



FFIS Weekly Update – April 13, 2010

Weekly News:

GENERAL

April 6, 2010: OMB Releases Guidance on Federal Spending Transparency and Accountability

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released guidance to federal agencies regarding the need for increased transparency in federal spending. The memorandum also addresses sub-recipient reporting under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). To date, federal agencies have reported contract or award information only at the prime recipient level for transparency purposes. Under this guidance, sub-award information will now be required to be collected and reported. Sub-award reporting will be required beginning October 1, 2010, through a single searchable website, USAspending.gov. OMB is expected to issue additional guidance for sub-award reporting in the next month. The memorandum also sets forth data quality instructions for federal agencies regarding USAspending.gov. A copy of the memorandum is available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/open_gov/OpenGovernmentDirective_04062010.pdf

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) April 12, 2010: HHS Releases Information on Medical Loss Ratio and Premium Increases

In an effort to implement health insurance reform law, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released information on medical loss ratios and premium increases. Specifically, HHS released a letter to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) requesting their assistance in defining medical loss ratio. The letter is available at: <http://www.healthreform.gov/newsroom/naicletter.html>

In conjunction with this letter, HHS announced that it will be publishing in the *Federal Register* two separate requests for information. HHS is asking for input on the definition of medical loss ratio and payment of rebates to enrollees as well as information concerning the annual review of unreasonable rate increases.

Copies of these documents are available at:

Medical Loss Ratio - http://www.federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2010-08599_PI.pdf

Premium Review Process - http://www.federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2010-08600_PI.pdf

2) April 9, 2010: CMS Releases Guidance on Medicaid Expansion included in Health Care Reform Law

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released the first letter in a series of guidance regarding the Medicaid changes that are included in the health care reform law. Specifically, this letter provides initial guidance on the new Medicaid state plan option to cover low-income childless adults. The letter is available at: <http://www.cms.gov/smdl/downloads/SMD10005.PDF>

3) April 6, 2010: ACF Releases Rule on Use of TANF Carry-Over Funds

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) issued its final rule allowing states, tribes, and territories to use Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program funds carried over from a

prior year for any allowable TANF benefit, service, or activity. The final rule represents an adoption of the interim rule, published on May 27, 2009, without any changes. To view the rule, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-7530.pdf>

4) April 12, 2010: ACF Posts Guidance on Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems (SACWIS)

ACF released a program instruction to provide guidance on the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) requirements that a SACWIS must support, and outlines funding considerations to meet the NYTD requirements. To view the program instruction, go to: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/pi/2010/pi1004.htm

5) April 12, 2010: ACF Posts Funding Information for Children's Justice Act (CJA) Grants

ACF released a program instruction to set forth the eligibility requirements and grant application procedures for FY 2010 CJA grants and to provide the tentative state allocation table. To view the guidance, click here: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/pi/2010/pi1003.htm

6) April 12, 2010: ACF Posts Guidance on Title IV-E Eligibility Reviews and Criminal Record Checks

ACF released a program instruction to provide guidance to state title IV-E agencies on how it will enforce compliance with the criminal record check requirement amended by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006. To view this information, see: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/pi/2010/pi1002.htm

HOUSING

1) April 7, 2010: HHS, HUD Announce Grant Funding to Assist Persons with Disabilities

HHS and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the availability of \$40 million to public housing authorities to support approximately 5,300 Housing Choice Vouchers for non-elderly persons with disabilities. More information is available at: http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp

2) April 6, 2010: HUD Issues Final Rule on Section 108 Community Development Loan Guarantee Program

HUD has issued a final rule on the agency's authority to provide community development loan guarantees to states borrowing on behalf of local governments in non-entitlement areas (governments that do not receive annual Community Development Block Grants). For more information, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-7767.pdf>

NUTRITION

1) April 12, 2010: Final Rule Released on SNAP Benefit Issuance

The Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released a final rule that updates and reorganizes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations pertaining to the issuance of SNAP benefits. The rule will become effective on June 11, 2010, unless the department receives written adverse comments or notices of intent to submit adverse comments postmarked on or before May 12, 2010. To view the rule, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-8200.pdf>

2) April 12, 2010: FNS Posts FAQs on TEFAP Infrastructure Grants

FNS has posted a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Infrastructure Grants. The FAQs can be found at: http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/whatsnew_fd.htm

