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Medicare Shared Savings Program: Navigating the Application

Office Hours

May 8, 2023

Medicare Shared Savings Program



Disclaimer

This guide was prepared for informational purposes only and isn't intended to grant rights or impose obligations. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It isn't intended to take the place of the written law, including the regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations, and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents.



Agenda

- Introduction
 - Welcome
- Resources
 - Shared Savings Program Webpage
 - Application Types and Timelines Webpage
 - Application Toolkit
- Shared Savings Program Application Process
 - Registration
 - Application
 - Advance Investment Payments
- Question & Answer Session



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A simple icon of a black folder with a white document sticking out of it.

Resources

Resource	Description
Shared Savings Program website	Overview of the Shared Savings Program including helpful information and resources
Applications Types & Timeline webpage	Key deadlines and resources to help complete the application including sample applications
Application Toolkit	Quick access to guidance and other materials relevant to all application types



Application Types and Timeline

Application Types

Application Type	Description
Initial Application AIP Supplemental Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ACO that is applying to participate in the Shared Savings Program that is not considered to have previously participated in the Shared Savings Program. An ACO that either previously participated in the Shared Savings Program and is applying to participate in the Shared Savings Program after a break in participation or that CMS determines to be re-entering because greater than 50 percent of their ACO participants have prior participation in the same Shared Savings Program ACO in any of the five most recent past performance years (re-entering ACO). <p style="text-align: center;">Advance Investment Payments (AIP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ACO that is interested in receiving advance investment payments will need to complete supplemental application materials as part of their initial application.
Renewal/Early Renewal Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ACO currently participating in the Shared Savings Program that is in the final performance year of its most recent ACO Participation Agreement and intends to renew its participation for a new agreement period starting on January 1st of the upcoming calendar year without a break in participation. An ACO currently participating in the Shared Savings Program that elects to voluntarily terminate its ACO Participation Agreement with an effective date of termination of December 31st of the current performance year and intends to apply for a new agreement period starting on January 1st of the upcoming calendar year without a break in participation.
SNF 3-Day Rule Waiver Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ACO applying for approval of a SNF 3-Day Rule Waiver. Available for ACOs applying to or currently participating in the Shared Savings Program under Levels C, D, or E of the BASIC track, or the ENHANCED track.
BIP Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ACO applying to establish and operate a BIP. Available for ACOs applying to or currently participating in the Shared Savings Program under Levels C, D, or E of the BASIC track, or the ENHANCED track.

Application Types & Timeline

The Shared Savings Program application dates for a January 1, 2024 agreement start date are posted below.

For a detailed overview of all actions and deadlines available throughout the cycle, reference [Key Application Actions and Deadlines \(Updated 2/13/2023\) \(PDF\)](#).

Updates to the [Application Toolkit](#) for this application cycle are now available.



For ACOs

Application Types & Timeline

Application Toolkit

Program Participation



The Application Toolkit

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For ACOs

Application Types & Timeline

Application Toolkit

Program Participation

Application Toolkit

The Shared Savings Program application dates for a January 1, 2024 agreement start date are posted on the [Application Types & Timeline webpage](#).

[How to Complete ACO Management System \(ACO-MS\) Registration \(Updated 4/10/2023\) \(PDF\)](#) ←

This tip sheet provides information on how applicants must register in ACO-MS in order to begin their application.

[ACO-MS: Initial Access Information \(Updated 4/10/2023\) \(PDF\)](#) ←

This tip sheet provides information on how to obtain access to ACO-MS and what to expect the first time you sign into the system.

[Shared Savings Program ACO Participation Options \(Updated 4/10/2023\) \(PDF\)](#) ←

This document outlines the different participation options (tracks) that allow ACOs to assume various levels of risk. The table in the document summarizes the characteristics of the participation options under the BASIC track and ENHANCED track.

[Application Reference Manual \(Updated 4/10/2023\) \(PDF\)](#) ←

The Application Reference Manual is the primary resource for ACOs applying to the Shared Savings Program and guides ACOs through the application process.

In addition to the Application Reference Manual, the resources below will assist ACOs with submitting the different elements of their application(s) and responding to requests for information (RFIs) in ACO-MS.

[Advance Investment Payments Guidance \(Updated 4/10/2023\) PDF](#) ←

Applies to initial applicants identified as low revenue and inexperienced with performance-based risk Medicare ACO initiatives interested in receiving Advance Investment Payments (AIP)



Shared Savings Program Application Process

- Important Dates
- Registration
- Application Process in ACO-MS



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Important Dates

<p>1</p> <p>Submit Phase 1 of the Application</p> <p>Opens: May 18, 2023 Due: June 15, 2023</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Respond to Phase 1 RFI-1</p> <p>Opens: July 11, 2023 Due: Aug. 1, 2023</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Respond to Phase 1 RFI-2</p> <p>Opens: Aug. 22, 2023 Due: Sept. 5, 2023</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Phase 1 Dispositions</p> <p>Issued: Oct. 18, 2023</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Submit Phase 2 of the Application</p> <p>Opens: Oct. 19, 2023 Due: Oct. 30, 2023</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Respond to Phase 2 RFI</p> <p>Opens: Nov. 9, 2023 Due: Nov. 16, 2023</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Final Application Dispositions</p> <p>Issued: Dec. 5, 2023</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Annual Signing Event</p> <p>Opens: Dec. 6, 2023 Due: Dec. 12, 2023</p>

