



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Aging adults, residents with disabilities can get free assistance choosing Medicare coverage

Open enrollment ends Dec. 7

LANSING, Mich. – Aging adults and people with disabilities in Michigan can receive free assistance selecting Medicare coverage, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Aging & Adult Services Agency announced.

Medicare open enrollment runs through Dec. 7. Assistance for residents who are eligible for Medicare – who are age 65 or above or have disabilities – is available from the Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program, which provides access to free, unbiased counseling on health benefits to help make selecting coverage easier.

“Providing easy access to services such as health care coverage is one of MDHHS’s core values,” said Dr. Alexis Travis, senior deputy director at the Aging & Adult Services Agency “We want to make sure all Michiganders know about the services available through the Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program. The program serves 86,593 beneficiaries annually and has the capacity to serve more residents.”

The Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program – working through the Area Agencies on Aging – has provided high-quality and accessible health benefit information and counseling, supported by a statewide network of unpaid and paid skilled professionals, since 1985.

There are over 600 counselors statewide, most of whom are volunteers. They are specialists trained in Medicare and Medicaid law and regulations, health insurance counseling and relevant insurance products. Counselors are not connected with any insurance company, nor are they licensed to sell insurance. Their purpose is to serve residents objectively and confidentially.

Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program counselors helped beneficiaries save more than \$51 million on their health care expenses last year. Counselors can help residents:

- Identify resources for prescription drug assistance.
- Explain Medicare Health Plan options.

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- Understand doctor bills, hospital bills and Medicare summary notices.
- Understand Medicare/Medicaid eligibility, enrollment, coverage, claims and appeals.
- Enroll in Medicare Savings Programs.
- Review Medicare supplemental – “Medigap” – insurance needs, compare policies and pursue claims and refunds.
- Explore long-term care financing options, including long-term care insurance.
- Identify and report Medicare/Medicaid fraud and abuse.

In addition to Medicare open enrollment, MDHHS and the Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) are reminding Michiganders that open enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace runs until Dec. 15. This open enrollment period allows all consumers to evaluate available plans and discounts. Information to get started is available at [Michigan.gov/HealthInsurance](https://michigan.gov/HealthInsurance).

“Health care coverage is critical to health and financial wellbeing, and now is the time for Michiganders to take action to make sure they are covered in 2021,” said DIFS Director Anita Fox. “If you are not sure what programs you are eligible for, there’s no wrong door to get started. At [Michigan.gov/HealthInsurance](https://michigan.gov/HealthInsurance) you will be directed to available plans and discounts, as well as how to contact free local agents or assisters. The best thing you can do to ensure you and your family are protected is to get started today.”

Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program counselors also are available year-round to assist with Medicaid enrollment for people of all ages.

For more information visit <https://mmapinc.org> or call 1-800-803-7174 to speak with a counselor. For more information about open enrollment on the Health Insurance Marketplace, visit [Michigan.gov/HealthInsurance](https://michigan.gov/HealthInsurance) or call 877-999-6442.

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