

PRESS RELEASE

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John R. Kasich, *Governor*
Jillian Froment, *Director*



ODI
Ohio Department
of Insurance

Medicare Open Enrollment Begins October 15

Director Jillian Froment says now is the time to compare Medicare plans, and there is free help available at statewide Medicare Check-Up Day events

COLUMBUS – As the 2019 Medicare open enrollment period approaches, Jillian Froment, Director of the Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) is encouraging those on Medicare to review their drug and health insurance coverage options and select a plan that fits their needs and budget. The Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP), a division of ODI, will host Medicare Check-Up Day events throughout the state to help consumers compare and select the best plan that meets their unique needs. Medicare Open Enrollment for 2019 runs from October 15 through December 7.

“Medicare Open Enrollment is a once-a-year opportunity for Ohioans who are enrolled in Medicare to compare plans and find one that fits their needs at a price that’s right for them,” said Froment. “Medicare health and prescription drug cost-sharing can vary between plans for the same drug or service, so it is important to look at your options each year and make changes if necessary.”

Before making any changes to an existing health plan, it is important for Ohioans who are Medicare eligible to know what their current coverage provides and compare that to available choices offered, including the benefits, cost of premium, and out-of-pocket costs. Consumers should also confirm their physicians participate in the plan they select.

During Medicare's annual open enrollment, Ohioans can:

- Stay on or return to Original Medicare and shop for a stand-alone Part D prescription drug plan.
- Select a Medicare Advantage Plan, which provides comprehensive health benefits, typically including drug coverage.
- Determine if their existing coverage will continue to meet their health insurance needs.
- Attendees can also learn more about recent Medicare plan changes and financial assistance programs that help pay prescription drug costs and Part B premiums.

Protecting Against Fraud and Identity Theft

Froment advises Ohioans to be aware of predatory sales practices during open enrollment. The Ohio Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) will be present at Check-Up Day events to encourage Medicare enrollees to protect their Medicare card, explain how to detect fraudulent behavior, and how to report issues. If a consumer suspects wrongdoing, they should call the department's Fraud and Enforcement hotline at 1-800-686-1527 or the SMP at 1-800-488-6070.

Those unable to attend a Medicare Check-Up Day event can contact OSHIIP at 1-800-686-1578, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., or call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week. Information, including specific plan details, is available at www.medicare.gov.

To view a complete listing of Medicare Check-Up Day events, visit OSHIIP's Medicare Check-Up and Annual Enrollment page at www.insurance.ohio.gov/Consumer/OSHIIP/SitePages/CheckUpDays.aspx.

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