TRANSPORTATION

1) March 29, 2010: FRA Releases Funding Opportunity for Safety Technology Grants

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced the availability of \$50 million in grants (80-20 federal state match) under the new Rail Safety Technology Program authorized by the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA). Applications are due July 1, 2010, with grant awards expected by September 3, 2010. The full announcement is available at:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-6889.pdf>

2) March 31, 2010: DOT Announces Emergency Relief Funds

The Department of Transportation (DOT) announced \$338 million to states to cover costs incurred to repair roads and bridges damaged by a variety of natural emergencies and catastrophic events. To view the awards by state, go to:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa1005.htm>

3) April 5, 2010: FTA Announces \$24.8 Million for Public Transportation in Americas National Parks, Forests, Wildlife Refuges

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced that national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges in 20 states will receive funds from the Transit in Parks Program to implement public transportation within the facilities. To view the awards by state, see:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/news/news_events_11504.html

ARRA:

GENERAL

April 6, 2010: President Issues Memorandum on Combating Non-Compliance with ARRA Reporting

In a move signaling an increase in oversight of recipient reporting requirements under ARRA, the president issued a memorandum in the *Federal Register* directing agencies to further intensify their efforts to improve reporting compliance by prime recipients of ARRA, where appropriate, by terminating awards; pursuing measures such as suspension and debarment; reclaiming funds; and considering, initiating, and implementing punitive actions. To view the memorandum, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-8226.pdf>

COMMERCE

April 7, 2010: NTIA Receives Applications for BTOP Round Two

The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced that it received 867 applications for the second round of its ARRA Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). Awards are expected to be made this summer. To view an online searchable database of BTOP applications, go to:

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/applications/search.cfm>

EDUCATION

April 6, 2010: \$350 Million Now Available to Help Consortia of States Create New Assessments

ED announced that it has set aside up to \$350 million of Race to the Top (RTT) funds to support a consortia of states in developing and implementing a new generation of assessments. For more information on this new category of RTT funding, click here:

<http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/04/04062010c.html>

Click here for the new Assessment Programs website: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/index.html>

ENERGY

April 8, 2010: DOE Announces Nearly \$100 Million for Smart Grid Workforce Training and Development

The Department of Energy (DOE) announced award selections for nearly \$100 million for 54 smart grid workforce training programs for the utility and electrical manufacturing industries. For more information on the newly announced funding, click here: <http://www.energy.gov/news/8842.htm>

ENVIRONMENT

April 2010: EPA Updates ARRA Recipient Reporting Guidance

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently updated its reference guide for ARRA recipient reporting for grant and assistance agreements. Follow this link to view the new checklist:

http://www.epa.gov/recovery/recipient_chklist.xls

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) April 6, 2010: HHS Announces ARRA Funds for New Health IT Regional Extension Centers

HHS announced that more than \$267 million has been awarded to 28 additional non-profit organizations to establish Health Information Technology Regional Extension Centers (RECs).

Additional information, including a list of awardees, is available at:

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/04/20100406a.html>

2) April 12, 2010: ACF Posts Information on Wage Rate and Buy American Requirements for CCDF

ACF released a program instruction to provide guidance on two specific requirements applicable to ARRA funds that now apply to Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds. These provisions include wage rate requirements and domestic content requirements applicable to the use of ARRA funds for construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair. To view the guidance, see:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/guidance/current/pi2010-02/pi2010-02.htm>

LABOR

April 12, 2010: DOL Announces Availability of \$90 million in Additional ARRA Funds for On-the-Job Training

DOL released Training and Employment Notice No. 38-09 to announce the one-time availability of up to \$90 million in funding for On-the-Job Training (OJT) National Emergency Grants (NEGs) funded through ARRA. These NEG funds will be available for expenditure from the date of award through June 30, 2012. To view the notice, go to:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2882

NUTRITION

April 8, 2010: Funds Provided for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

FNS announced that Indian tribal organizations and states operating the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) have received more than \$4.5 million in ARRA funding for the purchase of equipment and the improvement of facilities. The remaining FDPIR Recovery Act funds are expected to be allocated soon to other FDPIR tribal partners. For a list of awards, go to:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/PressReleases/2010/0178.htm>

TRANSPORTATION

March 22, 2010: DOT Awards \$11.8 Million in ARRA Training Grants

DOT announced \$11.8 million in On-the-Job Training Supportive Service (OJT/SS) grants. These grants were made to organizations in 19 states, Guam, and Puerto Rico to fund apprenticeships and training centers for underrepresented or disadvantaged people seeking careers in transportation, engineering, or construction. The full announcement and awards by state are available at:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa1004.htm>