



Checklist for New Medicare Beneficiaries



1-800-351-4664

www.shiip.iowa.gov

☐ **Enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B**

- ✓ “I am already receiving Social Security benefits.” You will be automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B and receive your Medicare card 3 months before your 65th birthday.
- ✓ “I am turning 65 and I am not receiving Social Security benefits.” You need to contact Social Security to enroll in Medicare. You have 3 months before your birthday, your birthday month and three months after to enroll.
- ✓ “I or my spouse will continue to work and have employer health coverage through the worker’s employer.” Contact SHIIP at 1-800-351-4664 about the options and consequences of enrolling in Medicare Part A and Part B
- ✓ “I am under 65 and have been on Social Security disability for 24 months.” You will automatically be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B. Individuals with End-Stage Renal Disease or ALS are automatically eligible for Medicare.
- ✓ “I am currently enrolled in a Marketplace plan.” Your Marketplace plan will not coordinate with Medicare and you will lose any premium tax credits and reduced cost sharing when you enroll in Medicare. To cancel your plan call 1-800-318-2596.

☐ **Decide How I Want to Get My Medicare Coverage**

- ✓ Traditional Medicare *
- ✓ Medicare Advantage plan**
- ✓ Medicare Cost plan**

***Traditional Medicare**

- ☐ I will choose a Medicare Supplement to help cover costs not paid by Medicare.
- ☐ My employer or retiree coverage will supplement my Medicare benefits.

****Medicare Advantage Plan and Cost Plans**

- ☐ I choose a Medicare Advantage Plan **with** Part D drug coverage included.
 - ✓ The plan is available in my county.
 - ✓ I have contacted my doctors and hospital to find out if they will accept the plan.
 - ✓ Run a comparison to determine which plan will provide the best coverage for my prescriptions.
 - ✓ If you enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan you do not need a Medicare supplement. (It will not pay benefits.)

- ☐ “I choose a Medicare Advantage or Medicare Cost Plan **without** drug coverage.”
- ✓The plan is available in my county.
 - ✓I have contacted my doctors and hospital to find out if they will accept the plan.
 - ✓I understand the co-pays and out-of-pocket maximum
 - ✓I have other coverage for my drugs.
 - ✓Cost Plans offered in Iowa do not include drug coverage. To receive this benefit you will also need to enroll in a Medicare Part D drug plan.

☐ **Enroll in Medicare Part D**

Enrolling in Medicare Part A or B triggers eligibility for Medicare Part D.

- ☐ I want to enroll in a Medicare Part D drug plan
- ☐ I have creditable employer drug coverage (creditable means “as good as Medicare’s drug coverage”) and I do not need to enroll in Part D. (You could lose some or all of your employer benefits if you enroll in Part D. Check with your benefits office before you enroll.)
- ☐ I have a Medicare Advantage Plan with drug coverage.
- ☐ I have VA benefits and I may or may not want to enroll in a Part D plan
- ☐ Compare plans on www.Medicare.gov

**If you have limited income and resources you may be eligible for these programs:
(Incomes listed are based on 2025 federal poverty levels.)**

- ☐ **Apply for Extra Help for Medicare Part D drug costs**
- ✓ You must have a monthly income below \$1,976 if you are single, or \$2,664 if you are married, AND resources below \$17,600 (single) or \$35,130 (married). Your income can be higher for families of more than two.
- ☐ **Apply for a Medicare Savings Program to help with your Medicare premium and deductible co-pay (Income and Resources listed are effective April 1, 2025.)**
- ✓ You must have a monthly income below \$1,781 if you are single, or \$2,400 if you are married, AND resources are below \$9,660 (single) or \$14,470 (married).

☐ **Create a Medicare account on Medicare.gov**

- ✓ What can you do with your account? You can see your claims faster, as well as save and track your prescription drugs and preventive services.



2025 Medicare Deductible, Coinsurance & Premium Amounts

v.11.20.24

Medicare questions? SHIIP offers free, confidential & objective counseling
Call our statewide number: 1-800-351-4664 (TTY 1-800-735-2942)

Medicare Part A (hospital insurance)

Inpatient Hospital

Deductible	first 60 days (per benefit period)	\$1,676
Coinsurance	days 61-90 (per benefit period)	\$419/day
	lifetime reserve days (60)	\$838/day

Skilled Nursing Facility

Coinsurance	days 21-100 (per benefit period)	\$209.50/day
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Monthly Premium

40 quarters of Social Security work credit	Free
30-39 quarters of Social Security work credit	\$285
Less than 30 quarters of Social Security work credit	\$518

Medicare Part B (medical insurance)

