



Information Partners Can Use on:

Helping People with Medicare Apply for Extra Help

New Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

As of March 2006

You continue to be a valuable resource in helping people with Medicare apply for **extra help** paying their Medicare drug plan costs. A person may qualify for extra help if they have limited **income** and **resources**. Read below for more detailed information.

- **Limited income** (below \$14,700 for an individual or \$19,800 for a married couple living together). **Even if their annual income is higher, a person still may be able to get some help with their prescription costs.** Some examples where income may be higher include if a person or their spouse
 - support other family members, who live with them, or
 - have earnings from work, or
 - live in Alaska or Hawaii.

The following cash payments **don't count as income**:

- Food stamp assistance
- Home energy assistance
- Medical care assistance
- Housing assistance
- Disaster assistance
- Earned income tax credit payments
- Victim's compensation
- Scholarships and education grants

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- **Limited resources** (below \$10,000 for an individual or \$20,000 for a married couple living together). These resource limits **can be slightly higher (an additional \$1,500 per person)** if a person will use some of the money for burial expenses.

The following items **don't count as a resource**:

- Your primary residence
- Your personal possessions
- Your vehicle(s)
- Resources you could not easily convert to cash, such as jewelry or home furnishings
- Property you need for self-support, such as rental property or land you use to grow produce for home consumption
- Non-business property essential to your self-support
- Up to \$1,500 (or \$3,000 if you are married and living with your spouse) of the cash value of life insurance policies
- Burial spaces

Social Security has a simple application process to help people with Medicare apply for extra help. There are several ways for people with Medicare to apply for extra help:

- Apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov.
- Get an application or apply over the phone by calling Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778.
- Attend a community event sponsored by Social Security or a civic or service organization where they can complete an application. Questions about extra help will be answered at these events. Staff from Social Security's 1,300 field offices are out in local communities taking applications at locations such as senior centers, libraries and places of worship.
- Visit a local Social Security field office.

For more information about applying for extra help with your Medicare drug plan costs, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 or visit www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp on the web.