

ENROLLMENT PERIODS

Medicare enrollment periods include an Initial Enrollment Period, Annual Open Enrollment, General Enrollment Period, and Special Enrollment Periods. It's important to understand each period's specific dates and conditions to ensure timely enrollment and avoid potential late enrollment penalties.

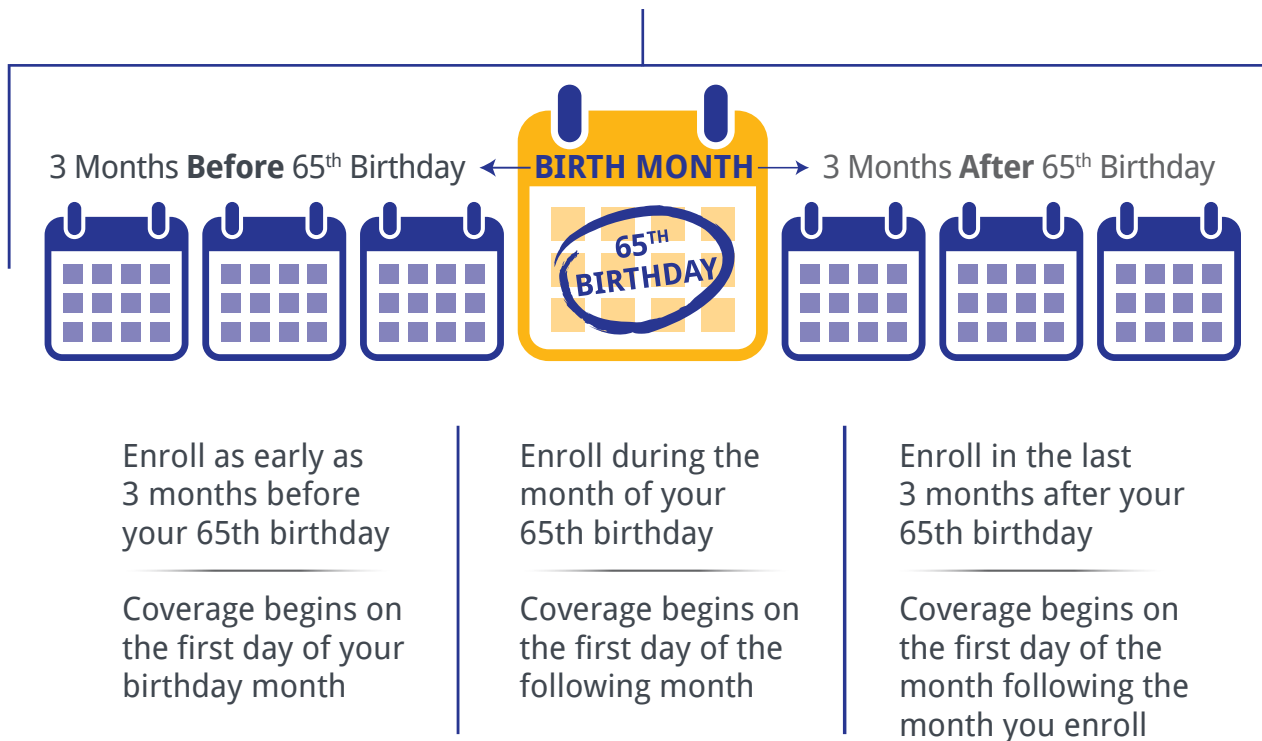
Initial Enrollment

When you first become eligible for Medicare, you can sign up for Part A and/or Part B during a 7-month Initial Enrollment Period (IEP). The IEP begins 3 months before you turn 65 and ends 3 months after you turn 65. During this time, you can choose to enroll in Original Medicare with or without Part D or a Medicare Advantage plan. If you are under age 65 and newly eligible for Medicare due to a disability, you also have a 7-month IEP to select your

Medicare coverage. This initial enrollment begins 3 months before the 25th month of receiving Social Security Disability or Railroad Benefits and ends 3 months after your 25th month of receiving benefits.

If you sign up for Medicare in the first 3 months of your eligibility, your coverage will start on the first day of the month you turn 65. If you sign up during the month you turn 65, your coverage begins on the first day of the following month. If you enroll in Medicare

7-Month Long Initial Election Period (IEP)





during the last three months of your Initial Enrollment Period, your Medicare coverage will start the first day of the month following the month you enroll.

If you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan during your IEP, you have the option to switch to another Medicare Advantage plan (with or without drug coverage) or switch back to Original Medicare (with or without a drug plan) within the first 3 months of having Medicare Part A and Part B.

