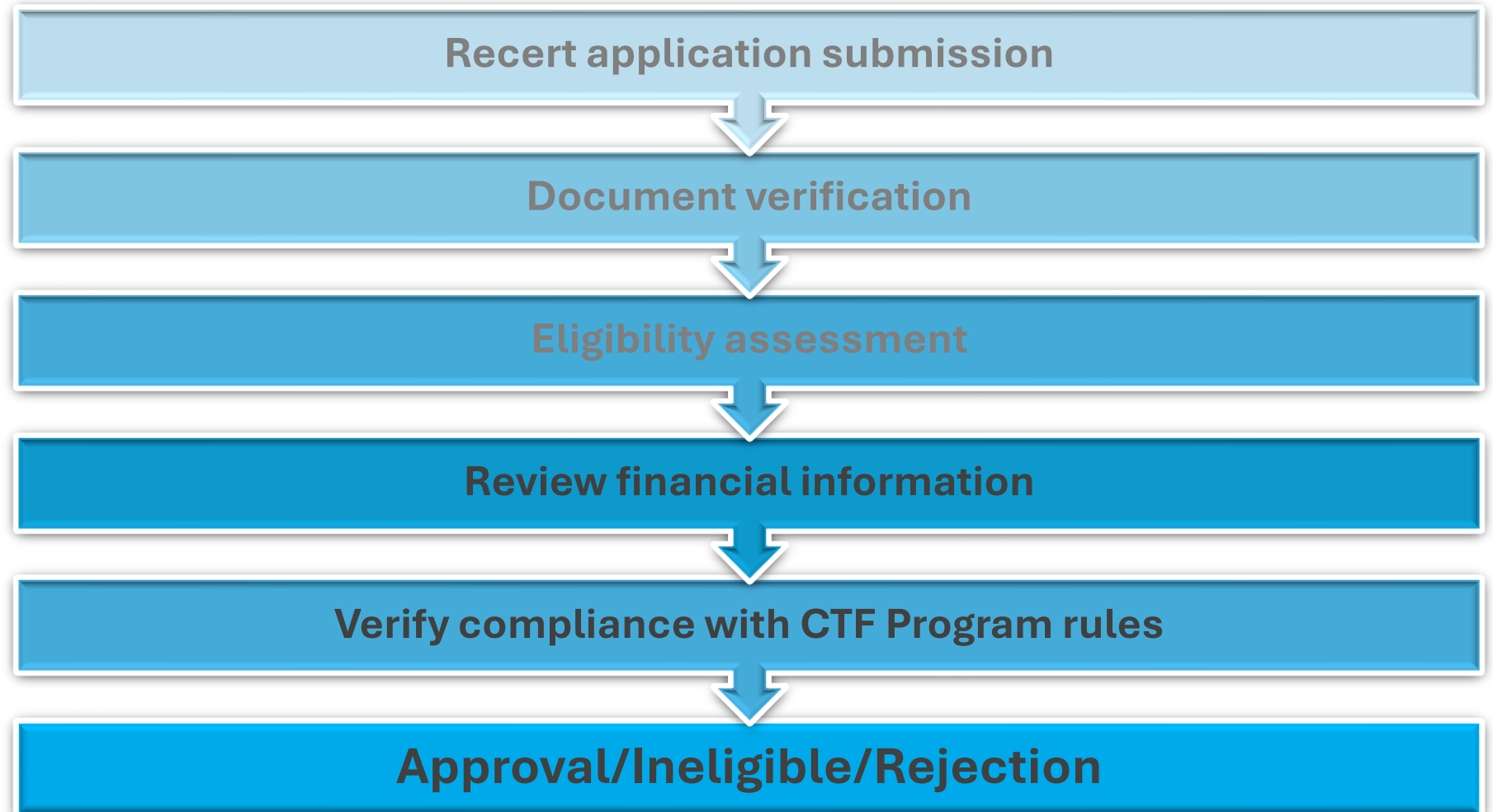


Recertification Notification

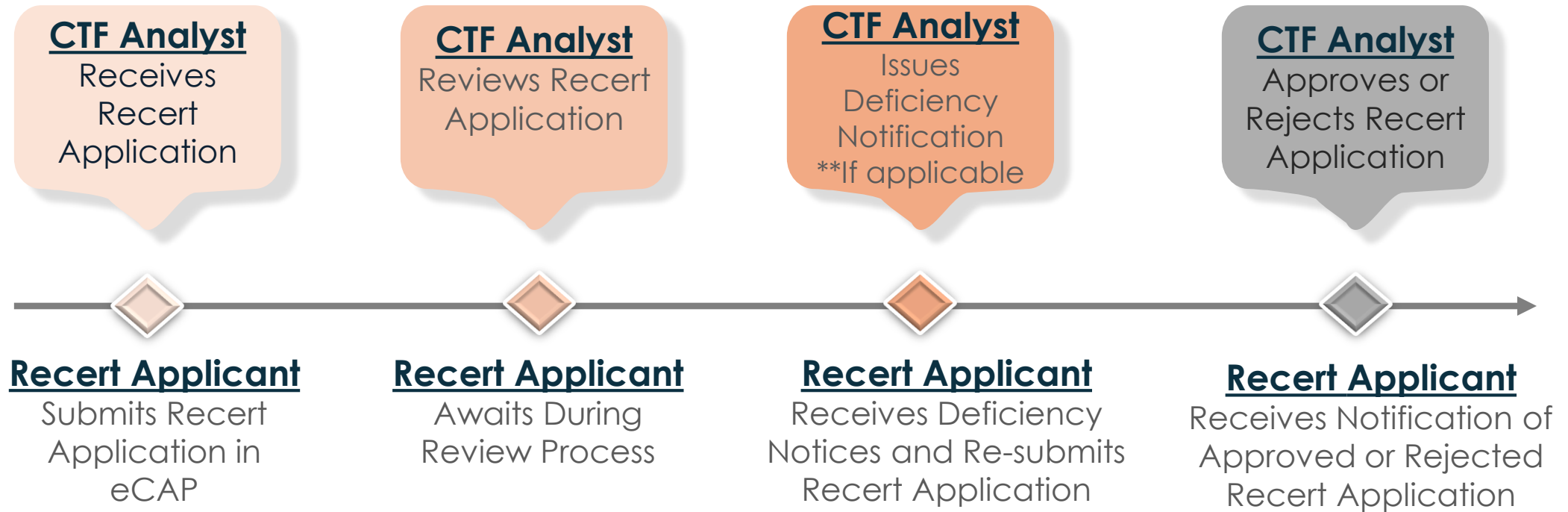
The California Teleconnect Fund will notify participants through E-CAP when they need to Recertify. Notices will go out to participants through e-mail.

- First Notice will be sent 120 days prior to the expiration of eligibility.
- A Second Notice will be sent 60 days prior to the expiration of eligibility.
- A Third and Final Notice will be sent 30 days prior to the expiration of eligibility.

Recertification Review Process



Recertification Timeline





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CTF- Claims Process

Types of Services Eligible for CTF Reimbursement

Eligible Services are categories of advanced communication services that are eligible to receive the CTF discount. The following eligible services are

Asynchronous Transfer Mode

Broadband Over Power Lines

Cable Modem

Digital Subscriber Line

Digital Signal, DS1, DS2, etc.

Ethernet

Fiber Optics, including leased dark fiber and leased lit fiber

Fixed Wireless Internet Access

Telecommunications Services Eligible (Cont.)

Frame Relay

Integrated Services Digital Network

Mobile Broadband Service – with certain restrictions*

Multi-Protocol Label Switching

Optical Carrier, OC1, OC2, etc.

Satellite Internet Access

Switched Multimegabit Data Service

Trunk Level, T1, T2, etc.

Wide Area Network (WAN)¹

Restrictions on Mobile Broadband Services: Mobile Broadband Services may be eligible for certain participants. In these instances, the participant's Approval Letter must explicitly state that the participant is eligible to receive discounts on Mobile Broadband Services. If the participant's Approval Letter includes restrictions on the eligibility of Mobile Broadband Services (for example, restrictions on the number of lines or on the types of eligible services), the service provider can only apply the CTF discount in accordance with those restrictions.

¹ Wide Area Network connections that form a data network between multiple participants are eligible for the CTF discount. Local Area Network, Managed Internal Broadband Services, and other connections that from a data network for a single participant service address or campus are not eligible for the CTF discount.

Documentation requirements for filing claims

Record retention

- Please keep a copy of your submitted claim sheet for future audit purposes.

Consistent email communication

- Deficient, Rejected, or Approved letters.

Ensure correct claim totals

- After you have corrected all system generated errors, please double check that the total claim amount is correct.

Consider final formatting.

- Data should be submitted using an Excel worksheet. Please ensure data is in the correct columns.
- Excel worksheet template is provided via a link during the claim's submission process.

