

1



## Welcome to Medicare 2024

### Medicare and Other Coverage

Presented by Contra Costa County  
Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program  
**HICAP**

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY  
EMPLOYMENT & HUMAN SERVICES




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Note: All costs are for 2024 unless otherwise noted

April 8, 2024

1

2

## What is HICAP?

### Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program

- All things Medicare
  - Education, Counseling & Advocacy
- Primarily a Volunteer Organization
  - Initial and Ongoing Training
  - Registered with California Department of Aging
- Funded by California and Federal Gov't
- No affiliation with Insurance Companies
  - No Policies Sold or Endorsed
- Free to you!

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2

3

## After This Module You Will Know

### How Medicare Works With:


✓ ACA: Covered CA and MAGI Medi-Cal	slide 4
✓ Small Employer Plans	slide 8
✓ Retiree Plans (Employer or Union)	slide 12
✓ COBRA	slide 15
✓ Federal Employee Health Retiree Benefits	slide 16
✓ Tricare for Life	slide 17
✓ Veterans Affairs Benefits	slide 18

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3

4


## ACA: Covered California and MAGI Medi-Cal

**Affordable  
Care Act  
(ACA)**


- Assured that health coverage is available to those without Employer, Medicare, Medi-Cal, or other health coverage


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**Covered  
California**


- California marketplace of health insurance under ACA for QHPs- "Qualified Health Plans"
- Various level of subsidies available based on income

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**MAGI  
(expanded)  
Medi-Cal**


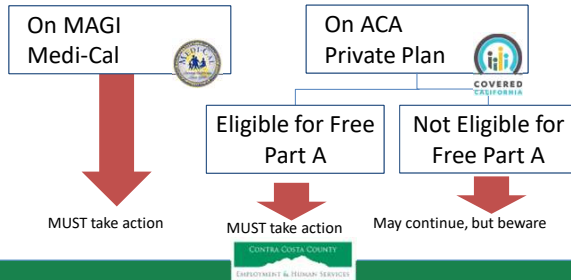
- Eligible if income below \$1732/mo. (S) or \$2352/mo. (M); no asset limit
- No cost for medical or Rx coverage
- Can't choose subsidized private ACA plan instead

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4

## Have ACA Plan/MAGI Medi-Cal and become eligible for Medicare?

- When you turn 65 or become eligible for Medicare due to disability (SSDI > 2 years)
- May need to take action regardless of whether you enroll in Medicare



5

## Have ACA Plan, become eligible for Medicare and entitled to free Part A?

- Enroll in Medicare during initial enrollment period\*
- Cancel ACA when Medicare effective
  - Must request disenrollment
- If Stay with ACA?
  - No ACA subsidies. May have to repay
  - No coordination with Medicare
  - If don't enroll in Medicare timely, coverage delays and lifetime penalty.

\*No later than birthday month to avoid problems

6

## Have ACA Plan, become eligible for Medicare and NOT entitled to free Part A?

- Can continue Covered CA with subsidies and decline Medicare
- If wish Medicare later, subject to delays in coverage and late enrollment penalty
  - Evaluate for Medicare Savings Programs/Other Medi-Cal

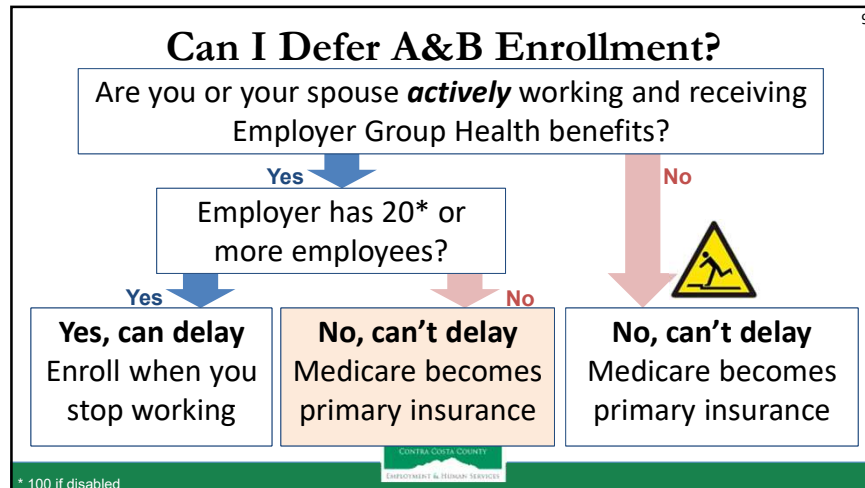


7

## Actively Working for A Small Employer at 65+?



8



9

**Rules for Small Employer/Union Coverage**

- Small employers can require you to take Parts A and B
  - Medicare is primary, employer plan becomes secondary
- May offer option to keep you on employer plan as primary
  - Get in writing to avoid problems later
- Be careful if have Health Savings Account (HSA)
  - Can't make contributions
  - Can use balance to pay medical and Medicare costs

