



FFIS WEEKLY UPDATE – February 17, 2010

AGRICULTURE

USDA Publishes NOFA for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

On February 3, 2010, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) published a notice of funds availability (NOFA) for \$55 million to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. For more information, including state allocations, click here:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2218.pdf>

EDUCATION

ED Publishes Due Dates for State Revenue and Expenditure Reports

On February 1, 2010, the Department of Education (ED) announced dates for the submission of FY 2009 attendance statistics, and expenditure and revenue data by state educational agencies (SEAs). Follow this link to view the notice: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2026.pdf>

COMMERCE

1) NTIA Releases Broadband Report

On February 16, 2010, the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) released its report on broadband internet connectivity based on a survey of more than 50,000 households commissioned. The report can be found at:

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/>

2) 2009 Voting-Age Population Estimates Released

Commerce published a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing the voting-age population estimates as of July 1, 2009, for each state and the District of Columbia. To view the population estimates, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1522.pdf>

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) CMS Releases Three State Health Official Letters on CHIP

On February 2, 2010, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released a letter to state health officials regarding new options for states to provide premium assistance for the purchase of employer-sponsored health insurance coverage to children under age 19 who are eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Medicaid. CMS released two additional letters on February 4, 2010. The first one provides guidance on the Express Lane eligibility option that enables states to conduct simplified eligibility determinations for Medicaid and CHIP. The second letter provides information on the application of Medicaid payment requirements for federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics to CHIP. The letters are available at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SMDL/SHO/list.asp#TopOfPage>

2) CMS Publishes 2009 Health Spending Report

On February 4, 2010, the Office of the Actuary at CMS released its annual report on national health spending. The report estimates that national health spending grew by 5.7% in 2009,

reaching \$2.5 trillion. To view the entire report, go to:

<http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/reprint/hlthaff.2009.1074v1>

3) HHS/DOL Issues Rules Requiring Parity in Treatment of Mental, Substance Use Disorders

On January 29, 2010, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Labor (DOL) jointly issued interim final rules, published in the *Federal Register*, providing parity for consumers enrolled in group health plans who need treatment for mental health or substance use disorders. The interim final regulations are effective on April 5, 2010. Comments are due on or before May 3, 2010. To view the notice, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2167.pdf>

4) CMS Posts FAQs on Haiti-Related Medical Care

On January 28, 2010, CMS posted a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) related to individuals arriving from Haiti for medical care. For more information, go to:

https://questions.cms.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/cmshhs.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?&p_pv=4.1122&p_prods=1,2,476,1122

5) CMS Clarifies Medicaid and Ticket To Work Policy

On January 28, 2010, CMS released a letter to state medicaid directors to clarify interactions between Medicaid and the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program. The letter can be accessed at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/smdl/downloads/SMD10002.pdf>

6) President Signs Bill to Fund Haiti Repatriation and QI Programs

On January 27, 2010, the president signed the Emergency Aid to American Survivors of Haiti Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-127), which provides assistance to U.S. citizens returned from Haiti. The law also addresses an expected shortfall in the Qualifying Individual (QI) program by including an additional \$50 million in funds for FY 2010 and \$15 million for FY 2011.

7) ACF Revises Child Welfare Policy Manual

On February 1, 2010, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) revised the Child Welfare Policy Manual to reflect additions related to the Independent Living Program. To view the additions, go to:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/i2ee/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/updates_add.jsp

8) ACF Releases Child Support Enforcement Matrix

On February 2, 2010, ACF released a matrix that includes state policy related to private child support collection agencies that enter into contracts directly with custodial parents. To view the information, see: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/IM/2010/im-10-01.htm>

9) ACF Updates LIHEAP Allocation Information

On January 27, 2010, ACF updated its funding information for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to include FY 2010 allocations. The information is available at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/funding/fund.html>

10) ACF Releases FY 2010 CSBG Allotments

On January 26, 2010, ACF updated its allotments to states and tribes for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). To view the allotments for FY 2010, go to:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/csbg/allotmentsribes.html>

