

**Strong Start Initiative**  
**Summary of the Amended Funding Opportunity Announcement**  
**April 30, 2012**

On April 30, 2012, CMS released an amended [Funding Opportunity Announcement \(FOA\)](#) for the Strong Start for Mothers and Newborns. This summary highlights some of the amendments. For a complete list of amendments, please see the introduction to the revised FOA and within the body of the FOA where the changes are noted in bold and underlined text.

Eligibility

- Women enrolled in Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), in addition to Medicaid, are eligible beneficiaries for Strong Start enhanced prenatal care.
- Birth Centers must be accredited by The Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers, licensed, or otherwise approved by the State to provide prenatal labor and delivery or postpartum care and other ambulatory services.
- Applicants from the 50 States, Washington D.C. and the 5 U.S. Territories are eligible. Faith-based, tribal, and community-based organizations are also eligible applicants.

State involvement

- As outlined in the original FOA, all applicants must outline in their budget submission the cost estimate indicated by the State for the data support necessary to evaluate the initiative. CMS expects that costs for data will vary between states and the estimate will be reviewed for cost-effectiveness. The amount used to compensate a State may differ from the proposed amount.
- Provider, managed care organization, and convener proposals must include a letter of agreement from the State agencies, with purview of vital records and Medicaid data, affirming that the State agencies will co-sign an agreement between CMS and the entity upon its selection as an awardee.

Required documents

- A work plan and timeline must be included in the application.
- Required letters of agreement (those between: non-state applicants and their states; and states, managed care organizations, and conveners with their providers) will not be counted in the application page limits.

### Letter of Intent / Linking potential applicants

- The Letter of Intent will provide a vehicle to link applicants. Interested applicants may indicate their consent to share contact information with potential partners on their Letter of Intent. Applicants who have already submitted a Letter of Intent may email [strongstart@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:strongstart@cms.hhs.gov) to indicate consent to share contact information. Applicants who consent will gain access to a password protected site, which provides contact information for all applicants who have consented to share contact information. All potential applicants interested in partnering will have access to this contact information if they have submitted a Letter of Intent and indicated consent to share contact information. The letter of intent is still due on May 11, 2012 at 5:00 PM EDT.

Please see the amended FOA for a complete list of changes, including guidance and further clarification on additional items such as supplementing funds, indirect costs and cost-effectiveness, and the control group.