



SHIP

State Health Insurance
Assistance Program

Navigating Medicare

ASK SHIP

YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

June, 2024

Q: I turn 65 in September, but I am actively working and covered by my employer's health insurance plan. Do I need to enroll in Medicare? I don't want to have a penalty for enrolling in Medicare late.

A: If you have health insurance from an employer, whether through your own active employment or through your spouse who is actively working, you will have an 8-month Special Enrollment Period to sign up for Part B when your employer insurance ends.

You may enroll in Medicare Part A when you turn 65, even if you have health insurance from an employer. For most people, Part A has no premium. However, your or your spouse's employer coverage will be primary as long as you or your spouse are actively working. So you don't need to enroll in Medicare and won't have a penalty.

You would want to consider delaying Medicare Part A until a later date if you are contributing to a Health Savings Account (HSA) or have to pay a premium for Part A. Keep in

mind, once you enroll in any part of Medicare, you won't be able to contribute to your Health Savings Account (HSA), if you have one. There are special rules for contributing to an HSA when you turn age 65.

You will NOT pay a penalty for delaying Part A, as long as you enroll within 8 months of losing your employer coverage or stopping work (whichever happens first).

Most people need to enroll in Part B when they turn 65. Only people who have health insurance from their (or their spouse's) current employer may be able to delay enrolling in Part B.

You can delay Part B until you (or your spouse) stop working or lose that employer coverage. This allows you to save the cost of your Part B premium.

When you or your spouse do stop working, you will have a guarantee of enrollment in original Medicare Parts A and B and Part D prescription coverage. It also allows you to use your one-time "Medigap" open enrollment period if you want to purchase this type of coverage. Or you can choose a

Medicare Advantage Plan with Part D prescription coverage.

You'll want to plan ahead and enroll in Part B at least a month before you stop working or your employer coverage ends, so you don't have a gap in coverage. It helps to start thinking about your Medicare choices about three months before you or your spouse retires.

If you miss your 8-month Special Enrollment Period when your employer coverage ends, you'll have to wait to sign up and go months without coverage. You might also pay a monthly penalty for as long as you don't have Part B and Part D. The penalty goes up the longer you wait to sign up.

If you have questions related to Medicare, call SHIP at (800) 452-4800 or find us online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find SHIP on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.