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10

**Considerations with Small Employer/Union Coverage**

- Get cost and coverage details from HR
  - Do you need it for spouse? Dental/vision?
  - Is drug coverage creditable for Part D?
- Compare costs and benefits of employer plan to Medicare options
- When employer plan ends, you have special rights for Medigap, Part D, Medicare Advantage Plans

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11

**No Longer Working**  
Other Health Coverage








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12

## Retiree Plans-Employer/Union

13

- Medicare is always primary (except for federal retirees)
- Must have Medicare A & B or you will have no primary coverage
- Not regulated by federal government
- Coverage varies; not identical to Medigap
  - May be a PPO or HMO (e.g. Kaiser); may or may not coordinate with Medicare
  - May have same name as public plans (e.g. Senior Advantage) but are not the same



13

## Considerations with Retiree Plans

14

- Obtain details from your HR representative
  - How coverage works with Medicare and cost
  - Benefits in addition to Medicare (e.g. dental)
  - Is the Part D creditable coverage?
- Normally once you leave a plan, no re-entry
  - May lose retiree option if not taken when first eligible
  - May need to keep coverage for dependent spouse
- If you or employer stop coverage, you are eligible for Special Enrollment Periods for Medigap, Medicare Advantage and Part D plans



14

## Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

15

- COBRA is continuation coverage
  - Lasts 18 to 36 months, depending on qualifying event
  - Is ALWAYS secondary to Medicare Parts A and B
  - Your rights to COBRA depend on whether you have Medicare at the time you end your job
  - Dependents have independent COBRA rights
- **Beware if you're offered COBRA!**
  - Once eligible for Medicare, Medicare is primary, even if you don't enroll
  - COBRA can recover costs paid in error and you'll face penalties later for Medicare



15

## Retiree Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)

16

Unique because don't need Part B with FEHB retiree coverage\*  
 \*except for most USPS employees as of 1/1/2025

- If don't take Part B
  - Can keep plan you had as an employee; it will still be primary
  - But, if want Part B later, you'll be subject to delays in coverage and lifetime penalty
- If enroll in Part B
  - Best to enroll when you're first eligible
  - Medicare becomes Primary, FEHB secondary
  - Can change to a different FEHB plan upon Medicare enrollment – includes "give-back" plans with credit towards Part B premium
  - With some plans, can suspend to "try" Medicare Advantage plans instead



16

## TRICARE for Life (TFL)

- For military retirees and dependents
- Must take Medicare A and B at age 65
  - TRICARE is the secondary payer
- Benefits include covering Medicare's coinsurance and deductibles
- Drug coverage is creditable for Part D
- For services covered by TFL but not Medicare
  - Medicare pays nothing



17

## Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits

- With VA, can be wise to also get Medicare A & B
  - VA doesn't cover non-VA facilities
  - In emergency, VA pays nothing if you go to a non-VA facility
- Can have both VA and Medicare but they don't coordinate
  - When benefits obtained from VA facilities, Medicare pays nothing
  - When benefits obtained from non-VA facilities, Medicare pays; VA pays nothing
  - In limited cases VA may pre-authorize care at non-VA sites
- Consider Part B with "give back" Medicare Advantage Plan
  - Discount on Part B premium plus caps risk if use non-VA services
- Can have VA drug coverage (creditable) + Part D Plan



18

18

## Next up...

### View Module 7:

#### Low Income Assistance Programs

- ✓ Transition from Expanded (MAGI) Medi-Cal to Medicare
- ✓ Medi-Cal programs: Aged and Disabled FPL
- ✓ Medi-Cal With Share of Cost - SOC
- ✓ 250% Working Disabled Program
- ✓ QMB for Medicare Part A
- ✓ Extra Help for Prescription Drugs



19

19

## Multiple Ways to Reach Us

Website: [www.cchicap.org](http://www.cchicap.org)

Email: [ehsdhicap@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ehsdhicap@ehsd.cccounty.us)

HICAP Office: (925) 655-1393,

(800) 510-2020 or (800) 434-0222



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20

20