MEDICARE PART D

Important Notice from Contra Costa Community College District About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

This notice is to all employees, retirees and COBRA participants who are Medicare-eligible and on a District medical plan. If you are not Medicare-eligible or not on a District medical plan you may ignore this notice. This notice is to inform Medicare-eligible employees, retirees and COBRA participants that your current prescription drug benefit program through Contra Costa Community College District provides “creditable coverage,” as defined below and to let you know that if you ever lose your current District prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will then be eligible for a two-month special enrollment period to enroll in a Part D plan. It also includes answers to questions you may have regarding your current prescription drug program and how it relates to Medicare Part D coverage.

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with Contra Costa Community College District 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. If you are considering joining, 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. Contra Costa Community College District has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by our Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage and Anthem Medicare Preferred PPO plans are, 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 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.

**THIS IS YOUR NOTICE OF CREDIBLE COVERAGE.** Be sure to read it carefully and keep it in a safe place where you can find it. If you lose this notice and need another copy, please call Reed Rawlinson at 925-229-6853, or request a copy in writing from Reed Rawlinson, 500 Court Street, Martinez, CA 94553. Updated versions of this notice will be sent annually and you will be informed if the District ever loses its creditable coverage status.

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 October 15th through December 7th.

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 Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

If you decide to join a Medicare drug plan, your Contra Costa Community College District coverage will not be affected. See below for more information about what happens to your current coverage if you join a Medicare drug plan.

Since the existing prescription drug coverage under Contra Costa Community College District is creditable (e.g., as good as Medicare coverage), you can retain your existing prescription drug coverage and choose not to enroll in a Part D plan; or you can enroll in a Part D plan as a supplement to, or in lieu of, your existing prescription drug coverage.

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your Contra Costa Community College District prescription drug coverage, be aware that you and your dependents may not be able to get this coverage back.

For more in-depth information on your benefits, please visit [www.4cd.edu/hr/benefits](http://www.4cd.edu/hr/benefits)
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 Contra Costa Community College District 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 October to join.

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

Contact the office listed below for further information. NOTE: You’ll get this notice each year. You will also get it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, and if this coverage through Contra Costa Community College District changes. You also 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’ll 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 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 or (800) 633-4227. TTY users should call (877) 486-2048.

If you have limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. 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).

Date: December 1, 2021

Plan Sponsor: Contra Costa Community College District

Administrator: Gene Huff

Address: 500 Court Street, Martinez, CA 94553

Telephone: If you have questions, please contact Reed Rawlinson at 925-229-6853.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON MEDICARE PART D

If I am a retired District participant with Kaiser Senior Advantage or the Anthem Medicare Preferred PPO plan, do I need to do anything now?

If you stay with one of the District’s sponsored Medicare plans, no action is required. You cannot be enrolled in more than one Part D plan at a time, so if you attempt to sign up with another Part D provider you risk being disenrolled from your medical and drug coverage.

If I am an active District participant, or a retired participant not with Kaiser Senior Advantage or the Anthem Medicare Preferred PPO plan, do I need to do anything now?

No, you can keep using the District’s prescription drug program the same as you always have. Your copayments will not change, nor will any pharmacy network.

When you first become eligible for Medicare, you will have the option to independently enroll in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. However, by enrolling in a Part D plan you will permanently lose your current prescription drug coverage under the Contra Costa Community College District and you will not be reimbursed for your Part D premiums. As mentioned above, the standard Part D benefit is not as good as the District’s own prescription drug program as described in your Health Plan Evidence of Coverage found at www.4cd.edu, select human resources and benefits.

You should compare your current prescription drug program, including which drugs are covered, with the benefits and costs of the Medicare Part D plans available in your area. To view the official summary of approved Medicare Part D plans in any of the United States, visit https://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan/questions/home.aspx. Note that a Part D plan might not include your regular prescription drugs on its formulary. The District cannot provide you with a complete comparison of available Part D plans, but we urge you to carefully review any descriptions you may obtain.

So why do I need to keep my notice of creditable coverage?

In case you ever drop or lose your District coverage, or in the unlikely event that District coverage becomes non-creditable, having this notice will allow you to immediately enroll in a Part D plan without having to pay a late enrollment penalty. Specifically, if you try to enroll after your initial eligibility period, you will be charged a permanent Part D premium surcharge of 1% for every month since your initial Medicare eligibility for which you cannot show that you had creditable coverage (if such non-creditable period exceeds 62 days). Also note that you may have to wait for the next regular annual Part D enrollment period, which will be October 15th through December 7th for coverage in the following calendar year.

How can I get more information on Medicare Part D?

More detail will be in the handbook “Medicare & You” that will be mailed to individuals who are Medicare eligible by Medicare in October of each year. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare-approved Part D providers. At any time you can visit http://www.medicare.gov/ or call 1-800- MEDICAR (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Every state has a Health Insurance Assistance Program to help Medicare beneficiaries and their families with their health insurance choices and with problems that might arise. In California it is called the “Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program” (HICAP) and can be reached (by non-cell phones only) at 1-800-434-0222.

For people with limited income and resources, extra help paying for a Medicare prescription drug plan is available. For more information about this extra help, visit the Social Security Administration website at http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ or call them at 1-800-772-1213. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778.

For more in-depth information on your benefits, please visit www.4cd.edu/hr/benefits