Submission process for claims



Welcome to eCAP Portal

 Email Address

 Password

Login

[Forgot your password](#) [Create an Account](#)

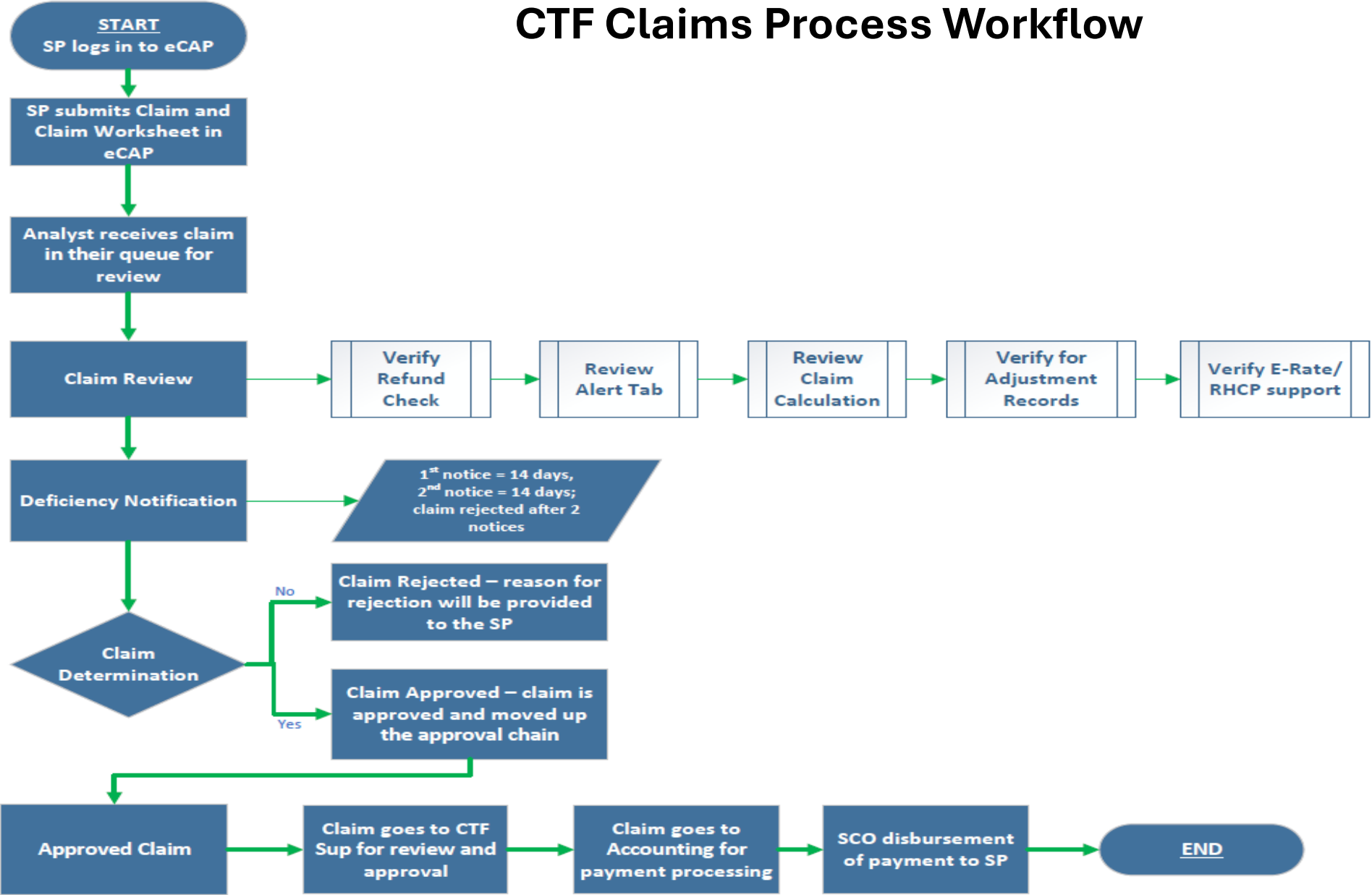
List of submitted and in-process claims

- ❖ Each claim is assigned a claim number
- ❖ “My Claims” queue will show all claims in various modes such as “approved, rejected, pending information, draft”
- ❖ To begin a new claim, service provider will click “File a Claim” button.

