## As of 12-17-2025

E-Rate Hardware and Software Allocation Eligibility for Cisco Services

Effective with E-Rate Funding Year 2026, the FCC proposed to treat all currently eligible software- or remote-based services, including bug fixes, security patches, software-based technical assistance, and configuration changes the same. Thus, applicants request all software- and remote-based services with the internal connections equipment that they support. This means, services previously included under Category Two Funding as Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections (BMIC), will now be treated as Internal Connections (IC) under Category 2 Funding. Essentially, all Cisco service SKUs will now be treated as Internal Connections contracts just like right-to-use licensing software is. This new ruling will allow E-Rate applicants to request funding for E-Rate eligible or partially eligible service SKUs during the first year of the funding request.

The FCC Wireline Services Bureau Proposal Benefits to E-Rate applicants:

- This will fund most Cisco Service contracts within the Category 2 funding sub-category of Internal Connections.
- Makes service contracts fundable under E-Rate in multi-year contracts – entirely fundable in first year of the E-Rate request.
- Recall – Applicants currently only received BMIC funding for 12 months, (1 July through 30 June of the applicable funding year) – increasing their pain level with E-Rate funding and hampering ability for pricing predictability and multi-year cost savings.

With Cisco appliances, services generally include full TAC support and an unbundled hardware warranty, and a variety of hardware returns based on customer urgency. For Cisco software licenses, additional services normally include additional TAC support beyond the included Software Support Service (SWSS). sold in addition to a product or license. Software TAC access is normally included with Meraki Licenses and is also included in Cisco Unified license and Catalyst 9000 series Switch Licensing under DNX license SKUs.
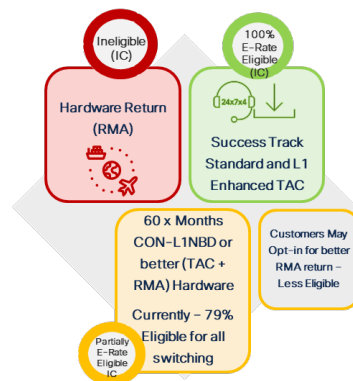
A Cisco or Meraki service is normally a combination of TAC support and RMA (return of product or service). RMA is not eligible for E-Rate unless it is included in the product warranty. When Cisco sells a Hardware Service/Warranty, we extend TAC support and hardware return to the customer. There are several types of services in Cisco. Service SKUs are categorized by type and service level. Within the E-Rate space, the most common Cisco service program types are:

- SMARTnet Total Care (SNTC)
- Success Tracks
- Solution Support (SOLN SUPP)
- Software Support (SWSS)

- RMA Only Upgrades (No TAC Support)
- TAC support only services like Cisco CON-SW SMARTnet without

Notes:

- Cisco or Meraki Hardware Replacement only (RMA) Warranties separately priced (unbundled warranties) are not eligible for E-Rate.
- If services/warranties are combined with online/telephonic TAC, software upgrades and patches including bug fixes and security patches, they are partially eligible after the RMA warranty is removed (hardware allocation).

Effective, E-Rate Funding Year 2025, the Cisco Public Funding Office has converted service SKU Levels to a standard allocation percent. Essentially, we strip out any RMA (return of product) from these unbundled services. We have vetted this with Funds for Learning, and it has been approved. We are in the process of updating the E-Rate Helpdesk portal database to reflect these allocation percentages and will be linking them directly to their supported product. In the interim, please use the following guidance to assist your organization with Cisco Service Eligibility.

Customers usually have a general idea of what level of service and product return they need. For instance, a switch with a lifetime hardware warranty may be all the customer desires. In this case, the customer would only need a contract to access to Cisco TAC support. TAC support might be included already – if the customer is selecting an EDU SKU or using a DNX license for the switch, they are fine without purchasing additional services.

A service level usually defines the amount of TAC support offered and the availability or urgency of product return. In some cases, a customer has a need for fast return; for instance, a core switch or firewall might require 8x7x4 (8 hours a day, 7 days a week, 4-hour ship). In this case, an EDU SKU or DNX would not provide that level of return. Thus, a higher service SKU would be required for purchase.

The following sections will provide a brief description of the most common Cisco service program types with an included table referencing the various levels of each service and the Eligibility Allocation as Internal Connections percentage. This percentage is not the E-Rate eligibility of the service, but eligible percentage of the service SKU after RMA is removed (cost allocated). To get the E-Rate eligibility of the service SKU, multiply the Eligibility Allocation as Internal Connections (IC) by the eligibility of the supported product (hardware or license) and divide by one hundred. Additional details follow at the end of the document.