11) ACF Announces CSBG Webinar on Summer Food Program

On February 19, 2010, ACF is hosting a webinar with Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) on the Summer Food Service Program. For more information, see:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/csbg/summer_food.html

12) ACF Releases Guidance on Refugee Assistance for Cuban and Haitian Entrants

On January 27, 2010, ACF issued a state letter on eligibility for Office of Refugee Resettlement-Funded Benefits and Services for Cuban and Haitian Entrants. To view the letter, see:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/stltrs10.htm>

For information on unaccompanied Haitian children, see:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/whatsnew/uhc.htm>

13) HRSA Rescinds Ryan White HIV/AIDS Policy

On February 10, 2010, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) published a notice in the *Federal Register* to rescind Policy Notice 99-02, Amendment #1 regarding the use of Ryan White funds for housing referral services. To view the notice, see:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2926.pdf>

HOMELAND SECURITY

FEMA Releases Draft National Disaster Recovery Framework

On February 5, 2010, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a draft of the National Disaster Recovery Framework, which focuses on engaging state, local and tribal governments, nonprofit partners, the private sector, and the public to enhance the nations ability to recovery from disasters. Comments on the draft must be received by February 26, 2010. For more information, go to: <http://disasterrecoveryworkinggroup.gov>

HOUSING

1) HUD Announces Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program FY 2009 Funding Awards

On February 5, 2010, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced in the *Federal Register* FY 2009 funding awards to housing agencies (HAs) under the Section 8 housing choice voucher program. For a list of recipients, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2568.pdf>

2) HUD Announces Formation of New Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (OSHC)

On February 4, 2010, HUD announced the new OSHC office, which was funded by Congress in FY 2010. OSHC is a component of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and will be the center-point for all of HUD's sustainability efforts. OSHC will administer grant programs for multi-jurisdictional and multi-sector partnerships and consortia, including state governments. These grants will be designed to encourage regions to build their capacity to integrate economic development, land use, transportation, and water infrastructure investments, and to integrate workforce development with transit-oriented development. For more information, see:

http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2010/HUDNo.10-028

HUD also posted a notice in the February 10, 2010 *Federal Register* announcing its intention to offer funding through a competition made available under its Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. In addition, HUD is seeking public comment on the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program through the notice. To view the notice, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2979.pdf>

NUTRITION

1) State Allocations Released for \$400 Million in SNAP Administration Funding through DoD

On February 12, 2010, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released state allocations of \$400 million in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administration funds, included in the Department of Defense (DoD) Appropriations Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-118). These are 100% federal funds and do not require a state match. To view the allocations, go to:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/whats_new.htm

2) First Lady Announced Nationwide Campaign Aimed at Reducing Childhood Obesity

On February 9, 2010, First Lady Michelle Obama announced a nationwide campaign, known as "Let's Move," aimed at reducing childhood obesity. As part of the initiative, the president signed a Presidential Memorandum creating the Task Force on Childhood Obesity, an advisory body that will be comprised of the First Lady and the secretaries of several federal agencies. Within 90 days, the Task Force will conduct a review of every program and policy relating to child nutrition and physical activity and develop a national action plan that maximizes federal resources and sets benchmarks toward the national goal. For more information, go to:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/first-lady-michelle-obama-launches-lets-move-americas-move-raise-a-healthier-genera>

3) FNS Releases Information on Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (P-SNAP) Benefits

On February 1, 2010, FNS released a series of questions and answers on Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (P-SNAP) benefits for school lunch recipients. For more information, see:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/2010/020110b.pdf>

4) FNS Issues Final Rule on New Food Stamp Eligibility and Certification Requirements

On January 29, 2010, FNS published a final rule in the *Federal Register* implementing 11 provisions of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (FSRIA) that establish new eligibility and certification requirements for the receipt of food stamps, effective April 1, 2010. To view the final rule, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-815.pdf>

