Cecil County Public Schools
Serving Learners, Families, and the Community

CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES/BENEFITS

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

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can easily locate it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with Cecil County 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 Medicare plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to making your decision about your prescription drug coverage is provided 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. Cecil County Public Schools has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the Cecil County Public School's Retiree Healthcare Plans are, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Since your existing coverage is considered 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 15, to December 7. 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 Cecil County Public School coverage will be affected. Cecil County Public Schools Retiree Healthcare Plan is deemed to be creditable coverage because it:

1. Provides coverage for brand and generic prescriptions;
2. Provides access to retail providers and for mail order coverage;
3. The plan is designed to pay, on average, at least 60% of participants' prescription drug expenses; and:

4. The prescription drug coverage has no annual benefit maximum or a maximum annual benefit payable by the plan of at least $25,000;
5. The integrated medical and prescription plan has no prescription deductible, no annual benefit maximum, and has no lifetime combined benefit maximum.

For individuals who elect Part D coverage, coverage under the Cecil County Public Schools Retiree Health Care Plan will end for the individual and all covered dependents. If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current Cecil County Public Schools coverage, be aware that you and your dependents will not be eligible to reenroll in the coverage.

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 Cecil County 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 October to join.

For More Information about This Notice or Your Current Prescription Drug Coverage
Contact the Benefits Office at Cecil County Public Schools or the Department of Aging at 410-996-8169. NOTE: You will receive this notice each year. You will also receive it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, and if the coverage through Cecil County 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 also may 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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