

2024

Complete Guide to Medicare



NOT AFFILIATED WITH OR ENDORSED BY THE GOVERNMENT OR FEDERAL MEDICARE PROGRAM

Your Complete Guide to Medicare

Let our 2024 Complete Guide to Medicare make the process easy and give you the peace of mind you deserve.

What is Medicare?

Medicare is a federal program that provides health insurance to individuals who meet certain age or disability requirements.

Eligibility & Enrollment

Medicare Eligibility

Who is Eligible for Medicare?

Individuals must be a U.S. citizen or permanent legal resident for at least five consecutive years and reach Medicare eligibility when at least one of the following applies to them:

- Are age 65 or older
- Are permanently disabled and have received disability benefits for at least two years
- Have been diagnosed with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)
- Have been diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS)

Are You Eligible for Medicare?

Visit our [online Medicare Eligibility Tool](#) to determine when you will be eligible for Medicare.

Medicare Eligibility Age Requirement

If you do not have a disability, ALS, or ESRD, your Medicare eligibility is age 65.

Medicare Disability Requirements

If you have a disability and have been receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) for more than 24 months, you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare at the start of the 25th month you receive SSDI.

Should You Take Medicare Benefits at Age 65?

Many times, people find it advantageous to sign up for Medicare when turning 65, however, every person's situation regarding Medicare is unique. We strongly encourage you to call us to discuss your options at [866.600.4266](tel:866.600.4266). There are a number of considerations to ensure you do not incur penalties.

Fill out the form for the full Complete Guide

How to Apply for Medicare

Learning how to apply for Medicare is one of the major things you'll need to know as you prepare to take advantage of this benefit. As complicated as Medicare can be, signing up for Medicare Part A and Part B is often quite simple.

Signing Up

If you are not automatically enrolled in Medicare, you can sign up for Part A and/or Part B via the [online Medicare application](#), by calling Social Security at **800.772.1278**, or by visiting your local Social Security office. If you are coming off group coverage, you will want to be sure your Medicare effective date lines up with the end of your other insurance coverage. Working beyond age 65?

Read This Article

During your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP), you will be able to sign up for a health plan to pair with your Part A and Part B benefits. Based on your doctors, prescriptions, travel plans, preferred pharmacy, and preferred hospital, you will want to consider this additional coverage.

When to Apply

Most people can apply for Medicare three months before their 65th birthday month. Signing up is different if someone has a disability or receives Social Security.

When to Enroll in Medicare

Initial Enrollment Period

Your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP) is the first time you are eligible to sign up for Medicare (Parts A, B, C, and/or D). This time frame starts three months before the month of your 65th birthday, includes your birth month, and extends three months after the month of your 65th birthday.

For example, if your birthday is June 15, your IEP would look like this graphic:

- **March 8:** Your IEP begins, and you are officially eligible to enroll in Medicare Parts A, B, C, and D.
- **June:** You turn 65.
- **September 30:** Your IEP ends. By now, you should have chosen and enrolled in the insurance health plan that is right for you.



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Annual Enrollment Period

Each year from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7, the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) or Medicare open enrollment takes place. During this time, individuals who are already enrolled in a Medicare plan have the opportunity to review and change plans.

If you choose to enroll in a different plan during AEP, your new Medicare coverage will start on Jan. 1 the following year.

Special Enrollment Period

Medicare Special Enrollment Periods (SEPs) are granted due to special circumstances, such as losing employer coverage or moving out of your plan's service area. For instance, if you leave employer coverage, you will be able to enroll in Medicare during a Special Enrollment Period.

The rules around Special Enrollment Period can be confusing and depend largely on your personal situation. We encourage you to call one of our advisors at [866.600.4266](tel:866.600.4266) if you have specific questions.

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Plans & Coverage

THE FOUR PARTS OF MEDICARE			
<div>Part A</div> <div>Hospital Related Services</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hospital stays• Skilled nursing care• Nursing home care• Hospice• Home health services</div>	<div>Part B</div> <div>Medical</div> <div><div>Medically necessary health services and supplies, like doctor office visits, outpatient hospital care, tests, and x-rays/rays.</div><div>Preventive services, like screenings and annual wellness exams.</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clinical research• Ambulance services• Durable medical equipment (DME)• Mental health• Outpatient care• Second opinion before surgery</div></div>	<div>Part C</div> <div>Medicare Advantage Plan</div> <div><p>Offered by private insurance companies. Plans use Part A, Part B, and sometimes Part D benefits into one plan. Every MA plan must provide the same basic coverage as Medicare Parts A and B, but many plans also feature extra benefits, including vision, dental, hearing, and fitness memberships.</p></div>	<div>Part D</div> <div>Prescription Drug Plan</div> <div><p>Medicare Part D is prescription drug coverage available to anyone with Medicare Part A and/or Part B. Medicare Part D plans are offered by private insurance companies.</p></div>

The full Complete Guide is 18 total pages