



MEDICARE can be complicated for those older Americans working beyond age 65, as well as for those planning to retire. The social workers at Community Partnership on Aging are able to assist with navigation of these benefits. Additional support and information can be found by calling the Ohio Senior Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) at 800-686-2578. The information below provides a framework for understanding these benefits.

If you have current employer insurance and are age 65+, your health insurance may be provided through a Group Health Plan (GHP). The following rules apply:

- Medicare pays primary if GHP is from a company with fewer than 20 employees.
- Medicare pays secondary if GHP is from a company with more than 20 employees.

If your employer plan pays secondary, **you should sign up for Medicare** during your initial enrollment period (up to 3 months prior to your 65th birthday month, during your birth month, or up to 3 months afterwards).

Before delaying Part A and/or Part B enrollment, you should know whether you will face delays, gaps in coverage, and/or penalties if you sign up later.

- If you are covered by your current employer insurance you can delay Medicare enrollment and use a Part B **Special Enrollment Period (SEP)** to enroll later.
- If you do not qualify for premium-free Part A (most people do), you can use this SEP to enroll in premium Part A, as well.

Before delaying Part D enrollment, you should know whether you will have a Special Enrollment Period.

- If you are covered by creditable prescription drug coverage, you have a SEP to sign up for Part D **up to two full months** after losing employer provided prescription drug coverage.



You also should know whether you will have a **Late Enrollment Penalty (LEP)** for delayed enrollment.

- You will not have a LEP as long as you were covered by creditable drug coverage while eligible for Part D. **Your employer must provide written notice that your drug coverage is creditable.**
- If you delay Part D enrollment and are not covered by creditable drug coverage, you likely will have a Part D LEP.
- The Part B penalty is 10% for each 12-month period that a you are not enrolled, whereas the Part D penalty is 1% for each month that you are not enrolled. These penalties exist as long as you have Medicare.
- You should keep records of health insurance coverage as you may need documentation in order to sign up for Medicare later.

For retirees

- Retiree coverage pays secondary to Medicare
 - If you delay Medicare enrollment while covered by retiree insurance, you will not have an SEP to enroll in Medicare at a later time.
 - If you receive retiree drug coverage, you will have a SEP to enroll at later time. And, if that drug coverage is creditable, you will not have a LEP.

Public and Federal employees have different rules and provide counselors to help members navigate their benefits and make sound retirement decisions. Utilize those resources when available. If you would like to speak to a CPA Social Worker, call 440-442-2628 (leave a message if they do not answer).

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