

Medicare Basics

Medicare is a health insurance program managed by the Federal Government and is supported by taxes you pay during your working years. The Federal Agency in charge of the Medicare program is the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, also referred to as "CMS". The Original Medicare program consists of Part A, Part B, and eff. Jan.1, 2006 Part D became available.

Basic Info	Medicare Part A = (Hospital Insurance)	Medicare Part B = (Medical Insurance)	Medicare Part D = (Prescription Drug Ins)
Type of Charges Covered	Inpatient Hospital Charges	Medically Necessary Doctor's Services Outpatient Care Medical Equipment/Supplies Certain Home Health Services	Prescription Drugs - Rx
Eligibility	You become eligible for Medicare on the first day of the month in which you turn 65 years of age. You may be eligible for Medicare at an earlier age if you have permanent kidney failure or have certain disabilities.		
How to Enroll	Enrollment is handled through your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office . More info may be found @ www.ssa.gov or contact your local office by calling 1-800-772-1213 (TTY: 1-800-325-0775)		Medicare is contracting with private insurance companies for Part D coverage. Enrollment is handled directly thru each individual company. More information may be found @ www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE.
When to Enroll	Contact your local Social Security office 60 days before your 65th birthday, if you do not automatically receive information in the mail.	Contact your local Social Security office 60-90 days prior to retirement. If you do not enroll in Part B when you first become eligible, you may have to pay an additional 10% penalty as long as you continue Part B coverage. (Except in Special Enrollment cases. Contact Medicare for more info.)	Your application with the Medicare D carrier of your choice should be completed 60-90 days prior to retirement. If you do not enroll when you first become eligible, you may have to pay an additional 1% penalty for every month you did not enroll. (Contact Medicare for more info on Special Enrollment cases.)
Cost	Most participants do not pay additional premiums for Part A coverage, because when they, or a spouse were working, they paid Medicare taxes.	Beginning January 1, 2007- Part B premiums will be based on your income. Contact Medicare directly for your specific premiums.	Costs vary per insurance company. All drug plans must provide coverage that is "as good or better" than Standard Part D coverage. Some plans may offer more coverage & additional drugs at a higher monthly premium.

Detailed information may be found in the *Medicare & You* handbook by contacting Medicare @ 1-800-MEDICARE. or visit www.medicare.gov/medicare-and-you/medicare-and-you.html