

OMB ARRA Acceleration Webinar Frequently Asked Questions

General

Do funds have to be obligated/expended by September 30, 2013, or drawn down from the Payment Management System (PMS) by September 30, 2013?

Per the OMB Directive, funds must be expended or drawn down by September 30, 2013. Recipients should ensure that funds deposited into its bank account for each drawdown are fully disbursed within 3 business days.

Will waivers be granted on a program basis or on an individual grant basis (e.g., State HIE Program vs. an individual state award)?

HHS has not made a determination regarding waiver requests; however, we plan to move forward on a program basis. ONC will share this information with the grantee community once it is available.

What are the instances when ONC may request a waiver from the September 30, 2013 deadline from the Office of Management and Budget?

Only the Secretary of HHS may request a waiver of the September 30, 2013 deadline. HHS may request a waiver from the OMB in instances where:

- Contractual commitments by the grantee with vendors or sub-recipients prevent adjusting the timeline for spending;
- A project must undergo a complex environmental review that cannot be completed within this timeframe;
- Programs are long-term by design and therefore acceleration would compromise core programmatic goals;
- Other special circumstances exist.

What is the process for submitting a waiver request for my grant? When and how do we submit waiver requests? How long does the approval process take?

ONC grantees should not submit waiver requests to ONC. Only the Secretary of HHS may request a waiver of the September 30, 2013 deadline.

Is ONC planning to submit waiver requests for any of the programs that currently extend past September 30, 2013 deadline (e.g. REC Cycle II grants, which currently have an end date of April 4, 2014)? When will a decision be made on submitting waivers for these programs?

HHS has not made a determination on waiver requests. All requests must be made directly by the Secretary of HHS to the Office of Management and Budget by September 30, 2012. ONC is working through this process with HHS officials.



If OMB does not issue a waiver, will that mean that our award, which currently ends in 2014, will end on September 30, 2013 instead?

As stated in the OMB Directive, if a waiver is not granted, ARRA projects must be completed and funds be expended by September 30, 2013.

Please note: In accordance with the OMB memorandum, ONC may review individual grants and programs to determine ones which may be able to achieve their programmatic goals at an accelerated pace. ONC program staff will be working closely with grantees to determine areas and projects that may be accelerated.

If our grant ends after September 30, 2013 will we still be able to request a no cost extension if we are unable to complete the work by our current budget/project end date?

Under current policy, programs with an end date after September 30, 2013 are not eligible for a no-cost extension.

Can we draw ARRA funds by the September 30, 2013, but continue project activities to the end date, which is in 2014?

As stated in the OMB Directive, if a waiver is not granted, ARRA projects must be completed and funds be expended by September 30, 2013.

When will we know definitively whether a program or individual grant has been approved for a waiver request?

HHS has not made a determination regarding waiver requests. ONC will share this information with the grantee community once it is available.

How do we request for a no-cost extension, and can we request a no-cost extension to the September 30, 2013 deadline?

Any extension requests should be submitted 60 days in advance of the change through GrantsSolutions, as detailed in the Grants Management Advisory 2011-02, Supplement #1, which can be found at:

http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_8012_3335_21279_43/http%3B/wci-pubcontent/publish/onc/public_communities/_content/files/2011_02_gma_supplement_1.pdf

Can we request a no-cost extension beyond the September 30, 2013 deadline?

No. No-cost extensions will not be approved beyond the September 30, 2013 date.



HIE-Specific Questions

We are part of the HIE program, and the ONC is requiring us to implement Direct before we start implementing query services. Will the ONC be changing their policies so we can start working on both processes simultaneously?

Please consult with your project office for guidance on program acceleration. Grantees should implement in accordance with approved plans at this time.

We have prepaid contracts for hosting HIE services and licensing fees that extend beyond the September 30, 2013 deadline. Do these require waivers?

ONC grantees should not submit waiver requests to ONC. Once determinations on waiver requests and/or approvals are made, more detailed guidance on program/grant administration will be provided.

The State HIE Plan allows for addendum of timeline and scheduled implementations. We have not had it approved for extension beyond project period. However in the case that it is not approved, would that have the same impact on budget timeframe?

Please consult with your project office for guidance on program acceleration.

University Training Programs

What is the deadline to submit a no cost extension for completion by 9/30/2013 if you are a University based training program?

Any extension requests should be submitted 60 days in advance of the change through Grants Solutions, as detailed in the Grants Management Advisory 2011-02, Supplement #1, which can be found at:

http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_8012_3335_21279_43/http%3B/wci-pubcontent/publish/onc/public_communities/_content/files/2011_02_gma_supplement_1.pdf

General Administrative

Where can we get a copy of the slide deck? Are they available on the HITREC or on the ONC website?

The slide deck is posted on this website along with this FAQ.

Can I have the ONC-GMA-2011-02 re-sent to us?

The GMA is available at

http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_8012_3335_21279_43/http%3B/wci-pubcontent/publish/onc/public_communities/_content/files/2011_02_gma_supplement_1.pdf