Annual deductible	\$257
Standard monthly premium	\$185

IRMAA (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount), based on 2023 Income

If Your Yearly Adjusted Gross Income is			
File Individual Tax Return	File Joint Tax Return	Part B premium	Part D IRMAA (in addition to Part D premium)
Less than or equal to \$106,000	Less than or equal to \$212,000	\$185.00	none
\$106,001 - \$133,000	\$212,001 - \$266,000	\$259.00	\$13.70
\$133,001 - \$167,000	\$266,001 - \$334,000	\$370.00	\$35.30
\$167,001 - \$200,000	\$334,001 - \$400,000	\$480.90	\$57.00
\$200,001 - \$499,999	\$400,001 - \$749,999	\$591.90	\$78.60
Greater than or equal to \$500,000	Greater than or equal to \$750,000	\$628.90	\$85.80
Married but File Separate Tax Return		Part B premium	Part D IRMAA
Less than or equal to \$106,000		\$185.00	none
\$106,001 - \$393,999		\$591.90	\$78.60
Greater than or equal to \$394,000		\$628.90	\$85.80



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Events That Guarantee Your Right To Buy Medicare Supplement Insurance

Medicare Supplement Open Enrollment Guarantees

You have a **six-month** open enrollment period when you are enrolled in **Medicare Part B** for the first time at **age 65 or older**. The six-month period begins the date your Medicare Part B begins. During your open enrollment period:

- You cannot be turned down for any plan being sold in Iowa:
 - **Age 65 prior to January 1, 2020:** Plan A, B, C, D, F, G, K, L, M or N
 - **Age 65 on or after January 1, 2020:** Plan A, B, D, G, K, L, M or N
- You cannot be charged a higher premium based on your health.
- You will not have a waiting period before benefits are paid for pre-existing health conditions **IF** you had previous health insurance coverage, **AND** you **apply** within **63 days** of the end of previous health insurance, **AND** you were covered for at least 6 months under that health plan.

Special Event Enrollment Guarantees

Events That Trigger A Guarantee Issue Opportunity	Enrollment Options Available For <u>63 Days</u> Only
1. You are covered by an employer group health benefit plan which pays benefits after Medicare pays, and the plan stops providing some or all health benefits. This includes retiree or COBRA coverage. These situations do not trigger this benefit: increase in premium; loss of Medicaid; choosing to leave your employer plan; your spouse losing coverage because of your decision to terminate your employer coverage; or reaching your annual limit or lifetime maximum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must be allowed to enroll in any Medicare supplement or Medicare Select Plan listed below: • <u>Age 65, disabled or ESRD* Medicare before January 1, 2020:</u> Plan A, B, C, F (including a high deductible Plan F), K or L from ANY COMPANY selling these plans in Iowa.
2. You are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage or Medicare Cost or Medicare Select plan or Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) provider and you disenroll because <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You move from the service area or • The plan stops providing Medicare services or • The plan seriously violates the contract or misrepresents the plan during marketing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Age 65, disabled or ESRD* Medicare on or after January 1, 2020:</u> Plan A, B, D, G (including a high deductible Plan G), K or L from ANY COMPANY selling these plans in Iowa.
3. You are enrolled under a Medicare Supplement policy and it ends because <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company is insolvent or bankrupt or • Coverage is involuntarily terminated or • The plan seriously violates the contract or misrepresents the plan during marketing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are a Medicare beneficiary under age 65, you will be limited to buying only from companies selling to those under 65.

	Events That Trigger A Guarantee Issue Opportunity	Enrollment Options Available For <u>63 Days</u> Only
4.	<p>You are enrolled in a Medicare supplement policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And you stop the Medicare supplement and enroll in a Medicare Advantage, Medicare Cost, or Medicare Select plan or PACE provider for the first time, • Then you disenroll from the new plan or program within the first 12 months. 	<p>You must be allowed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-enroll in the Medicare supplement policy you were most recently enrolled in if it is available from the same insurance company,** or if <u>not available</u>, • <u>Age 65, disabled or ESRD* Medicare before January 1, 2020:</u> Enroll in any Medicare supplement Plan A, B, C, F, K or L (including Medicare Select or high deductible choices) sold in Iowa. • <u>Age 65, disabled or ESRD* Medicare on or after January 1, 2020:</u> Enroll in any Medicare supplement Plan A, B, D, G, K or L (including Medicare Select or high deductible choices) sold in Iowa. <p>If you are under age 65, you can buy only from companies selling to those under 65.</p>
5.	<p>You enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan or PACE, at age 65,*** during your seven month Initial Enrollment Period (IEP) for Part B and disenroll within 12 months. Individuals enrolled in Medicare Part B prior to age 65 are not eligible for this GI event when they turn 65.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This includes individuals who enroll in employer-sponsored Medicare Advantage plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Age 65 before January 1, 2020:</u> You must be allowed to enroll in ANY Medicare supplement plan, A, B, C, D, F, G, K, L, M or N sold in Iowa. • <u>Age 65 after January 1, 2020:</u> You must be allowed to enroll in ANY Medicare supplement plan, A, B, D, G, K, L, M or N sold in Iowa. • Includes Medicare Select or high deductible choices.

