

Introduction to the “Important Information from Medicare about Paying for Prescription Drugs” Notice

What Is the Purpose of This Notice?

The “Important Information from Medicare about Paying for Prescription Drugs” notice is designed to make people who are automatically eligible for extra help paying for prescription drugs aware that Medicare prescription drug coverage is coming, and to let them know that they will get this help without needing to apply for it.

There are three versions of this notice: one for people with Medicare and Medicaid, one for people in a Medicare Savings Program (MSP), and one for beneficiaries who get Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Who Will Receive This Notice?

Medicare will mail the “Important Information from Medicare about Paying for Prescription Drugs” notice to all people with Medicare who are automatically eligible to receive extra help paying for a Medicare prescription drug plan. These individuals do not have to apply to receive the extra help, but will get it automatically.

Seven million people who have Medicaid and Medicare and are in an MSP will receive this notice, along with 400,000 people who have Medicare and SSI.

This summer, other people who do not automatically get the extra help, but who have been identified as potentially eligible for it, will get a different letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) telling them that they can apply to get help from Medicare to pay the cost of prescription drugs.

When Will People Get This Notice?

Most people with Medicare and Medicaid and people in an MSP will get the Medicare notice in May, 2005. People who get SSI only and people with Medicaid or in an MSP who live in Illinois, Wisconsin, South Carolina, Florida, Vermont and Maryland will get the notice in June, 2005.

What Should People Do Next?

People who receive this notice do not have to do anything now. In the fall of 2005, they have the opportunity to join a Medicare prescription drug plan in their area. Medicare will be sending them more information about choosing and enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug plan.

- If people who have Medicare and Medicaid do not choose a plan on their own by December 31, 2005, Medicare will enroll them in a plan. This way, they do not lose a day of prescription drug coverage once their Medicaid drug coverage ends on December 31, 2005.
- If people who are in an MSP or get SSI do not choose a plan on their own by May 15, 2006, Medicare will help them to enroll in a plan (effective June 1, 2006) so they pay the lowest premium.

If people have questions about the information in the notice, direct them to do the following:

- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Visit www.medicare.gov on the web.
- Look for their “Medicare & You” 2006 handbook in the mail this fall for more information about choosing and enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug plan.



Important Information from Medicare about Paying for Prescription Drugs

Beginning January 1, 2006, all people with Medicare can get Medicare prescription drug coverage.

Our records show that you currently get help from your state paying Medicare premiums.

Because you get this help, Medicare will help pay the cost of your Medicare prescription drugs. You will need to pay a small copayment for each prescription (up to \$5).

Other people will get mail from the Social Security Administration (SSA) telling them that they can apply to get help from Medicare to pay the cost of Medicare prescription drugs. **You won't get this mail from SSA, because we already know you will get this help.**

This fall your "Medicare & You 2006" handbook will include information about how Medicare will pay for your drug costs and what you will need to do.

Remember, you don't need to do anything now. If you have questions about the information in this letter

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TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Visit www.medicare.gov on the web.
- Look for your "Medicare & You" handbook in the fall.

Para obtener una copia de este aviso en español, llame gratis al 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Los usuarios de TTY deben llamar al 1-877-486-2048.