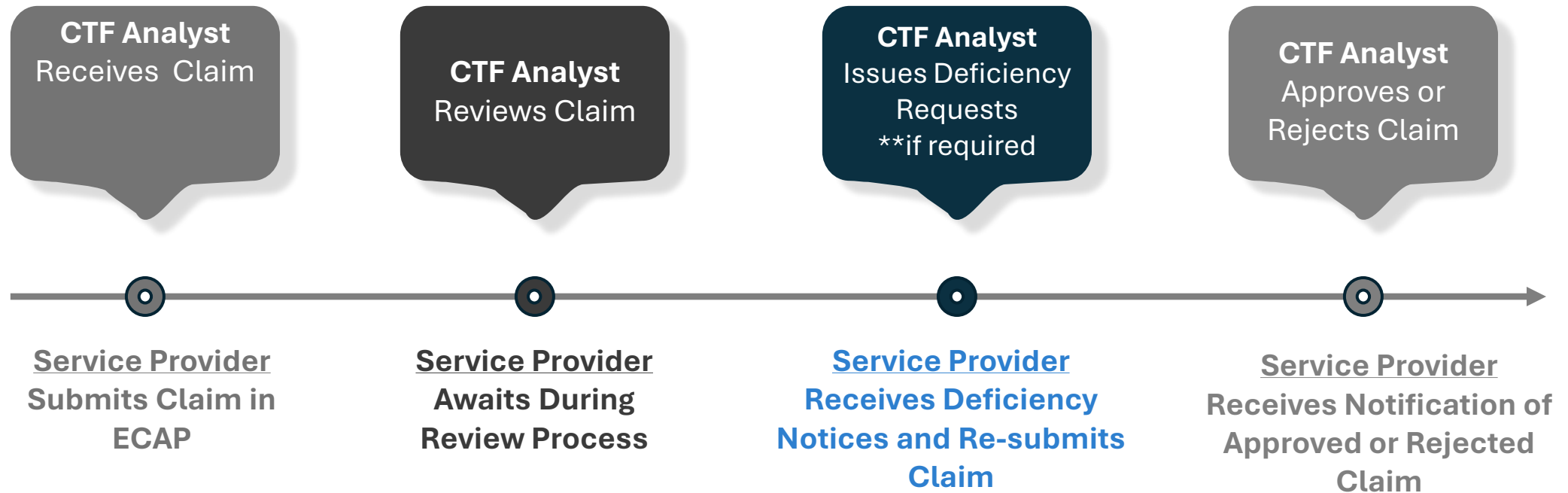
The screenshot displays the CPUC website interface. At the top, there is a dark blue header with a search bar and a user profile icon labeled 'Dan Lyulkin'. Below the header, a navigation bar contains logos for 'CALIFORNIA CONNECT', 'California LIFELINE program', 'CTF', 'California Advanced Services Fund', and 'CHCF-A' and 'CHCF-B'. A link 'Click on the below link to view list of CTF Participants CTF Participant Report' is visible. To the right, a box shows 'Account Name : Test Wireless' and 'Utility ID : 4532TEST'. Below this, three buttons are present: 'Update CTF Enrollment Information', 'CTF Program Enrollment', and 'File a Claim'. The 'Claims' section is active, showing a 'My Claims' dropdown menu. Below the menu, a table lists 56 items, sorted by status. The table has columns for Claim Number, Claim Record Type, Claim Month & Year, Status, Sub Status Info, and Due Date. The first five rows are visible, showing various claim statuses like 'Approved', 'Pending at Fiscal', and 'Canceled'. At the bottom, a large blue button labeled 'File a Claim' is prominently displayed.

Claim Number	Claim Record Type	Claim Month & Year	Status	Sub Status Info	Due Date
1 00003708	ULTS - Claim Wireless	2022-11 (NOV)	Approved	Fiscal Exported	
2 00008342	ULTS - Claim Wireless	2023-01 (JAN)	Approved	Pending at Fiscal	
3 00009149	CTF Claim	2023-01 (JAN)	Approved	Fiscal Exported	
4 00003704	ULTS - Claim Wireless	2022-11 (NOV)	Canceled	Draft	
5 00003705	ULTS - Claim Wireless	2022-11 (NOV)	Canceled	Draft	

CTF Claims Process Workflow



Claim Processing Timeline





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Conclusion

Conclusion

- The CTF program has a significant impact on communities in need of broadband services.
- The CTF program is funded by California ratepayers through surcharges on telephone corporations' active access lines in California.
- CTF accepts applications from nonprofit CBOs, schools, libraries, healthcare CBOS, government hospitals and clinics, and community colleges.
- Applicants to the CTF program must login to eCAP and submit a completed application with update and accurate supporting documents

Conclusion

- Recertification of California Teleconnect Fund participants will ensure compliance of eligibility requirements of participants, will enhance program administration and will ensure the accuracy of participant data
- Be on the look out for recertification notices 120, 60 and 30 days prior to your entity's recertification date
- CTF claims ensure service providers are reimbursed for offering discounts, supporting affordable access to advanced communication services in California.
- For successful claim submission, service providers need to maintain organized records, use clear and consistent email communication with CTF staff, double-check claim accuracy, and review their final excel sheet formatting.

Questions?



Resources

Information on the previous webinar is

Available at:

Program Outreach and Education

For more information:

<https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/CTF>

CTF Applicant & Participant Guidebook

Available on our website in English, Spanish, and Chinese

E-CAP Frequently Asked Questions:

[Help - FAQs \(ca.gov\)](#)





California Public Utilities Commission

For questions regarding the CTF program and application process, please reach out to us at CTFHelp@cpuc.ca.gov.