*ESRD is abbreviation for End Stage Renal Disease

**This option does not apply to employer retiree health plans. If you give up your employer retiree plan to try a Medicare Advantage plan, you may not get your employer retiree plan back later.

***There is one exception to this if you take Part B for the first time after age 65. Call SHIIP for details.

Protections With These Special Events:

If you **apply** for your new Medicare supplement plan within **63 days** of the end of previous coverage:

- Companies cannot turn you down because of existing health conditions.
- Companies cannot charge you higher premiums because of existing health conditions.
- You will not have a waiting period before benefits are paid for existing health conditions.

If you have questions about Medicare or other senior health insurance issues, contact SHIIP for assistance. **Toll-free: 1-800-351-4664 (TTY 1-800-735-2942)**

Webiste: www.shiip.iowa.gov **Email:** shiip@iid.iowa.gov

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GETTING READY TO RETIRE

WHEN SHOULD I ENROLL IN MEDICARE?



The decision to enroll in Medicare depends on your situation. If you get insurance through your current employer or your spouse's employer you might not want to enroll in any or all parts of Medicare.

If you cannot get insurance through a current employer, you need to enroll in Medicare or risk paying a penalty.

Before making decisions to retire it is important to understand the health insurance options available to you (and your spouse if you are married). Your options depend on:

- Your age
- Your spouse's age
- Whether you or your spouse are eligible for Medicare
- Whether you and your spouse will continue to be employed and have health insurance from your employer
- The number of employees where you and your spouse are employed

RETIRING BEFORE AGE 65

What if I retire before age 65?

Medicare does not begin until age 65 for most people so if you plan to retire before age 65

you need to know your options for health coverage. Your employer may provide you with continued health coverage when you retire.

If you work for a **public employer** in Iowa such as a public school, city or county government, you may choose to continue the employer group health coverage until you are 65. Your spouse may also be covered under a family policy until you, the retired employee, reach age 65.

State of Iowa retirees and their spouses should consult the Department of Administrative Services – Human Resource Enterprise website at benefits.iowa.gov for benefits available to retired employees and their spouses.

A nonpublic employer may choose to offer you continued coverage under a retirement health plan. Check to see how long the employer coverage continues.

If your spouse is still working, you may be able to continue coverage or become enrolled in his/her employer group health plan.

If you're retired, not yet Medicare eligible and need health coverage, you can use the Marketplace to buy a health insurance plan. Contact SHIIP to request the fact sheet *Medicare and the Health Insurance Marketplace* at 800-351-4664 (TTY 800-735-2942).

If you will not have a retirement plan, you may be able to continue your group health insurance under the COBRA law.

Is COBRA an option for you?

Federal COBRA law applies to employers with 20 or more employees. This law allows you to continue your coverage under the employer group health plan for up to 18 months. COBRA will end sooner if you become eligible for Medicare. In some cases a spouse may have coverage for a longer period. Call SHIIP at 1-800-351-4664 for more information.

Iowa law requires employers with fewer than 20 employees to allow you to continue your coverage under the employer group health plan for up to 9 months after retirement. This law only applies to group health plans issued in Iowa. It does not apply to self-insured plans. Call the State of Iowa Insurance Division at 1-877-955-1212 for information.

RETIRING AT AGE 65 AND NO WORKING SPOUSE

What happens when I am ready to retire at age 65?

When you are ready to retire at age 65 and you

and your spouse are not working:

- Medicare is your primary insurance regardless of any other health insurance you have.
- You should enroll in Medicare Part A and B. If you don't enroll at this time, you may pay a higher premium later.
- If you have retirement health insurance it will pay after Medicare.
- If you need a Medicare Supplement policy, you will have a six-month open enrollment to buy any supplement from any company that sells in Iowa. This enrollment opportunity begins when your Part B coverage starts.
- If you do not have drug coverage, you need to enroll in a Part D plan to avoid paying a higher premium later.

AGE 65 OR OLDER AND YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE WORKS

What if I will continue to have health insurance through active employment?