1. SMARTnet is troubleshooting support to minimize downtime if there is a network disruption or a hardware failure. In addition, assists with tracking inventory, keeping equipment up to date, and staying current with updates and patches. In most cases, it also provides for faulty hardware replacement. SMARTnet is available in different service level agreements (SLA) from 8x5xNBD through to 24x7x2. The 8 x 5 and 24 x 7 define the number of hours each day (8 being working hours) and how many days a week that Cisco will provide hardware replacement coverage. All SMARTnet contracts provide 24 x 7 access to the Cisco TAC. The NBD (Next Business Day) and 2 (hour) support level refer to the time in which Cisco will ship replacement parts after fault identification. More SMARTnet Information

2. Success Tracks offers (RMA) for Hardware, Software Updates, and Solution Support to expedite issue resolution. Success Tracks Success focus on adoption services, aiming to help customers maximize the value they get from their Cisco investments. It's more about ensuring that customers are effectively using Cisco technologies to meet their business goals. Success Tracks are often outcome-oriented, with a focus on achieving specific business outcomes through the effective use of Cisco products and solutions. Success Tracks are designed to guide customers toward

achieving specific business outcomes, aligning Cisco technologies with the customer's business objectives. They may involve a more consultative approach, with Cisco working closely with customers to understand their goals and challenges and providing guidance on how to achieve success. More Success Tracks Information

3. Solution Support (SOLN SUPP) – Solution Support combines solution level support with Cisco product support—Cisco SMARTnet Total Care (SNTC) or Software Support—in one service. Purchase Solution Support for each Cisco software and hardware product in your deployment. Cisco Solution Support applies to solutions, infrastructures, and appliances ("Solution") that have been documented in a Cisco Solution Support Service Definition Document and are comprised of solely Cisco Products or Cisco Products and products provided by third party vendors ("Solution Support Alliance Partner(s)").

Notes:

- Difference between SNTC and SOLN Support: Smart Net Total is Technical Support service that will help you solve problems faster, improve efficiency, and help keep the network up and running.
- If you want Cisco to work with your other solution providers, then Solution Support is the service preferred. If you want Cisco to help you support just the Cisco equipment than Smart Net Total Care is preferred. More Solution Support Information

4. Software Support (SWSS) – SWSS Software Support service covers its associated Application Software sold as any of the following:

- On-premises perpetual Software license
- On-premises Software subscription license
- Software as a Service (SaaS) subscription for Software residing in the Cisco cloud

Note: Software subscription may be a hybrid which is a Software application that resides in both the Cisco cloud and on-premises or may offer the right to use the application in either a Cloud or on premises Environment.

For each Application Software product, any subset of the following Software Support options may be available for purchase:

Software Support Service	Technical Support Coverage	Response Time Objective for Case Severity 1 or 2	Response Time Objective for Case Severity 3 or 4
Base Product– level support	Online	Not Available	Response within Next Business Day during local Standard Business Hours
Basic	24x7 via Online & Phone	Response within 1 hour	Response within Next Business Day
Enhanced	24x7 via Online & Phone	Response within 30 minutes	Response within 1 hour*
Premium	24x7 via Online & Phone	Response within 15 minutes	Response within 1 hour*
*For Severity 3 and Severity 4 calls received outside of Business Hours, Cisco will respond within the Next Business Day			

More Software Support Information

Software Support (SWSS)

Service Track Subgroup	Description	Eligibility Allocation as Basic Maintenance (BMIC)	Notes
CON-ECMU	SWSS Upgrades	100%	SWSS

5. The following Table depicts the common Cisco Services and the Eligibility Allocation as Internal Connections. Please see sections 6 and 7 on how to convert this allocation percentage to E-Rate Eligibility.

Service Track Subgroup	Description	Eligibility Allocation as Internal Connections	Notes
CON-L1NBD	CX LEVEL 1 8X5XNBD	79%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NBX	CX LEVEL 1 8X5XNBD	95%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NOS	CX LEVEL 1 8X5XNBDOS	63%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NOX	CX LEVEL 1 8X5XNBDOS	88%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NB3	3Y CX L1 8X5XNBD	79% Amortized Multi-year	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NB5	5Y CX L1 8X5XNBD	79% Amortized Multi-year	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NCD	CX LEVEL 1 8X7NCD	63%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NCX	CX LEVEL 1 8X7NCD	90%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NCO	CX LEVEL 1 8X7XNCDOS	53%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1COX	CX LEVEL 1 8X7XNCDOS	71%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1NCX	CX LEVEL 1 8X7NCD	90%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L12HR	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X2	37%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L12HX	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X2	45%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L12OS	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X2OS	32%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L12OX	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X2OS	38%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L14HR	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X4	49%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L14HX	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X4	64%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L14OS	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X4OS	39%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L14OX	CX LEVEL 1 24X7X4OS	48%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NBD	CX LEVEL 2 8X5XNBD	61%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NBX	CX LEVEL 2 8X5XNBD	90%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NOS	CX LEVEL 2 8X5XNBDOS	49%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NOX	CX LEVEL 2 8X5XNBDOS	69%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NB3	3Y CX L2 8X5XNBD	61% Amortized Multi-year	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NB5	5Y CX L2 8X5XNBD	61% Amortized Multi-year	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NCO	CX LEVEL 2 8X7XNCDOS	40%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2COX	CX LEVEL 2 8X7XNCDOS	47%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NCD	CX LEVEL 2 8X7NCD	49%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L2NCX	CX LEVEL 2 8X7NCD	60%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L22HR	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X2	29%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L22HX	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X2	30%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L22OS	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X2OS	24%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L22OX	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X2OS	25%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L24HR	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X4	38%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L24HX	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X4	43%	CX Success Tracks

