

INSURANCE MATTERS

A Newsletter for Delawareans

September 2024



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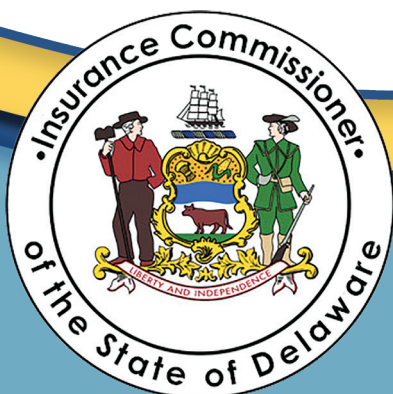
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Medicare was never intended to pay 100% of medical bills. It forms the foundation for beneficiaries' protection against heavy medical expenses. There are "gaps" in Medicare coverage where the beneficiary must pay a portion of expenses. Medicare supplement insurance, also called Medigap, can help cover these expenses. The Delaware Insurance Department regulates this type of plan.

What is Medicare?

Medicare is a Federal health insurance program for people 65 years of age or older, people of any age with permanent kidney failure, and certain disabled people under age 65. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services manages Medicare.

To find out more about
Medicare
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MEDICARE

Part A — Hospital coverage

Part B — Medical coverage

Part C — Medicare Advantage

Part D — Prescription drugs

MEDICARE IS SEPARATED INTO 4 PARTS

Part A - Hospital insurance

Medicare Part A helps pay for medically necessary care in the following areas: inpatient hospital care; inpatient stays in a skilled nursing facility following a hospital stay (not custodial or long-term care); home health care services; hospice care and blood. Limitations exist on the number of hospital or skilled-nursing facility care days Medicare helps pay for in a benefit period. Most people do not pay a premium for this coverage – it is generally covered by the federal government.

Part C - Medicare Advantage Plans

Medicare Advantage Plans are health plan options that are approved by Medicare and run by private companies. The Department of Insurance has no jurisdiction over these health plans. These plans are part of Medicare and sometimes called “Part C.” They provide all of your Part A and Part B covered services. Medicare Advantage Plans provide Medicare covered benefits to Medicare members through the plan and may offer prescription drug benefits as well as extra benefits that Medicare doesn't cover, such as vision or dental services. If you join one of these plans, you generally get all your Medicare-covered health through the plan and will use the health care card that you receive from your Medicare Advantage Plan. You may need a referral to see a specialist. In some plans, you can only see doctors who belong to the plan or go to certain hospitals to get covered services. If you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you don't need a Medigap policy because they cover many of the same benefits.

Part B - Medical insurance

Medicare Part B includes doctors' services; outpatient hospital services; emergency room care; diagnostic tests; durable medical equipment; ambulance services; and many other services and supplies not covered by Medicare Part A. Medicare Part B has a monthly premium. In 2024, most people will pay the standard monthly Part B premium of 174.70. If you file an individual tax return and your annual income is greater than \$103,000, or if you are married filing a joint tax return and your annual income is greater than \$206,000 you will pay a higher Part B premium on your modified adjusted gross income. If you have group insurance, check with your employer to see if you are required to select Part B. Your group benefits may be reduced if you do not enroll in Part B when you are eligible.

Part D - Medicare prescription drug coverage

Medicare offers prescription drug coverage (Part D) for everyone with Medicare. This coverage may help you lower your prescription drug costs and help you protect against higher costs in the future. It can give you greater access to drugs that you can use to prevent complications of diseases and stay well. To get Medicare drug coverage, you must join a plan run by an insurance company or other private company approved by Medicare. Each plan can vary in cost and drugs covered. If you join a Medicare drug plan, you usually pay a monthly premium. If you decide not to join a Medicare drug plan when you are first eligible, you may pay a penalty if you choose to join later. If you have limited income and resources, you might qualify for extra help paying your Part D costs. For more information about extra help with prescription drug costs and how to apply, call DMAB at (302) 674-7364.

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH



National Preparedness Month, observed each September in the U.S., serves as a vital reminder of the importance of being prepared for emergencies and disasters. Initiated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2004, the campaign encourages individuals, families, and communities to take proactive steps in readiness for natural disasters, pandemics, and other emergencies.

The theme for National Preparedness Month varies each year, but the central message remains consistent: preparedness saves lives. The month-long effort promotes activities such as creating emergency kits, developing family communication plans, and staying informed about local risks. Whether it's a hurricane, wildfire, flood, or man-made disaster, having a plan in place can make all the difference.

Ultimately, National Preparedness Month aims to build a culture of preparedness in which individuals take responsibility for their safety, and communities work together to respond to and recover from emergencies. By taking small steps now, we can help ensure our safety and resilience in the face of future disasters.

Form an Emergency Plan

- Prepare a go-bag. Pack a go-bag ahead of time, so you're ready to leave quickly. Include medicine, water, important documents, and a change of clothes.
- Create an evacuation plan. Make sure you know the safest and quickest ways to leave your area if a hurricane hits. Many states have designated evacuation zones. Learn your state and local plans by visiting your state and county emergency management websites. Save a list of nearby shelters in case cell service is down. Pick a friend or family member who lives in another area as an emergency contact and check in with them to confirm you are safe or if you get separated from your family and lose communication. Some social media platforms also have a "confirmed safe" feature in case of a natural disaster or other emergency event.
- Stay informed. Learn the different warning signals issued by the Emergency Alert System. FEMA also provides real-time alerts from the National Weather Service. Download the FEMA app and get alerts for up to five locations nationwide.

ASK THE COMMISSIONER

Understanding Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation is a form of insurance designed to provide financial protection for employees who suffer work-related injuries or illnesses. This system ensures that injured workers receive medical treatment and wage replacement benefits, while employers are shielded from lawsuits related to workplace accidents.

Workers' compensation typically covers a wide range of work-related injuries, from sudden accidents like falls and equipment malfunctions to chronic conditions caused by repetitive stress. It also compensates families in cases where a workplace injury results in the death of a worker.

One of the key components of workers' compensation is its "no-fault" nature. Employees receive benefits regardless of who was responsible for the injury—whether the worker or employer was at fault is irrelevant. In exchange, workers generally give up the right to sue their employers for negligence.

Workers' compensation serves as an essential safety net in the workplace, ensuring that employees are cared for after an injury, while also helping employers maintain a healthy, productive workforce.



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The consumer comes first.

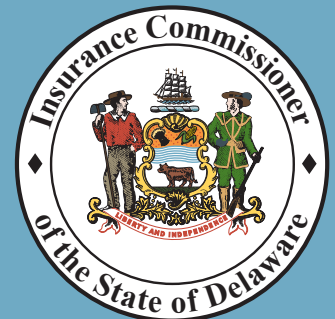
Our office is here to help if you have questions about or problems with your insurance coverage or insurance company.

Questions about insurance or complaints about an insurance company or insurance agent can be made to the Consumer Services Division by phone, by fax, by letter, by email or with an online complaint form.

Phone: 302-674-7300

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consumer@delaware.gov



Our Mission

Protecting Delawareans through regulation and education while providing oversight of the insurance industry to best serve the public.