

Medicare, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) & Work (Massachusetts)

Fact Sheet 2023

What is Medicare?

Medicare is a four-part federal health insurance program that provides coverage for individuals age 65 or older; under age 65 who have a disability and have received 24 months of SSDI; or of any age with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) (requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant), or Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease).

What are the 4 parts of Medicare?

Part A (Hospital Insurance) helps cover inpatient hospital care, some skilled nursing facility care, hospice care, and limited home healthcare. It is premium free for most people, but copays and deductibles apply.

Part B (Medical Insurance) helps pay for doctor visits, outpatient care, some preventive services, and other care not covered by Part A, e.g., durable medical equipment, physical and occupational therapy, speech-language pathology services. There is a monthly premium for Part B (\$164.90 in 2023); Part B also has copays and deductibles.

Does help exist to pay for Medicare Part B?

Yes. MassHealth (Massachusetts' Medicaid program) will cover this premium if an SSDI beneficiary qualifies for either MassHealth Standard, or CommonHealth (Medicaid Buy-In program) with income/assets as follows:

	Income at or below	Assets at or below
Single Individual	\$2,005/month	\$18,180
Married couple	\$2,712/month	\$27,260

Other beneficiaries may pay a higher premium, due to having a higher adjusted gross income. Premiums are usually deducted automatically from monthly SSDI cash benefits, or it can be paid by the beneficiary. If you feel you might be eligible for the MassHealth Buy-in program, contact MassHealth at 1-800-841-2900.

Part C (Medicare Advantage Plans) is optional coverage for Medicare beneficiaries who have Parts A and B. It provides supplemental coverage through Medicare approved private insurance companies, e.g., Health Maintenance Organizations--HMOs and Preferred Provider Organizations--PPOs. These plans must offer the same coverage as original Medicare, but are also permitted to offer additional benefits, such as dental and vision care. Usually, there is an additional cost for Part C coverage.

PART D (Prescription Drug Plan) provides prescription drug benefits through various private insurance companies. Monthly premiums apply. Coverage and premium amounts vary by state, by company, and by the amount of coverage offered. If an SSDI beneficiary is enrolled in a Part D Benchmark Plan and receives MassHealth, they may be entitled to full or partial help with their Part D premiums, deductibles and copays.

Extended Period of Medicare Coverage

If an SSDI beneficiary begins working and earns enough to begin their Trial Work Period (TWP), their Medicare will be preserved throughout their TWP. After the TWP ends, Medicare will continue for at least another 93 months. This is due to a special work incentive called the Extended Period of Medicare Coverage (EPMC).

Note: EPMC will continue as long as SSDI beneficiaries pay their Medicare premiums and meet Social Security's disability standards. Social

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Security is the only agency that can give a definitive date of when Medicare eligibility will stop. Contact your local Social Security office shortly after TWP ends, for more information.

Other Public Health Insurance Resources:

Health Care for All: This is a Massachusetts nonprofit advocacy organization. It works to create a healthcare system that provides comprehensive, affordable, accessible, and culturally competent care to everyone. (Phone number: 1-800-272-4232)

SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of Everyone): This is a state health insurance assistance program for Massachusetts residents with Medicare, and their caregivers. It provides free health insurance information, counseling and assistance. To schedule an appointment with a counselor call: 1-800-243-4636, or contact the Regional SHINE Program Office or senior center at: [SHINE Directory](#)

Medicare Advocacy Project (MAP): This is a project that operates from Legal Aid offices across Massachusetts. They assist elders and persons with disabilities to obtain Medicare and Medicare-related health insurance coverage. MAP represents Medicare beneficiaries with individual issues, and in groups, to address policy issues. The following programs provide MAP services:

Community Legal Aid

Toll Free: 1-855-252-5342 or [Community Legal Aid Online](#)

Greater Boston Legal Services

197 Friend Street
Boston, MA 02114
Toll Free: 1-800-323-3205

South Coastal Counties Legal Service

Toll Free: 1-800-244-9023

Medicare Contact Information:

1-800-633-4227 or visit www.medicare.gov/

For more information about

Work Without Limits Benefits Counseling

call toll-free

1-877-YES-WORK
(1-877-937-9675)

or visit

workwithoutlimits.org