CON-L24OS	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X4OS	30%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L24OX	CX LEVEL 2 24X7X4OS	32%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L24H3	3Y CX LEVEL 2 24X7X4	38% Amortized Multi-year	CX Success Tracks
CON-L24H5	5Y CX LEVEL 2 24X7X4	38% Amortized Multi-year	CX Success Tracks
CON-PREM	SNTC-24X7X2OS	36%	SMARTnet
CON-OSP	SNTC-24X7X4OS	45%	SMARTnet
CON-OSE	SNTC-8X5X4OS	50%	SMARTnet
CON-OS	SNTC-8X5XNBDOS	66%	SMARTnet
CON-S2P	SNTC-24X7X2	42%	SMARTnet
CON-SNCO	SNTC-8X7xNCDOS	60%	SMARTnet
CON-SNC	SNTC- 8X7xNCD	72%	SMARTnet
CON-SNTE	SNTC-8X5X4	62%	SMARTnet
CON-SNTP	SNTC-24X7X4	56%	SMARTnet
CON-SNT	SNTC-8X5XNBD	85%	SMARTnet
CON-SW	SNTC-NO RMA	100%	SMARTnet
CON-3OSP	3YR SNTC 24X7X4OS	45% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-3SNC	3YR SNTC 8X7XNCD	72% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-3SNTP	3YR SNTC 24X7X4	56% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-3SNT	3YR SNTC 8X5XNBD	85% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-5OSP	5Y SNTC 24X7X4OS	45% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-5SNC	5YR SNTC 8X7XNCD	72% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-5SNTP	5Y SNTC 24X7X4	56% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-5SNT	5Y SNTC 8X5XNBD	85% Amortized Multi-year	SMARTnet
CON-PL2HR	PARTNER LCSS 24X7X2	42%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PL4HR	PARTNER LCSS 24X7X4	56%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PLCOS	PARTNER LCSS NCDOS	60%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PLNBD	PARTNER LCSS 8X5XNBD	85%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PLNCD	PARTNER LCSS 8X7XNCD	63%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PLNOS	PARTNER LCSS NBDOS	66%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSNC	PRTNR SS 8X7XNCD	72%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSO2	PRTNR SUP OS 24X7X2	36%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSOE	PRTNR SUP OS 8X5X4	50%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSOP	PRTNR SUP OS 24X7X4	45%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSRT	PRTNR SS 8X5XNBD	85%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSUC	PRTNR SS 8X7XNCD	72%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSUE	PRTNR SUP 8X5X4	62%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSUP	PRTNR SUP 24X7X4	56%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PSUT	PRTNR SUP 8X5XNBD	85%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-PU2P	PRTNR SUP 24X7X2	42%	Partner Level SMARTnet
CON-ECMU	SWSS Upgrades	100%	SWSS
CON-L1SWX-XXX-A	CX LEVEL 1 SW	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-L2SWX-XXX-A	CX LEVEL 2 SW	76%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-SSTCM-XXX-A	SOLN SUPP SW SUB DNA Advantage	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-L1SWX-XXX-E	CX LEVEL 1 SW	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS

CON-L2SWX-XXX-E	CX LEVEL 2 SW	76%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-SSTCM-XXX-E	SOLN SUPP SW SUB	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-L1SWT-XXX-A	CX LEVEL 1 SW	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-L2SWT-XXX-A	CX LEVEL 2 SW	76%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-SSTCM-XXX-A	SOLN SUPP SW SUB DNA Advantage	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-L1SWT-XXX-E	CX LEVEL 1 SW	100%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-L2SWT-XXX-E	CX LEVEL 2 SW	76%	CX Success Tracks - SWSS
CON-PLSWT-XXX-A	PARTNER LCSS SW SUBS DNA Advantage	100%	Partner Level CX Success Tracks -SWSS
CON-PLSWT-XXX-E	PARTNER LCSS SW SUBS DNA Essentials	100%	Partner Level CX Success Tracks -SWSS
CON-SSC2P	SOLN SUPP 24X7X2OS	32%	Solution Support
CON-SSC4P	SOLN SUPP 24X7X4OS	39%	Solution Support
CON-SSC4S	SOLN SUPP 8X5X4OS	44%	Solution Support
CON-SSCS	SOLN SUPP 8X5XNBDOS	63%	Solution Support
CON-SSNCO	SOLN SUPP 8X7XNCDOS	53%	Solution Support
CON-SSS2P	SOLN SUPP 24X7X2	37%	Solution Support
CON-SSSNC	SOLN SUPP NCD	63%	Solution Support
CON-SSSNE	SOLN SUPP 8X5X4	54%	Solution Support
CON-SSSNP	SOLN SUPP 24X7X4	49%	Solution Support
CON-SSSNT	SOLN SUPP 8X5XNBD	79%	Solution Support
CON-SSSW	SSPT NO RMA (Software Support)	100%	Solution Support
CON-3SC4P	3Y SOLN SUPP 24X7X4O	39% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-3SSNC	3Y SOLN SUPP 8X7XNCD	63% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-3SSNP	3Y SOLN SUPP 24X7X4	49% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-3SSNT	3Y SOLN SUPP 8X5XNBD	79% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-5SC4P	5Y SOLNSUPP 24X7X4OS	39% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-5SSNC	5Y SOLN SUPP 8X7XNCD	63% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-5SSNP	5Y SOLN SUPP 24X7X4	49% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-5SSNT	5Y SOLN SUPP 8X5XNBD	79% Amortized Multi-year	Solution Support
CON-SSTCM	SOLN SUPP SW SUB Maintenance - NO RMA	100%	Solution Support
CON-ECMUS	SOLN SUPP SWSS	100%	Solution Support
CON-L1NSW	ENH NO HW RPL Cisco 8100 Series Se	100%	CX Success Tracks
CON-L1SNB	ENH 8X5XSNBD Cisco 8100 Series Se	79%	CX Success Tracks

6. Information on Services and Internal Connections (IC)

- E-Rate support is available for Internal Connections and technical support appropriate to maintain reliable operation when provided for eligible broadband internal connections. The following Internal Connections services are eligible:
  - Repair and upkeep of eligible hardware
  - Wire and cable maintenance
  - Configuration changes
  - Basic technical support including online and telephone-based technical support
  - Software upgrades and patches including bug fixes and security patches
- In the Cisco/Meraki realm, BMIC contracts normally include:
  - Basic technical support including online and telephone-based technical support (TAC)
  - Software upgrades and patches including bug fixes and security patches (Self or TAC)
  - Ineligible functions to unbundled warranty or service support include hardware/software replacement (RMA) and time/style of response to that replacement. RMA-Only Service SKUs are 0% Eligible (Ex: Meraki's CON-RO4-XXX, CON-ROB-XXX; Cisco's SP-XXX)

7. Determining E-Rate Eligibility for services through Internal Connections and Best Practices

- Step 1: Determine Product/Primary SKU Eligibility @ https://www.ciscoerate.com/ or email the Cisco Public Funding Office
  - Know Functions: Switching, Wireless, Routing, Basic Firewall, Wireless Controlling, etc., are generally 100% eligible as a basic function of Internal Connections (Appliances and SaaS for network functions)
  - Ineligible E-Rate Products equals Ineligible Licenses, Services, and Ancillary items
- Step 2: Determine License SKU Eligibility – (If this is a Software Support SKU)
- Step 3: Determine Service SKU Eligibility - SNTC, SWSS, SSTCM, Success Tracks, etc., are cost allocated (their eligibility multiplied by the product/license eligibility). Cost Allocation is a separate function performed in coordination with Funds for Learning. This procedure involves removing the RMA costs from the service SKU to find the hardware allocation percentage.
  - Example: The SMARTnet Total Care (SNTC) Service Level 'CON-SNT' service/warranty provides E-Rate eligible TAC support, and ineligible Hardware Replacement (RMA) of 8x5 NBD response. After hardware cost allocation, it has been determined that all CON-SNT service levels receive a hardware allocation eligibility of 85%
  - To determine the E-Rate eligibility for the CON-SNT SKU, the product eligibility must be known
  - The formula for Service E-Rate eligibility is: (Service SKU RMA Allocation) * (Product Eligibility) / 100
  - If the product is a switch, it is 100% eligible, thus (85%) * (100%) / 100 = 85% eligible as Internal Connections
  - If the product is not 100% eligible – such as a 70% eligible ISR-Security Router: (85%) * (70%) / 100 = 59.5 or 60% eligible as Internal Connections