

# Understanding Medicare

Medicare is the federal health insurance program for individuals age 65 or older and certain younger individuals with disabilities.



**Even if you have health insurance through an employer, it is important to be informed about all your insurance options.**

**When it comes to Medicare, making uninformed decisions can lead to costly financial penalties.**

## Benefits of Medicare

- The potential to lower your medical expenses.
- In many regions, Medicare provides better coverage than some employer-sponsored plans.
- It is likely that your current doctors accept Medicare.
- Some plans also provide additional benefits such as dental care, transportation to healthcare facilities, and other services, such as housekeeping, meal preparation, and gym memberships.

## How does Medicare work?

### Original Medicare options

**Medicare Part A – known as “hospital insurance”**

**What’s covered:**

- Inpatient care in a hospital
- Skilled nursing facility care
- Hospice care
- Home health care

**Medicare Part B – known as “medical insurance”**

**What’s covered:**

- Doctor visits
- Medically necessary services
- Outpatient services
- Preventive care

### Additional plans offered through private insurers

**Medicare Part D – known as “Medicare drug coverage”**

Prescription medication coverage above and beyond Original Medicare Part A and Part B.

**Medicare Advantage Plan – known as “Part C” or “MA Plans”**

An alternative to Original Medicare which combines Medicare Part A, Part B, and often Part D.

**Medicare Supplemental Plan – known as “Medigap”**

Medigap is insurance designed to work with Original Medicare. Original Medicare does not cover all of the costs associated with covered health care services and supplies. Medigap can cover some of the remaining health care costs, such as coinsurance, deductibles, and copayments.

# Enrolling in Medicare

## Do I need to enroll?

When you are nearing eligibility, it's important to understand your options so you can make informed decisions. Individual circumstances will ultimately determine when you should enroll in Medicare.

### *When considering your options, keep the following in mind:*

- The majority of individuals should enroll in Part A upon becoming eligible.
- Certain people may choose to wait to enroll in Part B, depending on their individual circumstances.
- If you do not qualify for premium-free Part A, you cannot enroll in Part A without first enrolling in Part B.

## How do I enroll?

If you are not already receiving other Social Security benefits, you will need to take one of the following actions to enroll in Original Medicare, Part A and Part B:

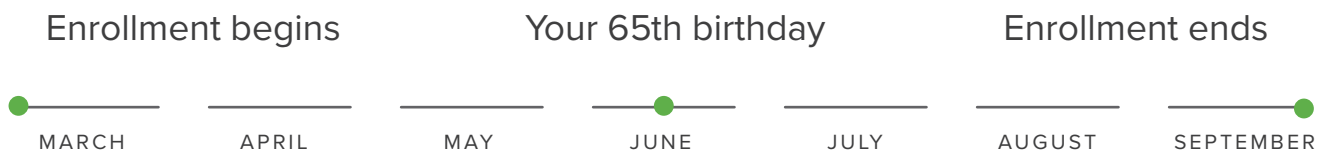
1. Apply online at [www.ssa.gov/retireonline](http://www.ssa.gov/retireonline)
2. Visit your local Social Security office
3. Call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213
4. If you are currently enrolled in Part A and want to enroll in Part B, you will need to complete an Application for Enrollment in Medicare Part B form (CMS-40B). Download the form [here](#).

## When do I enroll?

Upon becoming eligible for Medicare, you have 7 months to sign up for Part A and/or Part B; this is called the initial enrollment period. If your Medicare eligibility begins when you turn 65, you can sign up during the 7-month initial enrollment period which begins 3 months before the month you turn 65, includes the month you turn 65, and ends 3 months after the month you turn 65.

### EXAMPLE

#### Initial enrollment period at age 65



If you are eligible for Medicare or approaching the age of 65, a free consultation with one of our agents can help you determine important next steps.

**Call us today to discuss your options. 833.830.2386**

# | Enrolling in Medicare

## What happens if I miss my enrollment period?

If you do not fully understand your Medicare options and enrollment periods, and you choose the wrong plan or do not enroll, you may find yourself incurring significant out-of-pocket expenses.

### Medicare Part B late enrollment penalty

If you do not enroll in Part B when initially eligible, once you do enroll your monthly premium may have increased by 10% for each 12-month period in which you were eligible but not enrolled. This penalty will continue to increase for the length of time that you are not enrolled in Part B. However, you may not pay this penalty if you are eligible to enroll in Part B during a “Special Enrollment Period.” For example, if you are actively employed when you turn 65, you may be granted a “Special Enrollment Period” upon retirement from your employment.

### Medicare Part D late enrollment penalty

If you do not enroll in Part D when initially eligible, and you are without Part D or equivalent coverage for 63 or more days in a row, you will be subject to a monthly penalty added to your premium. This monthly penalty is calculated by taking 1% of the national base beneficiary premium (\$38.99 in 2026) and multiplying it by the number of months you were not enrolled in Part D.



**In most cases, if you enroll late in Part B or Part D, you will have to pay a penalty each time you pay your premiums, for as long as you are enrolled.**

## | Working with us

We provide Medicare-focused insurance services, including personal guidance and enrollment support to any individual who is eligible to receive Medicare. We help eligible individuals choose an ideal Medicare plan that will meet their individual medical and financial needs.

**When you work with us, our experienced licensed insurance agents support you through the entire process.**

- 1.** We work with you to understand your needs.
- 2.** We keep you informed of your responsibilities during the enrollment period to avoid penalties.
- 3.** We compare supplemental plans from a broad number of well-known insurance carriers who serve your region and only place policies with A-rate carriers.
- 4.** We check to see which physicians and prescription drugs are in-network and covered.
- 5.** Once the ideal supplemental coverage plan is identified, we will complete the enrollment application with you.
- 6.** Best of all, there is no cost to you for our services. Our agents are compensated on a commission basis from the private carriers who are offering the additional Medicare products.



If you are eligible for Medicare or approaching the age of 65, a free consultation with one of our agents can help you determine important next steps.

**Call us today to discuss your options. 833.830.2386**

*We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all your options.*