

Important Notice About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

PEEHIP elected to continue providing prescription drug benefits to Medicare-eligible retirees and covered dependents even when these members are eligible for the Medicare Part D program. However, if a Medicare-eligible member or dependent chooses to enroll in the Medicare Part D program, he or she will lose the PEEHIP prescription drug coverage.

Medicare-eligible members and dependents still need Medicare Part A and Part B but not Part D. Most Medicare-eligible members and dependents should not enroll in Medicare Part D if they are covered by the PEEHIP Medicare Plus program.

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with PEEHIP and about your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan or keep your PEEHIP drug coverage. If you are considering joining a Medicare drug plan, you should compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice.

There are two important things you need to know about your current coverage and Medicare's prescription drug coverage:

1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.
2. PEEHIP has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the PEEHIP is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing PEEHIP coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.

When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from November 15 through December 31.

However, if you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.

What Happens To Your Current PEEHIP Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your PEEHIP drug plan, your current PEEHIP drug coverage will terminate on the date that you enroll in a Medicare drug plan. Please be aware that you and your covered dependents will lose the PEEHIP drug coverage and you will not be able to get this coverage back until you drop the Medicare Part D coverage. You cannot have PEEHIP prescription drug coverage and Part D coverage at the same time.

If you enroll in a Medicare drug plan, you and your dependents will still be eligible for your current PEEHIP **health** benefits but will have no **prescription drug** coverage under PEEHIP.

When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You should also know that if you drop or lose your current coverage with PEEHIP and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a Medicare drug plan later.

If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base beneficiary premium. You may have to pay this higher premium (a penalty) as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following November to join.

For More Information About This Notice Or Your Current Prescription Drug Coverage...

Contact the PEEHIP office at 877-517-0020 for further information. NOTE: You will receive this notice each year and you may request a copy of this notice at any time.

For More Information About Your Options Under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage...

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the "Medicare & You" handbook. You will get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit www.medicare.gov
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of your copy of the "Medicare & You" handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help
- Call 800-MEDICARE (800.633.4227). TTY users should call 877.486.2048.

An exception may apply to certain "low-income" individuals who may be eligible for prescription drug subsidies, and thus may be better off applying for a subsidy and Part D (two separate steps). For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at www.socialsecurity.gov, or call them at 800.772.1213 TTY 800.325.0778).

Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you decide to join one of the Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show whether or not you have maintained creditable coverage and, therefore, whether or not you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).