Annual Open Enrollment

Medicare's Open Enrollment period takes place from October 15 to December 7. During this time, you can make changes to your Medicare coverage. This is a good opportunity to review your current plan to see if there is a better option for you, especially if your health needs have changed over the past year. Any changes you make to your Medicare coverage during this enrollment period will go into effect on January 1 of the following year.

During this enrollment period, you can:

- Switch from Original Medicare to an Advantage Plan
- Switch back to Original Medicare from an Advantage Plan
- Change your Medicare Advantage Plan to a different Advantage Plan
- Join, change, or drop your Part D Plan

General Enrollment Period

This annual Open Enrollment runs from January 1 to March 31. During this time, you can sign up for Medicare Part A and/or Part B, only if you didn't sign up when you were first eligible and if you're not eligible for a Special Enrollment Period.

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period

A yearly Open Enrollment Period takes place from January 1 to March 31 only if you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan. Your Medicare coverage will start on the first day of the month after you sign up.

If you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan you can:

- Switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan
- Switch to Original Medicare and join a Part D Plan

During this enrollment period, you are unable to switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan or join or

switch your Medicare Drug Plan if you are in Original Medicare.

Special Enrollment Periods

Special circumstances may allow you to enroll in Medicare under a Special Enrollment Period (SEP). If you did not join Medicare Part A and/or B during your initial enrollment because you had employer-based coverage through yourself or your spouse's employer, you will qualify for a SEP when you decide to enroll in Part A and/or Part B.

You can use your SEP to enroll in Original Medicare at any time while you're covered under employer-based insurance or during the 8-month enrollment period that you have after your employer-based coverage ends.

If you do not enroll during this 8-month Special Enrollment Period, your next chance to enroll will be during the next General Enrollment Period.

You may be eligible for a SEP for other reasons, such as a recent move, and will be able to switch to a new Medicare Advantage Plan or Prescription Drug Plan.

The timeframe for the SEP and the effective date of your new coverage will vary depending on the circumstances that qualified you for a SEP. If you decide not to enroll in Medicare during your Initial Enrollment Period and do not meet any of the certain conditions for a SEP, you may have to pay a Late Enrollment Penalty.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES FOR A SEP

- Losing your current health insurance coverage (including Medicaid)
- You choose to leave your employer-sponsored or union plan (including COBRA)
- Your current plan changes its contract with Medicare
- You receive a notice of error from Medicare for your plan
- A government-declared disaster or emergency
- Your employer or group health plan made an error or misrepresented your coverage
- You were formerly incarcerated and missed your Initial Enrollment Period, or you were enrolled in Medicare before you were incarcerated and stopped paying premiums

Plus others, found here: www.medicare.gov/basics/get-started-with-medicare/get-more-coverage/joining-a-plan/special-enrollment-periods

Late Enrollment Penalties

Part A Late Enrollment Penalty

If you need to purchase Medicare Part A because you do not qualify for a premium-free plan or did not enroll during your Initial Enrollment Period, your monthly premium may increase by 10% for double the number of years you didn't have Part A.



EXAMPLE: If you could have had Part A coverage for three years but did not enroll (and did not qualify for a SEP), you will pay 10% more than the usual cost, each year for a total of six years.

Part B Late Enrollment Penalty

If you did not enroll in Medicare Part B during your Initial Enrollment Period, your penalty will increase by 10% for each full year you continue without Part B coverage. This penalty will last for as long as you have Medicare Part B.



EXAMPLE: If you could have had Part B coverage for three years but did not enroll (and did not qualify for a SEP) you will pay an extra 30% fee when you do sign up, for as long as you are enrolled.

Part D Late Enrollment Penalty

If you go 63 days or more after your Initial Enrollment Period without Part D or other creditable drug coverage (like a prescription plan through your employer or a spouse's employer), you will be penalized for late enrollment. The Late Enrollment Penalty dollar amount will depend on how long you go without Part D or other drug coverage and will usually last for as long as you have Medicare drug coverage. The penalty amount is 1% of the national average of the premium for Part D plans (called the national beneficiary base premium) times the number of full, uncovered months you did not have Part D or other creditable drug coverage. The monthly premium is rounded to the nearest \$.10 and added to your monthly Part D premium. The national beneficiary base premium can change by year, which will affect the penalty amount you pay.



EXAMPLE: In 2023, if you were eligible for Medicare but waited three years to join a Medicare drug plan (and did not have other drug coverage) you would pay an additional 36% penalty for your plan's monthly premium.