

Annual Medicare Part D Certification Important Information

Applies if you or one of your dependents is on Medicare or becomes covered under Medicare while you remain an active employee.

Medicare offers insurance coverage for prescription drugs through Medicare Part D. Bismarck Public Schools Medical Plan will continue to offer prescription drug coverage as a benefit under these plans for active employees and their covered dependents. Bismarck Public Schools coverage is considered 'creditable coverage', which means Bismarck Public Schools Medical Plans' prescription drug benefits provide coverage at least as good as or better than Medicare Part D. ***If you or one of your dependents is on Medicare or becomes covered under Medicare while you remain an active employee, please print the Certificate of Creditable Coverage, and keep it in your records. This Certificate of Creditable Coverage will allow you and your dependents to join Medicare Part D in the future without paying late enrollment fees.***

During your employment, you have the option to choose to continue your prescription drug coverage through Bismarck Public Schools Medical Plan or to elect Medicare Part D. However, if you choose to elect Medicare Part D, you will not be eligible to participate in Bismarck Public Schools Medical Plan that provide both medical and prescription drug coverage. Please read materials sent to you from Medicare or other Medicare Part D providers carefully before making your decision.

Important Notice from Bismarck Public Schools About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with Bismarck Public Schools 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. Bismarck Public Schools has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the Medical 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.**

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 to 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 current Bismarck Public Schools coverage will not be affected. Your plan offers the following prescription drug coverage for a 1-month supply: 80% coverage after a \$15 copay for Formulary drugs and 50% coverage after a \$15 copay for Non-Formulary drugs. Members may keep this coverage if they elect part D and this plan will coordinate with Part D coverage. See pages 7- 9 of the CMS Disclosure of Creditable Coverage To Medicare Part D Eligible Individuals Guidance (available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CreditableCoverage/>), which outlines the prescription drug plan provisions/options that Medicare eligible individuals may have available to them when they become eligible for Medicare Part D.

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current Bismarck Public Schools coverage, be aware that you and your dependents may be able to get this coverage back.

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 Bismarck Public Schools 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 person 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 Bismarck Public Schools 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 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 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

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 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

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).

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