



Medicare and Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB)

Once you are eligible for Medicare, you may have questions about your need to enroll and how your FEHB and Medicare will coordinate benefits.

If I continue to work past age 65, is my FEHB coverage still primary?

Your FEHB coverage will be your primary (pays first) coverage. You do not need to enroll in Part B until you no longer have coverage based on ACTIVE employment. This could be coverage provided by you or your spouse's active employment.

Should I enroll in Medicare Part A?

If you are entitled to Part A without paying a premium you should take it, even if you are still working. Medicare Part A covers inpatient hospital care, skilled nursing facility care, hospice care and home health care. Although your FEHB benefits provide these services, Part A may cover some of the hospital related costs that your FEHB plan does not cover. You may want to delay Part A if you are enrolled in a High-Deductible Health plan with a HSA (Health Savings Account). You and your employer cannot contribute to your HSA if you are enrolled in Medicare Part A or Part B.

Do I need to enroll in Medicare Part B?

As long as you continue to work and have FEHB coverage based on ACTIVE employment you and your spouse can delay enrollment in Medicare Part B.

If you are retired and enrolled in a fee-for-service plan such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, GEHA, and Mail Handlers, enrolling in Part B may provide the most complete coverage. Some plans will waive deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments when you enroll in Part B allowing you to select a lower cost option.

If you are retired and enrolled in a FEHB HMO, you may want to consider Part B as it will pay for costs when seeing doctors outside of the plan's network and non-emergency care in the U.S. if travel is involved.

What if I choose to not enroll in Part B, can I enroll at a later time?

If you decide not to enroll in Part B after you no longer have coverage based on ACTIVE employment, you will be subject to a late enrollment penalty if you choose to enroll later. This could impact your options in the future if your FEHB benefits are reduced or premiums increase. Each year (full 12 month period) you delay will result in a penalty of

10% of the current Part B premium. If you delay two years you will pay 20%; a three year delay would be 30% penalty. You will pay this penalty for life. If you don't sign up when you are first eligible, you can sign up between January 1 - March 31 each year. Your coverage will begin July 1 of the same year.

Do my FEHB premiums change when Medicare is primary?

No. You pay the same for your FEHB premiums when you enroll in Medicare.

Do I need a Part D plan?

Your FEHB plan already offers comprehensive drug coverage that is considered to be "creditable" (as good as) Medicare Part D coverage. Therefore, you will not likely benefit from enrolling in a Medicare Part D drug plan and paying extra for prescription drug benefits. The exception is for those with limited income and resources who may qualify for help paying prescription drug costs. Medicare Part D "Extra Help" will pay for your Part D premium and some of the cost of your prescriptions. SHIP can help you apply for the "Extra Help."

Do I need a supplement?

No you do not need a supplement. Medicare and your FEHB retiree plan will coordinate benefits to provide complete coverage.

Can I enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan?

Yes, if you have both Medicare Part A and Part B. You can suspend your FEHB coverage if you choose to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan. You can re-enroll in the FEHB plan if you later lose or cancel your Medicare Advantage plan. You should contact 1-888-767-6738 to discuss enrollment and suspension.

What if I have TRICARE and FEHB?

If you are retired military, have TRICARE and FEHB coverage based on ACTIVE employment, you can delay Part B until you retire. If you choose to delay Part B, you can enroll in Part B and TRICARE-For Life when you retire. However, if you do not want a break in your TRICARE coverage you will need to enroll in Part B when you turn 65 or become eligible for Medicare.

Where do I go for more information?

- The FEHB website at: www.opm.gov/insure/health/medicare
- Your FEHB plan brochure
- Contact SHIP, a free, confidential, and objective service of the State of Iowa Insurance Division. Call **1-800-351-4664** (TTY 1-800-735-2942)