Application Process



Step 1: Complete ACO-MS registration

- Go to [ACO-MS](#) and select “Apply”
- Enter your ACO legal entity information
- Enter the contact information for your ACO’s ACO Executive and Primary and Secondary Application Contacts
- Review and submit
- Receive confirmation email

Step 2: Complete & submit the application

- Review the [Application Reference Manual](#) for a January 1, 2024 start date for instructions
- Review [sample applications](#)
- Refer to the initial and renewal/early renewal application checklists to complete the application in the [ACO Management System](#) (ACO-MS)

Step 3: Respond to RFIs

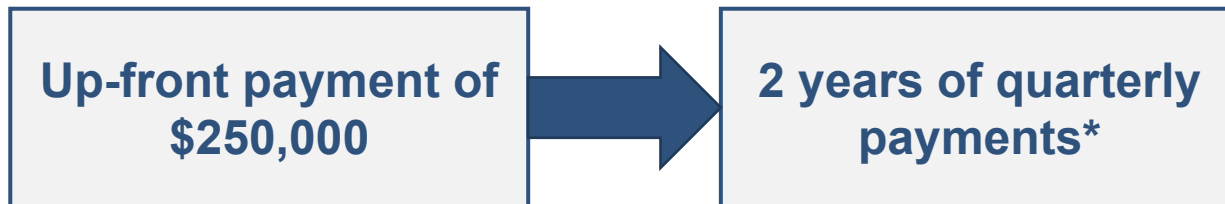
- Respond to RFIs by specified deadlines
- Work with your application reviewer to resolve questions

Step 4: Sign the participation agreement

- Review and certify final materials
- Sign the ACO Participation Agreement

Advance Investment Payments

AIP offers advance shared savings payments, including:



- Eligible ACOs can use these funds to build the infrastructure needed to succeed in the program and promote equity by holistically addressing beneficiary needs, including social needs
- Advance investment payments will be recouped from earned shared savings in an ACO's current and subsequent agreement period, if a balance persists. If an ACO does not achieve shared savings, the advance investment payments will not be recouped

*Up to \$45 per beneficiary per quarter based on beneficiary attributes, including Area Deprivation Score (ADI), Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy (LIS), and dual eligible (DE) status. ACOs must continue to be determined by CMS to be low-revenue and inexperienced with risk in order to receive all 8 quarterly payments



Requirements for AIP Participation

ACOs must meet the following requirements to be eligible for AIP:

AIP Eligibility (42 CFR § 425.630(b))

- ACO is not a renewing ACO or re-entering ACO (as defined under (42 CFR § 425.20))
- ACO has applied and is eligible to participate in the SSP under any level of the **BASIC track** glide path
- ACO is **inexperienced with performance-based risk** Medicare ACO initiatives*
- ACO is a low-revenue ACO*

*ACOs must continue to be determined by CMS to be low-revenue and inexperienced with risk in order to maintain AIP eligibility during the agreement period

Application Process:

Eligible ACOs will submit supplemental information for AIP in **Phase 2**. However, ACOs interested in AIP should be aware that decisions made in **Phase 1** may affect their AIP eligibility:

- Eligibility is determined based on the **Participant list** submitted by the ACO
- ACOs that select the **ENHANCED** Track glide path are **not eligible** for AIP



Tips for Application Success

- ✓ Act early and do not wait until the deadlines.
- ✓ Review program guidance for assistance in understanding program requirements.
- ✓ Become familiar with participation options.
- ✓ Establish a legal entity and organizational structure.
- ✓ Establish a governing body that meets program requirements.
- ✓ Establish a compliance plan and procedures that meet program requirements.
- ✓ Reach out to providers, suppliers, and SNF affiliates with whom your ACO intends to partner.
- ✓ Collect ACO participant TINs, PTANs, and LBNs.
- ✓ Collect SNF affiliate TINs, CMS Certification Numbers (CCNs), and TIN LBNs
- ✓ Create ACO Participant Agreements and SNF Affiliate Agreements that satisfy program requirements.
- ✓ Prepare to establish a repayment mechanism if applying to Levels C, D, or E of the BASIC track, or the ENHANCED track.
- ✓ Establish a banking account with a financial institution.
- ✓ Verify that all information is entered accurately upon first submission.
- ✓ Attend office hour calls for important information.
- ✓ Utilize the help desk for questions
 - ✓ Renewing applicants can also reach out to their ACO coordinator
- ✓ Safeguard user IDs and passwords.
- ✓ Ensure contact information is accurate and up-to-date



Application Sections

The Initial application contains the following sections:

Phase 1:

- Section 1 – ACO Legal Entity Information
- Section 2 – Program Participation
- Section 3 – Certify the Application

Phase 2:

- Section 1 – ACO Legal Entity Information
- Section 2 – Program Participation
- Section 3 – Leadership and Governance
- Section 4 – Certifications
- Section 5 – Certify the Application



Question and Answer Session

Additional Questions can be sent to the Shared Savings Program mailbox: shredsavingsprogram@cms.hhs.gov



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