5) FNS Provides Guidance on SNAP Time Limits for Able-bodied Adults without Dependents

On January 29, 2010, FNS released guidance listing states that are eligible to extend suspension of SNAP time limits for able-bodied adults without dependents beyond the deadline set by ARRA of September 30, 2010. Nearly all states may continue to suspend the three-month time limits through September 30, 2011, because they qualify for a waiver under SNAP program rules. For more information, see: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/2010/012910.pdf>

6) FNS Provides Updated Information on Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility under SNAP

On January 26, 2010, FNS provided updated questions and answers with guidance on implementing broad-based categorical eligibility under SNAP. For more information, see:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/2010/012610.pdf>

TRANSPORTATION

1) FTA Publishes FY 2010 Apportionments

On February 16, 2010, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published in the *Federal Register* FY 2010 apportionments, allocations, and program information. To view the notice and state tables, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2996.pdf>

2) FTA Establishes Emergency Relief Docket

On February 3, 2010, FTA published a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing that it is establishing an Emergency Relief Docket for calendar year 2010 so grantees and sub-grantees affected by national or regional emergencies may request relief from FTA administrative requirements. To view the notice, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-2312.htm>

ARRA:

AGRICULTURE

1) February 16, 2010: USDA Announces Funding Assistance to Help Rural Businesses

USDA announced \$144 million in loan guarantees to assist 54 rural businesses through funding

made available by ARRA. For more details, click here:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/02/0062.xml>

2) January 26, 2010: USDA Announces \$140 Million for 14 Community Facilities Projects in Rural Areas

USDA announced the selection of \$140.4 million in community facilities projects that are being funded through the ARRA. USDA has announced \$477.6 million in ARRA funding for community facility projects to date. For more information, click here:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/01/0034.xml>

COMMERCE

February 12, 2010: Guidance for Second Round BTOP Funding Posted

NTIA has posted grants guidance for Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI), Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA), and Public Computer Center (PCC) applications. NTIA posted grant guidance for the three project types in the second round Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for ARRA Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) grants. The deadline for applications is March 15, 2010. For more information, see:

www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/

EDUCATION

January 27, 2010: ED Publishes Corrections for Race to the Top Final Rule

ED published several corrections to the Race to the Top Final Rule, which was originally published in the *Federal Register* on November 18, 2009. Included as Appendix B to the November 18 Final Rule was the scoring rubric ED developed for scoring state applications. This January 27 publication makes several corrections to Appendix B of the Final Rule. To view the corrections, click here: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1502.pdf>

ENERGY

1) February 1, 2010: DOE Issues New Weatherization Guidance on Maintaining Recipient Privacy

The Department of Energy (DOE) has issued new guidance for the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) on maintaining the privacy of recipients. Click here to view the notice:

http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/pdfs/wpn_10-08_privacy.pdf

2) February 4, 2010: DOE Issues Request for Information Pertaining to Buy American Provisions

DOE published a request for information from stakeholders on questions pertaining to Section 1605-the Buy American provisions-of ARRA. For additional details, click here:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2378.pdf>

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) February 16, 2010: Updated ARRA Medicaid Funding Table

HHS posted updated state-by-state Medicaid grant funding information, as approved in Section 5001 of ARRA, through February 5, 2010:

<http://transparency.cit.nih.gov/RecoveryGrants/grant.cfm?grant=Reinvestment>

2) February 12, 2010: HHS Awards Grants to Support Health Information Technology (HIT), Job Training

HHS announced the award of ARRA grants totaling \$975 million for HIT related initiatives, including the use of electronic health records and training workers for health care jobs. The listing of awards to states and non-profit organizations is available at:

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/02/20100212a.html>

3) February 5, 2010: HHS Awards \$119 Million to States for Prevention and Wellness Initiatives

HHS awarded ARRA funds to states and territories to support public health efforts to reduce obesity, increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and decrease smoking. More information is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/recovery/>

