

## **Important Notice from the City of Carmel About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare**

**Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with the City of Carmel and about your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage.** This information can help you decide whether you want to enroll in a Medicare drug plan. If you are considering enrolling, 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. At the end of this notice is information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage.

**There are two important things you should 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 (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare prescription drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.
2. The City of Carmel has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the City of Carmel Employee Health Benefit 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 enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage.

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### **WHEN CAN YOU JOIN A MEDICARE DRUG PLAN?**

You can enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year thereafter from October 15<sup>th</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup>.

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 prescription drug plan.

### **WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR CURRENT COVERAGE IF YOU JOIN A MEDICARE DRUG PLAN?**

**Prescription drug coverage is a mandatory part of your medical coverage with the City of Carmel and cannot be separated.** Therefore, you should carefully compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and cost of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area, as well as the cost of plans offering medical coverage that supplements Medicare Part A and Part B coverage.

**You have these options with regard to your prescription drug coverage:**

1. Retain your City of Carmel coverage and choose not to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan.
2. Drop your City of Carmel coverage and enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan. You should understand that if you drop your City of Carmel prescription drug coverage, you will also be dropping your medical coverage, and your re-enrollment options will be limited.

3. Enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan as a supplement to your City of Carmel coverage. Your current coverage pays for other health expenses in addition to prescription drugs. If you enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, you and your eligible dependents will still be eligible to receive all of your current health and prescription drug benefits. Your City of Carmel coverage will be primary. Your Medicare coverage will supplement City of Carmel plan benefits.

**WHEN WILL YOU PAY A HIGHER PREMIUM (PENALTY) TO JOIN A MEDICARE DRUG PLAN?**

You should know that if you drop or lose your coverage with the City of Carmel and don't enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan later.

If you go 63 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 nineteen 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 enroll.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS NOTICE OR YOUR CURRENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE...**

Contact the person listed below for further information. **NOTE:** You will 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 through the City of Carmel 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 in the "Medicare & You" handbook. You'll get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare prescription drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov); or
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of the "Medicare & You" handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help; or
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

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](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

**Remember: Keep this Notice of Creditable Coverage. If you decide to join one of the Medicare prescription 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 you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).**

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