

Important Notice About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

Re: Your Prescription Drug Coverage Is Creditable for Medicare Part D

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage and 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 (such as 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. It has been determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by your employer's health plan is, 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 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 coverage will not be affected. Your current coverage pays for other healthcare expenses in addition to prescription drugs. You will still be eligible to receive all of your current health and prescription benefits if you choose to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan. The two plans combined will never pay more than 100% of your prescription drug costs. You should compare your current coverage with Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. The cost of the plans and which drugs are covered should be taken into consideration.

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current coverage, be aware that you and your dependents will 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 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 19 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 your group plan administrator as indicated below.

Name of Plan Sponsor (employer): Fern Ridge School District 28J

Name of Group Health Plan: PacificSource Health Plans - \$2000 Ded. SC, \$6000 Ded SC

Name of Group Administrator: Fern Ridge School District 28J

Address: 88834 Territorial Road Elmira, OR 97437

Phone Number: 541-935-2253

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 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 available in the *Medicare and You* handbook. Medicare will mail a copy of the handbook to you. They may also contact you directly regarding their prescription drug plans.

For More Information About Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

- Visit the Medicare website at www.Medicare.gov.
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program. (See the inside back cover of *Medicare & You* for its telephone number.)
- Call (800) MEDICARE ([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).