



Medicare Open Enrollment October 15-December 7

Medicare Open Enrollment for 2026 plans begins on Wednesday, October 15 and ends on Sunday, December 7. Do you need help changing or enrolling in a Medicare Part D Prescription Plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan for 2025?

If you have Medicare and are planning to join a plan or change your current plan:

You can compare plans on your own by visiting Medicare.gov and selecting the tab: Find Health and Drug Plans. You can also personalize your experience by setting up your own Medicare account on Medicare.gov and following the links to view plans based on your prescription drug costs.

You can also contact North Carolina SHIP (Seniors' Health and Insurance Information Program). The SHIP staff offer unbiased assistance in selecting either a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Part C Medicare Advantage Plan. The number to call for help is 1-855-408-1212. Before calling, make sure you have your current list of prescription medications and your Medicare Card information. You can also visit their website for helpful Medicare information at: <https://www.ncdoi.gov/consumers/medicare-and-seniors-health-insurance-information-program-ship>

Additionally, individuals can request help locally at either the McDowell Senior Center in Marion or the A.C. Bud Hogan Community Building in Old Fort by filling out and turning in a SHIP Medicare Form (available at both locations) and one of our SHIP trained staff and volunteers will contact you about the information provided and may set up an in-person or virtual appointment to discuss your options.

You can also call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to request assistance with Medicare plans. Before calling, make sure you have your current list of prescription medications and your Medicare Card information.

A Medicare beneficiary may also be able to save money on their prescription drug plan and prescription drug costs if they meet certain financial criteria. If your gross monthly income before any deductions is less than \$1,956.00 (single individual) or \$2,644.00 (married couple) and you have assets of less than \$17,600.00 (single individual) or \$35,130.00 (married couple) in savings, stocks, IRA accounts, or additional property other than your home, you may be eligible to apply for the Medicare Part D Extra Help Program through Social Security. You can apply online at ssa.gov under the Medicare tab or by calling Social Security at 1-800-772-1213, by calling the NC SHIP hotline at 1-855-408-1212, or by completing the Medicare Pre-Enrollment Form at either of our Senior Centers and one of our trained SHIP volunteers will assist you with applying.