



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

November 9, 2012

Dear Governor:

Over the past two years, we have worked together as many of you began building your new health insurance marketplaces. The hard work you have engaged in has laid the foundation for providing access to quality affordable coverage for millions of Americans. Consumers in all fifty states and the District of Columbia will have access to insurance through these new marketplaces on January 1, 2014, as scheduled, with no delays.

This Administration is committed to providing significant flexibility for building a marketplace that best meets your state's needs. We intend to issue further guidance to assist you in the very near future. Funding is now available to you no matter where you are in the process of establishing an Exchange and no matter whether you plan to run your own Exchange, partner with another state, or work with the federal government. In response to your request, we previously announced that states have until the end of 2014 to apply for these federal funds and have the flexibility to use such funds both for building Exchanges and for associated start-up costs provided that a state's Exchange is not yet self-sustaining. The next application deadline for Level 1 and Level 2 Exchange establishment grants is November 15, 2012. I encourage you to take advantage of these additional resources.

As the date approaches for submission of your Blueprint for Approval of State-based and State Partnership Exchanges, we have heard from many states that additional time would allow you to submit a more comprehensive, complete Blueprint application for your Exchange.

The deadline for a Declaration Letter for a State-based Exchange remains Friday, November 16, 2012. However, today, in order to continue to provide you with appropriate technical support if you are pursuing a State-based Exchange, HHS is extending the deadline for State-based Exchange Blueprint application submissions to Friday, December 14, 2012. HHS will approve or conditionally approve the State-based Exchanges for 2014 by the statutory deadline of January 1, 2013.

Additionally, if you are pursuing a State Partnership Exchange, we will accept Declaration Letters and Blueprint Applications and make approval determinations for State Partnership Exchanges on a rolling basis. The final deadline for both the Declaration Letter and Blueprint Application for State Partnership Exchanges that would be effective for 2014 has been extended to Friday, February 15, 2013. And states will be able to apply to run Exchanges in subsequent years.

We are committed to providing you with the flexibility, resources, and technical assistance necessary to help you achieve successful implementation of your state's Exchange and look forward to continuing to work with you as we implement the health care law.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Sebelius