Many people are working past age 65. If you or your spouse is actively employed and covered by a group health plan when you turn 65, then you will have some decisions to make about your health insurance.

You are **not** required to enroll in Medicare Part A or Part B if you have coverage through your or your spouse's current employer.

If you choose to continue to work beyond age 65 or your spouse is working and the employer has **20 or more employees**, you and your spouse must be allowed to continue any health insurance coverage you had before age 65. The employer health plan based on **active** employment will be the first payer on claims.

Employers with **less than 20 employees** are not required to continue your health

coverage when you become eligible for Medicare. If they do, you need to check the insurance contract to see if your employer insurance will be primary.

When the person carrying the employer insurance is no longer working, or employer coverage is dropped during active employment, you will need to sign up for Part B. At that time you won't have to pay a higher premium, even though you are past age 65.

If you and/or your spouse are enrolled in Medicare before retiring, employer group health coverage can be continued under the COBRA law when you retire. Medicare will pay first when you retire. You will continue to pay the full premium for the employer plan, and it will supplement your Medicare. It is necessary to enroll in Part B when you retire, or you may pay a higher premium later.

ENROLLING IN MEDICARE

There are some things to keep in mind when deciding if you should enroll in Medicare.

Medicare Part A

- For most people, Part A does not charge a premium.
- If you are already receiving Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits when you turn 65 you will automatically be enrolled in Part A.
- If you are not getting Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits when you turn 65, you will not be automatically enrolled in Part A.
- Enrollment in Part A triggers your eligibility for Medicare Part D drug coverage. Check if your employer drug coverage is creditable (at least as good as Medicare coverage). If it is creditable you don't need to enroll in Part D.

If you have a Health Savings Account (HSA)

You may want to delay Medicare if your employer insurance is a qualified high deductible plan with a Health Savings Account (HSA). If you and your employer contribute to your HSA while you are enrolled in Medicare Part A or Part B you could face IRS penalties. If you choose to delay Part A at age 65, when you do enroll your Part A effective date will be backdated up to six months or your 65th birthday month whichever is less. This determines when you should stop contributing to your HSA. Your spouse going on Medicare does not affect your ability to contribute to your HSA.

Medicare Part B

- Everyone pays a monthly premium for Part B.
- If you are already receiving Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits when you turn 65 you will automatically be enrolled in Part B.
- If you are not getting Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits when you turn 65, you will not be automatically enrolled in Part B.
- You can delay Part B if you or your spouse is **actively employed** and you are covered by a group health plan through the employer of the actively employed person.
- It is important to understand that even though you can delay your Part B enrollment, if your employer has **less than 20 employees** they may choose to pay secondary when you are eligible for Medicare.

- Enrolling in Part B will also start your Medicare **six-month open enrollment** period. During this one-time open enrollment you can buy any Medicare Supplement from any company that sells in Iowa.
- When you are age 65 or older and you **do not** have employer insurance based on ACTIVE employment, you need to enroll in Part B to avoid paying a penalty.

Medicare Part D

- Everyone pays a monthly premium for Part D unless you qualify for Extra Help.
- As long as you have “creditable coverage”, you do not have to enroll in a Part D plan. Creditable coverage means your prescription drug coverage is as good as, or better than, a standard Part D plan. Check with your HR department to verify if your prescription policy is creditable coverage. If not, you need to enroll in Part D to avoid paying a penalty in the future.
- Typically, prescription insurance through work and other sources like VA offers better coverage than what you can get through Medicare. For this reason, most people wait until their work coverage ends to enroll in Part D.

Enrolling in Medicare Part A and Part B

There are several ways you can enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B:

- Call or visit your local Social Security office
- Call the national Social Security number 1-800-772-1213
- Enroll online at www.socialsecurity.gov (If you have already enrolled in Part A, you cannot enroll in Part B online)

Once you get your Medicare card, protect it like you do your bank card. If individuals call and ask for your Medicare information, hang up. You can report a lost or stolen Medicare card to **1-800-Medicare**. If you think you have been a target of Medicare fraud, such as someone billing your Medicare number for unexplained charges, call the Iowa Senior Medicare Patrol at **1-800-351-4664**.

How do I pay my premium?

If you are receiving Social Security benefits, your Part B premium will be automatically deducted. If you are not receiving Social Security benefits, you will be sent a bill and will need to make your payment.

SHIIP CAN HELP For reliable and objective answers call the Senior Health Insurance Information Program or SHIIP at 1-800-351-4664 (TTY 1-800-735-2942) or email SHIIP@iid.iowa.gov. A service of the Iowa Insurance Division, SHIIP can help you compare Medicare options and answer your questions. You can also visit our website at shiip.iowa.gov



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