

MEDICARE COVERAGE

PART A – HOSPITAL COVERAGE

- Covers most inpatient hospital expenses
- 2019 Deductible = \$1,364

PART B – MEDICAL INSURANCE

- Covers 80% doctor bills & other
- Helps pay for services from doctors and other health care providers, outpatient care, home health care, durable medical equipment, and some preventive services.
- 2019 Standard monthly premium = \$135.50

ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE PART A

- Individuals with 40 credits under Social Security
- Individuals who do not have 40 credits but are a spouse, ex-spouse, widow/widower of a worker who has 40 credits
- “Non-covered” employees who paid into Medicare only for 10 years (1.45% of F.I.C.A. taxes)

****ANYONE CAN PURCHASE PART B**

ENROLLMENT PERIODS:

1. INITIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD:

- This is your “age 65 window”
- File 3 months prior to your 65th birthday month to be effective the first day of the month you turn 65.
- This applies to those not working with an active employer plan at 65 and/or those not covered under a spouse’s active plan at 65.

2. SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD:

- An “active” employee or spouse of an employee covered by employer group health plan will remain on the employer plan as “primary” beyond age 65, in most cases
- This enrollment does not hold a penalty for filing after age 65.
- There is no lapse in coverage from “active” to “retiree” status.
- The employer is asked to complete a form (L564) to verify the active coverage dates. The individual signs a Part B enrollment form (HCFA 40B)
- Part B should be initiated 2-3 months before the date of change from active to retiree so that coverage will be in place timely.
- *If you are not on Part A at the time of retirement, you will need to file for both Parts A and B by completing the full application with SSA*

3. GENERAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD:

- A “GEP” occurs each January through March for individuals who missed an initial or special enrollment. The coverage begins July 1st of the year of enrollment.
- A penalty of 10% is imposed for each year the person should have applied for Part B, but did not.

- The penalty is added to the base premium for that year and remains for life!

WHAT IF...?

1. *I retired from MA public service before age 65 and carry my health insurance as a retiree. I am approaching age 65...*
 - You must file for both Part A and B within 3 months of your 65th birthday month. Medicare is effective on the first day of the month you turn 65.
 - You'll be billed quarterly until you begin to receive Social Security payments.
 - If you are **already collecting Social Security when you are 65, Medicare is automatic** and Social Security will notify you about 4 months before your 65th birthday.
2. *I am approaching age 65 and will continue to work beyond age 65 and have coverage under an employer group plan...*
 - Your active plan is primary and Medicare is not needed until you retire.
 - If you do nothing with Medicare, you will not be penalized. You **can** (but are not required) to sign up for Part A only. It will not interfere with your active coverage.
 - Your employer will verify your active coverage with you retire and apply for Medicare.
 - This applies to spouses covered under the active plan
3. *I am over 65, my active plan is ending and I have Part A only...*
About 3 months before you or your spouse retires, request the "Special Enrollment" forms from Social Security.
4. *I am over 65, my active plan is ending and I never signed up for Part A or B...*
 - You must complete an application for Medicare. File it online in 8 minutes or less or call Social Security and make a phone appointment to file.
 - **Filing 2-3 months before retirement will effectuate Medicare the first month of retiree status and there will be no lapse in coverage and no penalty.**

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- File for retirement benefits about 3 months before you want to begin collecting
- If you are already retired from public service and are not yet receiving Social Security benefits, file for Medicare Parts A and B 3 months before your 65th birthday.
- If you work past "full retirement age," you must contact your local Social Security office about 3 months before you retire to provide proof of your public pension and apply for Part A and/or Part B.
- Web pages to note:
 - "WEP" and "GPO" – <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/planners/retire/gpo-wep.html>
 - GPO reporting form - <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/forms/ssa-3885pdf>
 - WEP reporting form - <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/forms/ssa-150pdf>
 - Medicare Part B forms for working past age 65: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/forms>