To view the awards by state, go to:

http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/recovery/docs/State_prevention_and_wellness_ARRA_awards_fact_sheet.pdf

4) February 2, 2010: HHS Publishes ARRA Adjustments to FMAPs

HHS published in the *Federal Register* the adjusted Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) rates for the first quarter of FY 2010. To view the notice, see:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2177.pdf>

5) February 4, 2010: ACF Guidance on Make Work Pay Tax Credit Disregard for TANF

ACF posted a new Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program Instruction advising jurisdictions they must disregard the Making Work Pay tax credit as income and as a resource in the month of receipt and the two following months. Jurisdictions may choose to disregard the tax credit for a longer period, e.g. 12 months, and may take a similar approach for other refundable tax credits and tax refunds to increase administrative simplicity. The complete guidance can be found at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/policy/pi-ofa/2010/pi201002.htm>

HOMELAND SECURITY

February 3, 2010: DHS Announces \$23 Million Fire Station Construction Grants

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced an additional \$23 million in Fire Station Construction Grants (SCG) funded by ARRA. For more information, see:

http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/pr_1265124355731.shtm

LABOR

January 29, 2010: Update on the Status of States in Regard to UI Incentive Payments

The Department of Labor released a Training and Employment Notice on the status of states in applying for and receiving unemployment insurance (UI) modernization incentive payments. As of the date of the notice, 32 states had received \$2.8 billion in incentive payments. Another \$4.2 billion remains available to states that apply for the payments and meet the requirements. To view the notice, go to: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2851

NUTRITION

February 16, 2010: Resources for States New to the Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) has provided 2010 CSFP training resources for new state staff, including links to powerpoint presentations and excel spreadsheets to assist new states in the CSFP Program. For more information, go to:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfpcsfpc_training_for_new_state_staff.htm

February 8, 2010: CSFP FAQ's Updated

FNS has updated its list of Frequently Asked Questions for CSFP. The updated list can be viewed at: http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfpcsfpc_faqs.htm

February 5, 2010: CSFP Final Rule Released

FNS issued a final rule in the Federal Register amending the regulations for the CSFP by removing the priority given to women, infants, and children before the elderly in program participation, in accordance with the amendment made by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill). As a result of this amendment, local agencies are no longer required to prioritize benefit issuance based on population group. All CSFP applicants may be treated equally when caseload slots become available, provided all eligibility requirements are met. This rule will

become effective on March 8, 2010. To view the notice, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-2594.pdf>

February 4, 2010: New FNS School Lunch Program Food Safety Initiative Announced

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced several new initiatives to assure the safety and quality of food purchased by the Department of Agriculture for the National School Lunch Program and other food and nutrition assistance programs. Including among the initiatives is that the FNS will review and evaluate methods currently being used by state agencies to communicate with schools and school districts regarding product recalls. FNS will develop performance criteria for states that allows them to provide rapid communication to schools and school districts. FNS will provide financial assistance to states to allow them to upgrade the speed and accuracy of their food safety messages. For more information, see:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/02/0052.xml>

February 3, 2010: Income Eligibility Determinations Extended for CFSP and TEFAP

FNS announced a Temporary Extension of the 2009 Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Income Guidelines and Impact on Income Eligibility Determinations for CSFP and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). For more information, see:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfp/CSFP_TEFAP-Temp_Ext_of_Income_Guidelines.pdf

TRANSPORTATION

1) February 5, 2010: FHWA Releases Notice on Redistribution of ARRA Funds

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released a notice (N 4510.720) advising states of the redistribution of Highway Infrastructure Investment funds. The unobligated balances will be withdrawn and the redistribution process will begin on March 2, 2010. To view the notice, go to:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legisregs/directives/notices/n4510720.htm>

2) January 28, 2010: ARRA Forest Highway Program

FHWA released guidance on the redistribution of funds under the Forest Highway Program. To view the guidance, go to: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/fhredistribution.htm>